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**Philanthropy
and
Voluntarism
among the
Jews**

GOAL

Part I.

The goal of this curriculum guide is to set forth a course of study that will familiarize students with the pivotal role of philanthropy and voluntarism in the social life of the Jewish people in America as well as throughout different periods of history and under different social structural conditions.

In recent years, social science has come to recognize with increasing clarity that “liberal political and economic institutions depend on a healthy and dynamic civil society for their vitality.” [Francis Fukuyama, Trust: the Social Virtues & the Creation of Prosperity, (The Free Press, 1995.)] The concept of “civil society” refers to that complex web of human associations that find expression in clubs, fraternal associations, unions, businesses, charitable organizations, churches, synagogues, mosques and the like, which in turn are rooted in the primary bonds of the family. In as much as “a thriving civil society depends on a people’s habits, customs and ethics” (Fukuyama 1995) this curriculum is designed to serve as one building block among many others in understanding the formation of modern American civil society which, by virtue of its growing diversity and multiculturalism, is necessarily shaped by the traditions of its constituent peoples.

Although Jews constitute less than three percent of the total U.S. population (National Jewish Population Survey 1990) the culture of American society is commonly described as “Judeo-Christian.” In large measure this description is based on the fact that Christianity and particularly Protestant Christianity is deeply rooted in ancient Judaism. The profound influence of that dual heritage on liberal democratic political culture in general and that of the United States in particular was explicated in a widely popular work by Harvey Cox, The Secular City (The Macmillan Co., 1965, 1966, 1967), one of the rare books on theology to achieve “best seller” status.

Besides the influence of theological constructs and institutional models drawn from the history of the ancient Israelites, American Jews them-

selves have often played a pivotal role in the shaping of American society, most particularly through their philanthropic and voluntaristic activities. For example, the union movement among American workers is arguably rooted not only in ancient Judaic concepts of distributive justice, but also in the voluntary organizations of immigrant Jewish workers in New York and Philadelphia in the closing decades of the nineteenth century [Arthur Liebman, Jews and the Left, (John Wiley & Sons, 1979); Judah J. Shapiro, The Friendly Society: A History of the Workmen's Circle, (Media Judaica, 1970)]. Similarly, ancient Jewish concepts of religious tolerance have fused with the pragmatic concerns of Jews as an endangered minority to produce a robust American advocacy movement for the strict separation of church and state [Naomi W. Cohen, Jews in Christian America: The Pursuit of Religious Equality, (Oxford University Press, 1992)].

Traditional Jewish commitments to the study of text and to the primacy of physical well-being have likewise fused with the social needs of an upwardly mobile immigrant population and uniquely American societal opportunities, to create major Jewish philanthropic undertakings in the advancement of American education [Charles E. Silberman, A Certain People: American Jews and their Lives Today, (Summit Books, 1985)] and health care [Tina Levitan, Islands of Compassion: History of the Jewish Hospitals of New York, (Twayne Publishers, 1964)].

This course aims to explore the interplay between Jewish ideals and values related to philanthropy and voluntarism, the social needs of Jews borne of diverse historical and socio-cultural circumstances, and the external socio-political opportunities and constraints under which Jews have forged their collective lives as the pathways to understanding the pivotal role of philanthropy and voluntarism in the life of America's Jews. Therefore, the course will also introduce students to the religious-cultural and historical origins of modern American Jewish philanthropy and voluntarism. Because the course attempts to provide a broad overview it is organized thematically rather than chronologically. This mode of organization lends this course more readily to the sociological/anthropological branches of the college curriculum than to, say, history.

The outline that follows traces the ideological, sociological as well as historical development of the voluntaristic and philanthropic dimensions of the Jewish experience. It locates that development and links it to five specific stages of Jewish history. Moving from the sources of Jewish philanthropy, the course examines its functions, its typical institutionalized modes of enactment, and its by-product of the creation of Jewish civil society. Finally, the course examines special issues of Jewish philanthropy that have emerged under the unique conditions of modernity and post-modernity.

WEEK 1

Introduction to Diversity in Judaic Contexts

In the introduction to his seminal work, *The Uprooted* (Grosset's Universal Library, 1952), Oscar Handlin wrote: "I once thought to write the history of immigrants to America. Then I realized that immigrants are the history of America." In a similar fashion, one might say that to design a course on philanthropy and voluntarism among the Jews is to risk reducing to but a component an aspect of Jewish life that is very nearly constitutive of that life in its entirety. So much of what defines the structures of Jewish society and the processes of Jewish communal life are, in fact, constituted of philanthropy and voluntarism.

The rather abstract and formal definition of philanthropy as **the private and voluntary organization of time and money for collective benefit** can be readily applied to nearly every facet of organized Jewish life in virtually every period of Jewish history. The principal reason for this is that Jews have constituted an essentially voluntary community in virtually all societies. Throughout history, their host culture would have much preferred if Jews simply gave up their distinctiveness through conversion – either to Islam or to Christianity. Therefore, for Jewish communities to exist at all required an enormous and persistent effort at collective action.

The only rare exceptions to that generalization are periods of history when Jews constituted a nation-state in a homeland of their own, backed by a legal system with powers of enforcement. In those rare periods, in the ancient as well as the modern land of Israel, Jews could meet most of their key social, cultural, economic, and religious functions through the political and administrative processes of government. But, apart from those brief periods — which happen to include the present moment in Israel — virtually all Jewish institutions and cultural movements have been the product of philanthropy and voluntarism.

Unlike peoples whose societies have had clear national boundaries and firm governmental structures, or at least a relatively fixed territorial anchor point, the Jews have been a nomadic people for most of their history, transnational in their settlement patterns, and multi-cultural in

language and custom. That they have remained identifiable as a distinct social and cultural group from their beginnings in the 17th Century before the common era (BCE) right up until the present day, is attributable to two essential aspects of Jewish group life: (1) wide-spread antagonism and exclusion practiced toward them by the many societies in which they lived, and (2) the self-sustaining force of their philanthropic and voluntaristic norms. The latter itself is rooted in doctrines of the Torah, which Christians call the Old Testament of the Bible. That text has been the most constant Constitution of the Jewish people since the time of Moses in the 13th Century BCE.

Up until the modern era, virtually all scholarly attention focused on the Jews was devoted to the study of the Torah text and the exegetical texts which flowed from it, principally the multi-volume Talmud (Gershom Bader, The Encyclopedia of Talmudic Sages, Jason Aronson, 1988) which was compiled between 200 BCE and 500 CE .

In the Biblical books, known collectively as the T'Nach, — a three letter abbreviation referring to the Torah (Bible or the Five Books of Moses), Nevi'im (the Prophets), and K'tuvim (the Apocrypha) — compiled between the 10th and 4th centuries BCE, one finds frequent recitations of great battles fought by the Jews against their adversaries, great collective undertakings and shared calamities. But, these narratives are designed to reveal the thread of divine will or some facet of divine law as found in the Torah itself made manifest in subsequent periods of Jewish life. Only with the influence of Greeks and Romans, beginning in the 3rd century BCE, do Jewish writers start to record contemporary events without any direct attempt at linkage between the secular and the sacred text.

The first truly “secular” recording of Jewish history is found in the work of Josephus Flavius (38 CE - 100 CE), a highly Romanized Jerusalemite who settled in Rome after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. In many respects Josephus set the tone for nearly all Jewish historical writing up until the modern era.

Modern Jewish historiography began with the work of Leopold Zunz (1794-1886), founder of the “science of Judaism” — an effort to ascertain the factual basis of Jewish historical claims on the basis of scientific methodology. Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891) was the first modern Jewish historian, applying Zunz’s principles in a grand opus of eleven volumes, which attempts to describe the complete past of the Jewish people.

Curiously, much of the history of Jewry — even in its most modern genre — has been written from the perspective of Jewish victimhood. Some have called the standard Jewish historiography the “lachrymose view” of

Discussion Topics

• *Why have organized philanthropy and voluntarism figured so little in the historical literature of the Jews?*

• *How might one begin to differentiate philanthropy and voluntarism from other facets of Jewish collective behavior?*

Jewish history. To be sure, the record of degradation, violence and exclusion visited upon the Jews for more than 3000 years gives ample reason for a historiography with a lachrymose outlook. Yet, it can be argued that those experiences have had but a relatively small relationship to the indigenous forces of internal group organization. The forces of adversity have but shaped and evoked varying forms of an apparently unique Jewish genius for self-organization.

Yet, in comparison with the vast literature that describes and analyzes the victimization of the Jews, from their slavery in Egypt in the 14th Century BCE right up until the Holocaust, there has been relatively little attention given to the intricate ways in which Jews have determined their own group life.

Obviously, this broad generalization is not meant to suggest that there have been no attempts made by writers, scholars, and community chroniclers to record the variety of ways in which Jews have organized themselves for collective action, to fulfill shared group values and to meet collective needs. Were that to be the case, it would be impossible to undertake the present curriculum. Rather, it is the premise of this educational initiative that the ways in which Jews have mobilized their own individual and group resources to meet group needs have been at best of only secondary interest in understanding of the evolution of Jewish life, culture and society.

However, to live as a Jew has always meant to live, not so much in conformity with a particular body of laws, norms and values, but in community with other Jews. The primacy of community over conformity with creed has further placed emphasis on the personal responsibility of each individual for his/her brethren and for the community they share in common. Therefore, to live as a Jew has always meant to give as a Jew: to help sustain one's fellow Jews who may be in need for one reason or another, and to help sustain the Jewish community as a whole.

That sheer fact of Jewish existence argues for placing a much sharper focus than had been done heretofore upon the various dimensions of Jewish philanthropy and voluntarism. The broad understanding of philanthropy presumes here that men and women give of themselves for the sake of others and for the community as a whole in a variety of ways; not merely in the form of money or goods. In the case of Jews, who have been an endangered minority in many societal settings, philanthropy must also include the willingness of individuals to extend themselves politically so as to secure the welfare of others; at times to risk their own security for the sake of their people. To the extent that individuals pool their resources, of their own volition, for the sake of others, philanthropy is the material embodiment of the spirit of voluntarism.



WEEKS 2, 3 & 4

Textual Foundations of the Jewish Philanthropic Tradition

As “People of The Book,” Jews trace their central institutions as well as their core values and behavioral norms to the precepts of the *Torah*. The permutations of Jewish historical experience are seen as variations on those central themes.

This section of the curriculum examines the religio-cultural foundations of philanthropy and voluntarism among the Jews as reflected in ancient texts.

However, these texts themselves need to be examined as only part of the legitimizing basis of Jewish philanthropy, as the texts themselves are historical products. The texts raise the larger philosophical issue about the variety of sources of legitimacy for philanthropic action in different societies.

That Jews have placed “the text” at the center stage of their legitimizing apparatus raises the question of what other sources of legitimacy might enable or account for philanthropic action. In his classic *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), Max Weber speaks of four basic types of social action. He classifies these types principally based upon their sources of legitimacy: (a) means-ends rational action, (b) value-rational action, (c) affectual (emotionally oriented) action and (d) traditionally oriented action.

It is certainly easy to recognize that a very large portion of philanthropic activity might be accounted for on the basis of emotion (i.e. empathy, pity, sympathy and love). Indeed, the familiar English word “charity” is rooted in the Greek *caritas* whose core meaning is to care for or to love. In sharp contrast to that essentially emotional construct, the Hebrew word for “charity” is *zedakkah*. That word is rooted in the word *zedek*, which quite literally means “justice,” and is still in common usage in modern Hebrew. Insofar as words are clues to deeper cultural meanings, it would seem that the ancient Israelites and their progeny down through the ages found the legitimizing basis of philanthropy in the concept of distributive

As a result of differences in transliteration, zedakkah (or charity) may also appear in texts as tsedakah.

justice more readily than they did in the emotional bonds that might be presumed to unite a religio-ethnic community.

1. Biblical "brotherhood"
2. Prophetic "universalism"
3. Rabbinic "communal ordinance"
4. Modern "social responsibility"

Each people's history begins "once upon a time;" that hazy epoch which marks the boundary between legends and recorded events. For Jews that hazy epoch is recorded in the compendium of books called the *T'Nach*. (See under, "Week 1".)

The "stories" recorded in the *Torah* are estimated by archeologists and historians to have taken place sometime between the 17th -13th centuries BCE. Although it begins with the history of the world itself, including the legend of creation, the *Torah* is generally regarded as the earliest record of Jewish history. In this historical record Jews are essentially a familial-tribal group attached to the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, their wives, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah; their concubines and their immediate nuclear families.

Many of the earliest stories surrounding Abraham, the founder of Biblical monotheism, are of acts and adventures that could arguably be seen as prototypes of the two central ideals of Jewish philanthropy: *zedakkah* (loosely translated as charity), and *chesed* (acts of loving-kindness). (See Appendix A.)

Because the "founders" of Judaism are portrayed as an extended biological family, much of the impetus behind the Jewish philanthropic tradition is presumptive familial responsibility. The familial nature of the Jewish folk is mirrored in a quasi-familial view of the relationship between God and humankind, where God is most often viewed as father, benefactor, protector and the like.

The post-Biblical texts of the Prophets, particularly those written after the seventh century before the common era, are far more apt to portray God as a Righteous Judge, but the nature of His righteousness is most often expressed in His call to His people to behave more compassionately toward one another. The language of righteousness expressed in the exhortations of those Prophets is frequently an attempt to evoke in people a sense of their fundamental familial relationship to one another long after they have moved away from the primordial tribal settings in which the feelings of familial responsibility might have been nurtured. (See Appendix B.)

Unlike the Prophets who speak in the highly generalized language of universal principles, the Rabbinical writings, beginning with the debates and resolutions of the *Talmud*, address concrete issues of social concern:

- Is the owner of a field, who is required by *Torah* law to leave a portion of his harvest for gathering by the poor required to extend that generosity to the non-Jewish poor as well as the Jewish poor? (Yes)
- Is one permitted to delay feeding the hungry in order to complete some urgent matter of business? (No)
- What proportion of one's wealth ought a person be permitted to give away in charity? (Not more than one-fifth)
- What is to befall one who takes even a cent of charity when he or she does not need it? (They will end up in poverty and dependent on charity)
- In what manner is financial aid to be distributed to the poor? (Preferably in secret, so as not to shame the recipient)
- Might charity take forms other than money or material support? (Yes – Rabbi Yitzchak Napcha said, "One who gives a penny to a poor man will be blessed with six blessings, but one who speaks kind words to the poor will be blessed with seven blessings.")
- Should charity be denied to those who were once rich and used to a luxurious life? (No)
- Is kindness to be shown only to particular individuals or to the collective as well? (To the collective as well – Rav Huna would walk through the streets of his community after a storm and put his own workmen to the task of pulling down damaged walls so as to prevent injuries to passers-by.)

It was also the Rabbis of the *Talmud* who ordained that every Jewish municipality or *kahal* must maintain an organized charity fund to aid the needy, administered by appointees of the community whose own probity is beyond question.

The multitude of Rabbinic ordinances, exegetical interpretations of *Torah* law and inferences from the humane exhortations of the *Prophets* were ultimately compiled in a comprehensive form by Moses Maimonides (1135-1204) in the *Mishne Torah*. (See Appendix C.)

The theory and practice of Jewish philanthropy takes a radically new turn, as so much else in modern Jewish life, with the emergence of Zionism as an ideology and the social and political activities emanating therefrom. As Arthur Herzberg has written, "For Jewish historians Zionism is, of course, one of the pre-eminent facts — for most, it is the crucial issue — of Jewish life in the modern age." (*The Zionist Idea*, Doubleday and Co., 1959.)

In sharp contrast with more traditional Jewish theories and models of philanthropic initiative, Zionism introduced into the Jewish community principles of philanthropy completely dissociated from individual human need. The re-building of the Jewish nation state, its agricultural reclamation, political and military defense, and cultural advancement became a key organizing force motivating Jewish collective behavior the world over, long before the actual establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

Driven in part by the early political messianism of such men as Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795-1874) ("the beginning of the Redemption will come through natural causes by human effort and by the will of governments..."), the cultural revivalism of Eliezer Ben Yehuda (1858-1923), who is principally credited with the revival of modern Hebrew as a living language, and most prominently by the pragmatic nationalism of Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), arguably the father of the modern nation state of Israel, Zionism fostered the establishment of a vast network of fund-raising instrumentalities from the mid-nineteenth century on.

The ideals of Zionism, harnessed to the growing enlightenment and emancipation of Jews, first in the West and later in the East, particularly in the Pale of Jewish Settlement, stimulated new ventures in education, the advancement of a new Hebraic culture, training for agricultural labor and military or at least para-military defense, commercial efforts to purchase land in Palestine, and a network of mobilizing ventures, such as youth groups, toward the ultimate end of transporting large numbers of Jews to their ancient — and soon-to-be — new homeland.

Those initiatives spawned a modern Jewish philanthropic establishment quite independent from the synagogue and from the established functional divisions of the *kehillah*, the autonomous corporate communities of Jews around the world. With the advent of Zionism, Jewish philanthropy had evolved from a system of collective behavior that has been first rooted in tribal loyalty, then rooted in "divinely revealed" *Torah* laws and Rabbinic interpretations thereof, into a system of virtual self-taxation rooted in a sense of personal responsibility for the well-being of something quite abstract: *am Yisrael* — the people Israel.

Discussion Topics

- *How do Jewish texts relate to Jewish social life in general?*
- *What do these texts have to say about philanthropy?*
- *How do Jewish texts reflect changes in Jewish thinking about the nature of philanthropy?*

Suggested Research Topics in Jewish Philanthropy

1. Compare the responses of German Jews in the seventeenth century (as described by Selma Stern, *The Court Jew*) with those of German Jews in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth Centuries with regard to assistance rendered to their poor.
2. Some of the giants of modern Jewish philanthropy (e.g. Sir Moses Montefiore or Felix Warburg or Max Fischer) are often regarded as later-day embodiments of ancient Jewish Patriarchs. How does their model of leadership differ from the Patriarchal models of the Bible?
3. In what way has financial philanthropy aided, supplanted, or existed in tension with other forms of Jewish activism such as Hassidism, Zionism or Bundism?
4. Compare and contrast the role of Jewish philanthropy in the rescue of Jews from the Holocaust and in the processes of nation building leading to the establishment of the State of Israel.
5. Given the centrality of text as the basis of legitimizing Jewish philanthropy, how has the philanthropic enterprise been effected by the broad secularization of Jews in America?
6. How does the contemporary federated system of Jewish philanthropy compare with the more classical model of the *kehillah*?
7. Assumptions about the constancy of certain fundamental human needs (e.g. poverty, widowhood, orphanhood) have been at the basis of Jewish philanthropy through the ages. What has been the impact of the great social mobility of American Jews on the contemporary rationale for Jewish philanthropy?
8. How has the philanthropic enterprise become a pathway of legitimization for previously powerless or stigmatized groups (e.g. gays and lesbians; interfaith families; singles and the voluntarily childless; women)?

Suggested Reading

Pentateuch translated into English and annotated by Rev. M. Rosenbaum and Dr. A. M. Silvermann (Jerusalem/London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1972).

"The Prophets," in The Reader's Bible (London: Oxford University Press, 1951).

Moses Maimonides, Mishne Torah (various editions).

Michael Avi-Yonah and Abraham Malamat, Views of the Biblical World (Chicago, Ill.: Jordan Publications, 1959).

Abraham Cronbach, "Philanthropy in Rabbinical Literature," in Jewish Tracts, I, UAHC Series: Popular Studies in Judaism (Cincinnati, OH: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, n.d.).

Ephraim Fisch, An Historical Survey of Jewish Philanthropy (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1924).

Richard Elliot Friedman, Who Wrote the Bible? (New York: Summit Books, 1987).

Charles Hoffman, The Smokescreen: Israel, Philanthropy and American Jews (Silver Springs, MD: Eshel Books, 1989).

Raphael Patai, The Jewish Mind (New York: Jason Aronson, 1977).

Stephen Sharot, Judaism: A Sociology (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1976).

Ernest Stock Partners & Pursestrings: A History of the United Israel Appeal (New York: University Press of America, 1987).

WEEKS 5, 6 & 7

Varieties of Jewish Social Systems

1. From Family to Tribe
2. National formation
 - a slave revolt
 - a people in search of leadership
3. Ancient statehood
 - the priesthood
 - federation of tribes
 - monarchy
4. Diasporas — pre-modern
5. Diasporas — modern
6. Self-determination (Israel, US, etc.)

These three weeks of the course will focus on the broad variety of social structures that Jews lived under in the long course of their history as an identifiable people. The lectures will draw most heavily on the work of Daniel J. Elazar and Stuart A. Cohen, The Jewish Polity: Jewish Political Organization from Biblical Times to the Present (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1985) as these two scholars have done painstaking yeoman's work in pulling together a vast amount of detailed scholarship to describe the **internal** political organization of the Jews throughout history.

Because so much of the historical literature dealing with the Jews is focused upon what others have done to them, what Jews have done for themselves is often overlooked. Yet, from the Biblical times onward there is a clear theme in the Jewish narrative: Jews are both reactive and proactive in shaping the social circumstances of their life as a people.

Elazar and Cohen have classified what they call the "constitutional development" of the Jewish people into fourteen broad epochs:

The Epoch of the Forefathers	c. 1850 - 1570 BCE
The Epoch of Egyptian Bondage	c. 1570 - 1280 BCE
The Epoch of the Congregation of Israelites	c. 1280 - 1004 BCE

The Epoch of the Federal Monarchy	c. 1004 - 721 BCE
The Epoch of the Kingdom of Judah	c. 721 - 440 BCE
The Epoch of the Great Assembly	c. 440 - 145 BC
The Epoch of the Jewish Commonwealth	c. 145 - 140 CE
The Epoch of the Sanhedrin & Patriarchate	c. 140 - 429 CE
The Epoch of the Yeshivot & Exilarchs	c. 429 - 748 CE
The Epoch of the Yeshivot & Gaonim	c. 748 - 1038 CE
The Epoch of the Kehillot	c. 1038 - 1348 CE
The Epoch of Federations of Kehillot	c. 1348 - 1648 CE
The Epoch of Voluntary Associations	c. 1648 - 1948 CE
The Epoch of State and People	c. 1948 - present

The political culture and its institutional embodiment in each epoch are determined and shaped by an interplay of ideals and values given by the core constitution of the Jewish people, the laws of *Torah*, the external socio-political and economic circumstances of the people who comprise Jewry in a given time and place, and the vagaries of human quality embodied in leadership.

Our knowledge of the earliest epochs is based largely on the *Torah* text and subsequent archeological records. Therefore descriptions of those periods are of necessity the most conjectural. Nevertheless, from the earliest narratives referencing the tales of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, there is a theme of individuals related by blood and marriage who are striving for a more abstract principle of connectedness and mutual responsibility.

The legend of Abraham, delegating his servant Eliezer to seek a wife for his son Isaac (Genesis 24) points to an early recognition of some link between family formation and the formation of something more transcendent. Abraham articulates the principle of **tribal endogamy** in bidding Eliezer, "thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I abide. But, thou shalt go [back] unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife [from there] unto my son Isaac."

The issue of tribal endogamy looms large in the lives of the other Patriarchs as well. In addition to the issue of endogamy, which seems to link family to a transcendent sense of community, another persistent theme from the earliest epoch of Jewish history is that of authority based on some transcendent principle beyond individual power. The importance of this principle is that it seeks to engage the consent of the governed on some voluntary basis.

Perhaps, the first instance of a reach for tribal authority is the legend of Joseph attempting to assert moral authority over his siblings, ten of whom are older than he. He relates to his brethren that he has had a dream:

Hear, I pray you, this dream I have had. Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field. And my sheaf arose and placed itself upright and your sheaves surrounded and prostrated themselves to my sheaf.... Then, I had another dream, and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars prostrated themselves to me. (Genesis 37)

Although Joseph incurs his brothers' hatred and wrath for his apparent haughtiness, his dreams prove "prophetic" when he ends up the Viceroy of Egypt where, eventually, his brothers and their families seek refuge from famine and are completely dependent upon Joseph's political protection and largess. (Genesis 45)

Of course, one presumes the retrospective nature of the text. But, the fact that the *Torah* text weaves that particular account of Joseph's relationship with his brothers is suggestive of a principle of authority as well as of responsibility that transcends both Joseph's personal magnanimity and also his brothers' feelings toward him. Both Joseph's dream and subsequent relationship with his brothers is embedded in some putative message encoded in the dream itself. The entire bond of authority and responsibility appears as an enactment of a revelation.

Virtually all subsequent instances of Jewish leadership and authority, from Moses (c. 1280 BCE) until the end of the epochs of monarchy (c. 440 BCE), are likewise predicated on some incident of revelation.

The importance of the link of authority and responsibility to revelation is that it allows every member of the community to see himself and herself as both entitled and obligated. The founding drama of revelation for the Jews occurs in the wilderness of Sinai (c. 1280 BCE) when the people, having left slavery in Egypt, are essentially a mixed multitude of ex-slaves, following the leadership of a liberator, Moses. Apparently, Moses realizes that if he is to forge this vast multitude into a more cohesive people he will need not only a system of government but a basis of legitimacy that is greater than the transitory fact of being their liberator.

Thus, the turning point in the saga of the Exodus from Egypt is the revelation of the *Torah* laws at Sinai. The importance of these laws is not merely the codification of a constitution for the Jewish people, but also that each and every individual is witness to the new social contract.

And the Eternal said to Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. And [have them] be ready on the third day; for on the third day the Eternal will come down before the eyes of all the people upon Mount Sinai....And the Eternal came down upon Mount Sinai...and the whole mount trembled greatly. (Exodus 19)

Was it an earthquake, or magic tricks performed by talented leaders upon a gullible flock? No one will ever know. But the net effect of the legend has been to create a political culture in which the leaders and the led both lay claim to a mutual code, binding them into a pact of authority and responsibility.

In the framework of Elazar and Cohen, authority is embodied under three distinct divisions – somewhat analogous to the modern division of powers in American government. These are the *keter Torah* (authority based on legitimacy of the *Torah*), *keter malkhut* (authority based on local civil representation of the folk), and *keter kehuna* (authority based on legitimacy of the priesthood and dispensation of rites). The character of any given Jewish polity in any given age is to be understood in the particular manner in which the tripartite division of authority is configured, controlled and integrated.

In addition to the tripartite division of authority (and its sources of legitimacy), from the earliest times, the Jewish polity has also been organized in a distinct spatial configuration, ranging from the local to the regional to the national and, indeed, in the ages of Diaspora, to the international.

Throughout the many centuries, both before the Covenant at Sinai, and subsequently in the many centuries when the Jewish people did not reside in their own autonomous homeland and therefore did not possess governmental powers of taxation and enforcement, philanthropy was a singular thread giving cohesion to a system of collective self-organization.

The final destruction of the last ancient Jewish Commonwealth by the Romans, in 70 CE, ushered in a nearly two-thousand year period during which virtually all efforts to sustain the social, religious, educational and welfare institutions of the Jewish community were based upon philanthropic initiative. Typically, such initiative was the result, as Elazar put it elsewhere, of “a partnership between doers and givers.”

Discussion Topics

- *What are the central sources and types of authority in Jewish communal life?*
- *How do these types of authority relate to one another?*
- *What is the link between authority and philanthropy?*

Suggested Reading

Israel Abrahams, Jewish Life in the Middle Ages (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1896; New York: Atheneum, 1969). (See especially Chapter XVII, "Private and Communal Charities. The Relief of the Poor.")

Raphael Patai, The Tents of Jacob: The Diaspora – Yesterday and Today: Cultural Analysis of the Jewish People and of Jewish Communities the World Over (New York: Prentice Hall, 1971).

Abraham Leon Sachar, A History of the Jews, fifth edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

Selma Stern, The Court Jew: A Contribution to the History of Absolutism in Europe (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1950; New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1985).

**WEEKS
8, 9, 10 & 11**

Diverse Structures of Jewish Philanthropy

Philanthropic initiatives, which are such a critical component of organized Jewish life throughout most of Jewish history, in fact occupy a very small place in the corpus of either religio-philosophical, historical or socio-political literature of Jewry. Why this should be so is, itself, an interesting question in the historiography of the Jewish people. But the fact that it is so makes any effort at accurate description and analysis of the actual organization of Jewish philanthropy over time problematical.

Naturally, as with all other aspects of Jewish history, the history and sociology of philanthropy becomes far more clearly delineated as one comes closer to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. That reason alone is sufficient to focus this section of the course principally upon the modern and contemporary periods, with primary emphasis on the United States, where arguably the Jewish philanthropic enterprise has evolved into unprecedented institutional forms.

Any attempt at understanding Jewish philanthropy and the communal institutions whose very existence depends upon it must contend with the fact that the impetus for involvement is often largely personal and emotional. Indeed one of the reasons that Jewish voluntarism and philanthropy has remained strong for much of the twentieth century is because of the deep and abiding feelings which Jews maintain, regardless of their particular place on the ideological or religious spectrum, towards continuing some form of Jewish tradition, supporting their needy coreligionists at home and abroad, and contributing to the development of the modern homeland of Israel.

Underlying the willingness of Jews to give generously in both time and money to support the vast philanthropic structure of American Jewry has always been a strong network of social ties between Jews and, on a personal level, a strong sense of Jewish identification. In the 1990s, it is precisely the steady decline in Jewish identity among younger generations combined with the diffusion of Jews throughout the United States that has

the organized Jewish community appropriately concerned for the survival of many of its institutions as well as the larger community at the end of the twentieth century.

Literature related to Jewish communal institutions has to be understood broadly to include any published analysis which sheds light on the functioning of the organized American Jewish community. Therefore, even national and regional demographic studies qualify as a basis for understanding contemporary Jewish philanthropy, provided that they both measure variables relevant to the functioning of Jewish institutions such as "communal involvement," "Jewish identity" or "intermarriage" and they conclude with recommendations for communal programs or policies.

Traditionally, the *kehillot* or Jewish communal structures in the Middle East, North Africa, Asia and Europe comprised, literally, semi-autonomous communities within larger host societies. These *kehillot* derived their authority from two different sources of legitimacy: *halachah*, Jewish religious law (see Appendix C) and the legal backing provided by the host nation.

Halachah provided the theological underpinnings for the Jewish communal structure and the parameters around which communities were to be organized. As a result, basic institutional continuity between Jewish communities was maintained despite substantial diversity in local conditions. The *halachah*'s pervasive influence also helped to shape a distinctively Jewish traditional view of philanthropy. The word used in Hebrew for charity is *tzedakkah* which actually translates as "justice". Unlike in the Christian West where philanthropy was based on giving out of love for one's fellow man, in Jewish tradition, everyone was commanded to give based upon religious law regardless of personal feelings. This traditional view of *tzedakkah* might partially explain the high degree of voluntary involvement of Jews relative to the larger population during a large part of the twentieth century.

On the other hand, the particular local circumstances of Jewish communities also played a significant role in shaping how Jewish communal institutions developed, especially, the nature of state recognition of the *kehillot*. Indeed, outside the United States, most nation states that had been hosts to Jewish communities backed the *kehillot* in order to facilitate control over the larger population. The franchisee-style relations between the *kehillot* and the political institutions of the larger society continued well into the modern period. Hence, in England Jewish religious life was controlled by the United Synagogue, which was vested with authority by an act of parliament in 1870. Not surprisingly, religious reform penetrated

Britain gradually and the chief rabbi played an important role in influencing the religious life of most local congregations.

In pre-Holocaust Germany, the state held ultimate authority to determine the types of religious reform which would result in secession from the formal Jewish community, wielding significant influence in how change affected the organized Jewish community. In France as well, the state intervened in Jewish communal affairs, actually making the "Jewish consistory" part of the French government. As late as the beginning of the twentieth century, the consistory paid the salaries of rabbis, appointed new rabbis, supported synagogues and their constituents and determined funding allocations to each Jewish institution (Diner, "Jewish Self Governance, American Style", 1994).

Clearly, the political and social environment of the larger society played a fundamental role in influencing how traditional Jewish societies adapted to modernity.

The mass immigration of Jews to North America beginning in the 1880s marked a major shift in the center of gravity, so to speak, of world Jewry. Upon arrival in America, Jews entered a society far different than any previous sociopolitical environment they had experienced. The openness of American society, the separation of church and state and the importance ascribed to individualism each profoundly influenced how Jewish communal institutions organized.

For the first time, identifying and affiliating Jewishly became a completely voluntary activity and relatively few barriers would constrain the integration of Jews into the larger society. *Halachah* was no longer binding except according to individual preference. Rabbis were divested of significant power as congregants no longer accepted their authority to dictate communal policy, even as it related to *halachic* issues (This was less true for Orthodox communities). As paying members, congregants insisted on exercising their right to a voice. If dissatisfied, they would simply join another synagogue. Strong competition ensued between Jewish religious institutions competing for members and unprecedented fragmentation characterized Jewish religious life during much of the 19th and early 20th centuries (Wertheimer, "Jewish Organizational Life in the U.S.", 1995).

At the same time, a division took shape between religious and secular institutions. The defense, philanthropic and social welfare organizations vigorously defended their separate space, facilitating the emergence of a newly prestigious group of lay and professional leaders in the Jewish community beginning at the turn of the century.

While Jews are generally quite proud of the diversity of institutions which they established, they consistently decry failure to develop a leadership body that could credibly speak on behalf of all Jews. In fact, a recurring theme in the literature has been how to facilitate greater integration and cooperation between institutions, for example, synagogues, Jewish community centers, Federations and Jewish educational institutions, as well as national fraternities and ideological movements.

Uneasiness over the lack of integration and frustration with some measure of duplication in most communities has had little dampening effect on the flowering of diversity in Jewish communal life. Excluding the explicitly denominational bodies — the hundreds of Hasidic, Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist and Humanistic congregations — the key sectors of the Jewish community consist of the following (a partial listing):

- *Federations of Jewish Philanthropies*
Beneficiary Agencies
 - Jewish hospitals
 - Jewish community centers
 - Jewish social services for the aged, new immigrants, etc.
 - Programs for advancement of Jewish education and culture
- *National "Defense" Organizations with Local Chapters*
 - American Jewish Committee
 - American Jewish Congress
 - B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League
- *Fraternal Organizations*
 - Hadassah Women's Organization
 - B'nai B'rith Women
 - National Council of Jewish Women
- *Cultural Organizations*
 - National Foundation for Jewish Culture
 - Various Jewish museums
- *Student Organizations*
 - Hillel/Foundation for Jewish Campus Life
 - Various Jewish fraternities & sororities
- *Professional and Coordinating Bodies*
 - Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations
 - National Jewish Community Relations Council
 - Council of Jewish Federations

- *Israel and International Organizations*

- United Jewish Appeal
- Joint Distribution Committee
- World Jewish Congress

- *Immigrant Absorption*

- Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)
- New York Association for New Americans (NYANA)

A comprehensive list of American-Jewish organizations is published annually in the American Jewish Yearbook.

Several important works help to contextualize the network of institutions which operate in the American Jewish community. [Wertheimer, "Jewish Organizational Life in the U.S., 1995"; Elazar, Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980); Medding, "Segmented Ethnicity and the New Jewish Politics", 1987]. Most compelling among these studies to date has been Daniel Elazar's Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry, wherein he argues that the diverse institutions of American Jewish life comprise a "Jewish polity" based on voluntarism. Elazar acknowledges that in many ways the institutions of American Jewry have developed with little regard for Jewish tradition. However, in other ways, the traditional political culture of the Jews has influenced the development of its institutions. For example, the "covenant" or federal idea occupied an important place in traditional Jewish culture. According to this principle, communities functioned based upon "contractual relationships" which were intended to foster partnerships. In American Jewry today as well, individuals are connected through relationships intended to encourage collaborative efforts between community and organization. This is true of all Jewish institutions from synagogues to defense organizations to the Federated philanthropic system.

The development of American Jewish fundraising institutions, representing the work of such major organizations as the Federations, the United Jewish Appeal and the American Joint Distribution Committee as well as the efforts of many smaller enterprises, stand as one of the towering achievements of philanthropy in American history. They are also institutional monuments to the power of Jewish organizational innovation within the general framework of ancient traditions.

Other less prominent institutions also serve as embodiments of the duality of Jewish continuity from the old world in Eastern Europe to the new world in America. Jewish institutions have developed in ways to remain consistent with Jewish tradition while also representing legitimate innova-

tions to address exigencies in a new environment. For example, Tenenbaum in her important work A Credit To Their Community, Jewish Loan Societies in the U.S. 1880-1945 discusses how the Free Loan Society, rooted in Jewish tradition, was adapted on American soil. She concludes that culture supplied Jews with the potential alternatives of action and their reaction to the new situation determined which aspects of that culture they decided to maintain. Aspects of their culture of origin at odds with the new society were gradually discarded.

More generally, Phillip Bernstein and Harry L. Lurie, authors of major histories of the Federation system in the United States, To Dwell In Unity, the Jewish Federation Movement in America Since 1960 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983) and A Heritage Affirmed; The Jewish Federation Movement In America (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961) respectively, argue that the Federation system evolved in accordance with traditional concerns for Jewish community welfare and self-help, but in new institutional forms in the United States.

Interestingly, of all modern Jewish philanthropic institutions, those devoted to the delivery of social services (e.g. Jewish hospitals, family services agencies and homes and services for the aged) have experienced the greatest challenge to their Jewish communal legitimacy.

While most American Jewish institutions easily match Lester M. Salamon's six defining characteristics of American non-profit institutions in that they are self governing, voluntary (at least in part) and functioning for the public benefit (as long as this can be defined as for particular Jewish causes as well as the more universalist cause of helping others in the larger society), questions persist about the "private" nature of many of the social service institutions. (cf. "The Rise of the Non-Profit Sector," Foreign Affairs 73,4: 109-22).

Many Jewish social service agencies, as their non-Jewish counterparts, receive substantial portions of their budget from the government, thereby blurring the boundaries between public and private organizations. Frequently, these organizations have almost no distinctively Jewish characteristics nor clientele. To survive as institutions, the most adroit among them were able to adapt their expertise and resources to serve a mainly non-Jewish clientele (Gross, "Paradigms of Jewish Ethnicity: Methodological and Normative Implications" 1993). However, as a result, one can legitimately wonder whether "Jewish" remains an appropriate adjective to describe these organizations.

Communal “defense” organizations, such as the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Congress and the Community Relations Councils were established since the beginning of the twentieth century, mainly to protect the civil rights of Jews in the United States and throughout the world, and to speak on behalf of the Jewish community where public policy issues impinged on the lives of Jews. Frequently, they have also become involved in the Jewish political lobby for Israel and Soviet Jewry and the more general issue of working to protect the rights of all minorities. Analyses of the evolution and survival of these organizations serve as a lens for understanding the sociology of American Jewry. For example, during the 1970s and 1980s, Jews from the left and right fervently debated the issue of whether American Jewish political organizations supportive of left-wing Israeli politics such as Peace Now should be accepted into the fold of the organized American Jewish community, i.e., by receiving a seat on the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

The explicit focus on Jewish political lobbying and mobilization efforts of organizations such as AIPAC (American Israel Political Action Committee), Peace Now, New Agenda, etc., forces one to confront the question of what are acceptable limits to philanthropy and voluntarism in the area of political action on behalf of the organized American Jewish community.

Other areas of Jewish philanthropic endeavor, such as the focus on culture and outreach to the wider community, including the non-Jewish community, have gained new prominence in the closing decades of the twentieth century. This shift has occurred partly as a result of what sociologists call goal succession — the key tasks of earlier generations have been achieved and new needs have emerged — and also partly as a result of profound demographic shifts in the character of American Jewry, resulting from geographic dispersal and interfaith marriage.

The growth of new outreach organizations, and outreach programs within the framework of existing Jewish institutions represents one of the most important Jewish communal responses to the findings of the National Jewish Population Study of 1990. This study highlighted the detachment of large numbers of less affiliated American Jews from the organized Jewish community.

Debates abound in this relatively new area of Jewish communal service about how scarce communal resources should be invested to maximize return for the community. At one extreme stand those who advocate investing most communal resources for intermarried and unaffiliated Jews to welcome them back into the Jewish community. At the other extreme are those who insist that resources should be invested only to strengthen

the core of highly committed Jews. The ongoing debates about outreach are also germane to the functioning of most other institutions whether they be synagogues, Jewish Community Centers or Federations, as each seeks to adapt its activities to the needs of a rapidly changing community.

On a less contentious front, since the end of the 19th century, women have maintained their own sphere of volunteer organizations in which they engaged in Jewish communal service. These organizations serve as vehicles for women to gradually negotiate changes in their traditional status as "homemaker" to play greater roles in the larger society (Wenger, "Jewish Women and Voluntarism: Beyond the Myth of Women as Enabler," 1989). While women remain underrepresented at the top of the organized Jewish community, they undoubtedly have made substantial progress during the past 20 years, assuming board positions and leadership roles in all aspects of Jewish communal organizations. Many studies seek to evaluate the extent to which women have gained equality in the Jewish community, and to deepen understanding about the important role which women have played in the organized Jewish community.

As the major threats facing world Jewry subsided in the closing decades of the twentieth century, and the situation of Jews in the United States became more stable, interest increasingly began to be focused on the major Jewish religious movements, i.e. Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist. Of particular interest has been the relationship between religious movements and other types of organizations including Federations, Jewish Community Centers and Educational institutions, etc. In an era of secularization and attendant declining Jewish identification, many leaders in all quarters of the community have been led to wonder about what ought to be the balance between what Elazar and Cohen might describe as the legitimacy of *Torah* (*keter Torah*) and the legitimacy of public opinion (*keter malchut*).

Yet another area of Jewish communal philanthropy that has enjoyed increasing support in the later decades of the twentieth century, from across the broad spectrum of American Jews, is that devoted to all forms of Jewish formal as well as informal education for adults and children alike. The major issue emerging as a result of the general enthusiasm for Jewish education is to what extent the community's resources are to be devoted to which forms of education. Some of the costliest forms, such as day schools and camping and Israel touring programs are the most effective in infusing young people with the Jewish values that such education is meant to impart. However, expenditure of communal resources on those expensive forms of education is bound to deny opportunities to large numbers of Jews who would wish to avail themselves of much less demanding but less costly forms of Jewish education.

Discussion Topics

- *What have been the major areas of philanthropic endeavor among American Jews in the past century?*
- *Why is coordination among philanthropic endeavors problematic?*
- *Why have the traditional social services experienced a problematic relationship to Jewish philanthropy in recent decades?*
- *How would goal succession apply to different periods of Jewish history?*
- *How did the "outreach debate" play itself out in the era of immigration between 1881-1924?*

Supplementary Bibliographic Sources

There is a rather vast literature about Jewish communal institutions that is written, published and read nearly exclusively within the Jewish community. Nevertheless, a good deal of more "academic" work is written with the general reader in mind. Even those general publishing houses which publish only a portion of their books about Jewish studies are usually Jewishly owned, and almost certainly seeking to increase their Jewish audience (Heilman, "The Sociology of American Jewry: The Last Ten Years", 1982). In fact, the Jewish community seems rather unique among American ethnic communities (at least white ethnic communities) in the degree and longevity of concern for its organized community as reflected in the plethora of Jewish publications which have discussed the work of these Jewish institutions since at least the beginning of this century.

The Journal of Jewish Communal Service, established in 1899, is devoted almost solely to analyzing the institutions and individuals that work to meet the needs of the Jewish community. Also since 1899, the American Jewish Yearbook has published studies and reports annually about contemporary issues in the American and World Jewish communities. In addition, a wide range of specifically Jewish journals publish articles and books about the Jewish institutions. These journals include the Jewish Journal of Sociology, American Jewish Archives, Contemporary Jewry, Moment Magazine, American Jewish History, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Jerusalem Letter, Jerusalem Report, Jewish Political Studies Review, Jews in Eastern Europe, Jewish Social Work Forum, Jewish Monthly, Israel Social Science Research, CCAR, A Reform Jewish Quarterly, Conservative Judaism, The Reconstructionist, Modern Judaism, American Jewish Archives, Jewish Political Studies and Commentary Magazine.

Given the wide range of literature devoted to Jewish communal institutions, one might expect to see a more significant percentage of serious works which discuss the organizational structure and functioning of contemporary institutions. Most inquiries however, avoid critical analyses of how organizations function, the resources they utilize and the networks they maintain with other Jewish organizations and institutions. The dearth of analysis in this area seems especially surprising given the large amount of social science research conducted about the Jewish community over the past 30 years and the fact that widespread agreement exists that major organizational change is necessary in the 1990s to address the problems of disaffiliation of the majority of American Jews from the institutions of the Jewish community.

That paradox can partly be understood as a result of the following issues:

- 1) the consensus style of decision making in Jewish institutions often inhibits organizational creativity and the incentives to be original,
- 2) employees of Jewish institutions tend not to allow researchers access to inside information about their organizations without assurances beforehand of favorable reviews, and
- 3) the inherent predicament of any social critic who conducts research about the institutions which pay his or her salary.

Jewish organizations and institutions actually sponsor much of the work being conducted and therefore, help to shape the types of questions researchers ask, and certainly, the amount of funding they receive. All these caveats to the contrary notwithstanding, there has in fact been a huge body of literature that has developed over the past half century dealing with virtually every facet of Jewish voluntarism and philanthropy. Many examples of this literature can be found listed in Parts II (Annotated Bibliography) and III (Additional Citations) of this guide.

**WEEKS
12 & 13**

Special Problems of Modern Jewish Philanthropy

Social Class and Gender Aspects of Jewish Philanthropy

The onset of Emancipation introduced new concepts in the lives of Jews as it did in the lives of all other men and women. Particularly in Eastern Europe, in the Russian Pale of Jewish Settlement, where the large masses of Jews lived up until the later half of the nineteenth century in varying degrees of political oppression and economic deprivation, growing Emancipation introduced concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity. Emancipation brought with it a considerable attraction — especially among the young — to socialist ideals. As Arthur Liebman explains in his thorough and excellent study, *Jews and the Left* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1979) a variety of historical circumstances combined to produce the social fact that immigrant Jews from Eastern Europe contributed disproportionately to the socialism and the union movement in the United States throughout the early decades of the twentieth century.

Some core Jewish values might have influenced the tendencies of some young Jewish men and women to join political and cultural organizations with strong socialist loyalties. But Liebman discounts the hypothesis that Judaism significantly predisposes its adherents or even former adherents toward socialist thinking or activism.

Whatever the dispositional factors, it remains the case that for substantial segments of newly Americanized Jewish immigrants, voluntarism and even philanthropy were expressed in the early decades of this century through involvement in movements for self-determination, for what they perceived as just re-distribution of wealth (in sharp contrast to notions of charity or even *tzedakkah*).

Not only did these involvements mark a sharp break with the more traditional forms of philanthropic and voluntaristic activities common to the Jewish tradition, but they also pit significant segments of “downtown

Jewry" (poor, working-class, immigrant) against their better-to-do and more traditionally philanthropic "uptown" co-religionists.

Where traditional Jewish philanthropists were eager to play their time-honored role "uplifting" their "poor cousins" through established forms of *tzedakkah*, and its more modern variants of social betterment through professional social-work techniques, many recent Eastern European immigrants and their children preferred the more radical ways of labor strikes, cultural self-assertion through the maintenance of an active *yiddish* language literature, theater, club and pub life. In his eminent elegy, The World of Our Fathers (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1976), Irving Howe depicts that world as one not only rich in protest and activism, but one rich as well in neighborly *menshlichkeit* (common empathetic decency) that formed the base of a network of mutual support. In contrast to settlement houses, established by "uptown" do-gooders [cf. Cary Goodman, Choosing Sides: Playground and Street Life on the Lower East Side, (New York: Schocken Books, 1979)], the immigrant-based *Arbeiter Ring* ("Workmen's Circle"), founded in 1896 by a handful of Jewish immigrants, created schools and camps that sought to perpetuate both *yiddish* culture and socialist ideals. A feature article in *The New York Times* (May 8, 1910) described those schools as "Sunday schools that teach children anarchy." [cf. Judah J. Shapiro, The Friendly Society: A History of the Workmen's Circle (New York: Media Judaica, 1970)].

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

PART II.

by Mark Shapiro and Jodi Shprintzen

Abramson, Stephen M., Ami Nahshon, Mark I. Berger and Jacob B. Ukeles. Reinventing Our Jewish Community: Can the West Be Won?. New York: Western Area Task Force, Council of Jewish Federations, 1994.

The Western Jewish community is different than other regions of the United States. Currently, it has high Jewish in-migration, problems of Jewish continuity and identity more pronounced than elsewhere, the highest number of secular Jews and the population least likely to contribute to Jewish causes and to affiliate Jewishly. Until the early 1990s, the institutions in the West had adopted most of their organizational strategies from their highly successful predecessors on the East Coast and in the Mid-West. However, given the unique characteristics of the Western Jewish community, a detailed strategic plan was developed to address their particular needs, Reinventing Our Jewish Community: Can the West Be Won?. This plan aims to promote Jewish identity and continuity and to enhance the ties between Western American Jews and Israel. To encourage greater Jewish involvement, Federations will establish new alliances with Jewish organizations most likely to strengthen Jewish identity and meaning for the community, reframe programs in terms of wide-ranging leadership development initiatives which involve important actors throughout the community, intensify its fund raising activities, and become more involved in the central offices of national Jewish organizations. Seventeen pilot projects divided into three phases during the next several years have been designed to realize the goals of this strategic planning process. The report offers insight into the type of self assessment/organizational change efforts underway in many American Jewish organizations to reach out to less affiliated Jews.

American Jewish Year Book. New York: American Jewish Committee, Volumes 1-94.

Since 1899, The American Jewish Year Book has been the most important annual publication on the contemporary situation of American Jewry. Regular articles about the United States include "Intergroup Relations", "the U.S., Israel and the Middle East", "Jewish Communal Affairs" and "Jewish Population in the United States". Other sections discuss events related to the Jewish communities of Canada, Western Europe, Central Europe, Eastern Europe, Australia, South Africa, Israel, the Middle East, North Africa and World Jewry in general. Several special articles normally cover a particularly important aspect of Jewish life during that year. A directory of national Jewish organizations in the U.S. and Canada provides information on the address, officers, mission and publications of every Jewish organization functioning that year.

Bernstein, Philip. To Dwell In Unity, The Jewish Federation Movement in America Since 1960. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1983.

By the 1960s, 200 Federations functioned on behalf of 800 communities in the United States and Canada, becoming the most powerful communal force in North America. They provided an institutional framework for Jews from diverse segments of the religious and ideological spectrum to work together for shared goals. They also facilitated the integration of fund raising and central budgeting for Jewish organizations, and community planning and coordination for social services in one central institution, thereby reducing costs and redundancy within the Jewish community. At the beginning of the century, mainly volunteers staffed Federation initiatives. However by the 1950s, most cities had professional staffs to administer programs and to help mobilize volunteers. By the late 1970s, the communal agenda of Federations had further expanded. Domestic services of the Federation included Jewish education, Jewish culture, college youth, Jewish Community Centers, the Jewish family, the elderly, health, vocational services and disaster relief. International services were operated in Israel, for Soviet Jews in crisis and in other Jewish communities. A third branch of Federation addressed Jewish relations with the total society, including divisions for community relations, public social policy and voluntary agencies. Bernstein discusses how these diverse areas functioned during the 1960s and 1970s in terms of human resources, financial resources, planning, budgeting and operating procedures.

Bogen, Hyman. The Luckiest Orphans: A History of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992.

The Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York was founded in 1860. It was the oldest, largest, and most recognized Jewish orphanage in the United States until it closed in 1941. The author discusses the history of the Hebrew Orphanage Asylum, focusing on how it was completely different from other orphanages of the time. The author attributes this difference to the compassionate and magnanimous attitude of the New York Jewish community toward its orphans. The HOA cared for its orphans by creating an environment which attended to their social, religious, and personal needs, and nurtured them in a caring and warm environment. Bogen discusses the history of the HOA within the larger historical context in which it existed, and how the large influx of Jewish immigrants into New York City as well as the political, social, and economic conditions of the time influenced the development of the HOA. The author, himself a resident at the orphanage from 1932 through 1941, describes the events of daily life in the orphanage for residents as well as employees. Bogen also utilizes the HOA as an example and model for how an orphanage can nurture children in a warm, caring environment in the hopes of molding them into self-confident, secure adults.

Chanes, Jerome. The Voices of the American Jewish Community. Excerpt From the Survey of Jewish Affairs. London: Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1990.

The strength of the Jewish community lies in its pluralistic structure, encompassing organizations across the religious and ideological spectrum. Chanes classifies American Jewish organizations into the following categories: Communal Service and Social Welfare Agencies, Council of Jewish Federations, Large City Budgeting Conference, Resettlement Organizations, Jewish Community Centers, Emerging Grassroots Organizations, Communal Relations Organizations, Religious Organizations, Zionist Organizations, International Organizations, Educational Organizations, and Holocaust Survivor Organizations. Despite the multiplicity of institutions and their overlapping agendas, they remain capable of working together to address the shared needs of the Jewish community as well as contributing to the development of the larger American society.

Cohen, Stephen M. Jewish Outreach, Strategies and Opportunities. New York: Nathan Cummings Foundation, 1993.

Addressing issues of how to strengthen Jewish identity among young people has become a central concern of Jewish communal institutions. As interfaith marriages have increased during the last thirty years, Jewish organizations have begun to respond by developing outreach programs to attract the less affiliated. Strong outreach efforts are essential for building sensitive, welcoming communities. These programs are unique in that they often seek to involve intermarried and less affiliated Jews and they insist that Judaism must be promoted aggressively, like any successful idea in contemporary society. This report provides a framework for potential givers as well as communal professionals to understand this new organizational trend. Cohen analyzes how outreach functions, discusses conflicting visions of outreach, i.e. proponents of targeting interfaith families versus proponents of targeting less affiliated Jews, explores why Jews might feel distanced from the organized Jewish community, and predicts which programs can be most effective. Strong outreach programs share the following characteristics: emphasis on a higher Jewish purpose, low-pressure learning opportunities, the willingness to suspend judgement, outstanding educators, promotion of a Jewish ideology tempered with respect for differing view points, the conviction that Judaism is relevant and the empowerment of everyone to participate in Jewish activities.

Dashefsky, Arnold. "Sources of Jewish Charitable Giving: Incentives and Barriers." In American Pluralism and the Jewish Community, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset, 203-25. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1990.

This essay appears in an edited volume discussing various aspects of the modern American Jewish community. Arnold Dashefsky examines the relationship between religiosity and philanthropic donations to religious organizations. The author focuses on the incentives and motivations to donate money to Jewish organizations within the Jewish community. The author delineates several psychological and sociological incentives for philanthropic giving before discussing the specific nature of Jewish charitable giving. The author notes that the study of Jewish philanthropic behavior has not received much attention, and there is very little literature available on the subject of Jewish philanthropic behavior. Dashefsky examines Jewish philanthropic giving within the context of how norms governed by social responsibility and helping those in need via charitable giving are important foundations of Judaism and the Jewish community. Dashefsky also discusses the data, methods, and results of the study he conducted on Jewish charitable giving by focusing on level of affiliation

(he delineated three categories for donors) and the incentives and barriers toward giving money to Jewish organizations. The author concludes that those who feel more of an affiliation with the Jewish community are more influenced by the social cohesion norms which govern charitable giving to Jewish organizations.

Dobkowski, Michael N., ed. Jewish American Voluntary Organizations. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986.

The voluntary basis of the American Jewish community is the most important element distinguishing it from traditional Jewish communities. No central organizational structure encompasses all of these diverse organizations. Therefore to understand American Jewry, it is necessary to learn how many of the major organizations have evolved and the types of issues they have sought to address. In Jewish American Voluntary Organizations, the history and activities of 120 national Jewish communal institutions in the United States are analyzed, including social service, philanthropic, religious, political, fraternal and cultural entities.

Elazar, Daniel. Community and Polity, the Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1980.

Post-emancipation Jews throughout the world often felt pressure to only express their Judaism religiously and in a private manner. The alternative mode of expression, nationalism, was not perceived as appropriate by most American Jews because it threatened to undermine their status as equal citizens in the United States. American Jews responded to the challenge of emancipation by finding the middle ground of "peoplehood" and basing their collective action as Jews on "philanthropy", which given the associational nature of American society, became more important to Jewish identity than religious life. Philanthropy provided an acceptable basis for political action because it was based on voluntarism and was not focused exclusively on Jewish goals. Community and Polity examines the development of this political dimension to the American Jewish community, encompassing a wide range of social service, religious, fund raising and Zionist organizations. These function in a series of overlapping spheres of activity: 1) religious-congregational, 2) educational-cultural, 3) communal relations, 4) communal welfare and 5) Israel. The relationship between organizations in these different areas varies from competitive to cooperative, depending on the nature of the movements. An increasing interdependence and overlap between organizations exists, but by no means integration. Because the networks of connections are formed on a

voluntary basis in accordance with local factors, no one pattern predominates in the interaction between institutions.

Friedman, Reena Sigman. These Are Our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880-1925. Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1994.

This book focuses on the establishment of Jewish orphanages in the United States which emerged in response to the large numbers of Eastern European Jews who immigrated to the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The author focuses on three prototypical orphanages: The Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York, the Jewish Foster Home in Philadelphia, and the Jewish Orphan Asylum in Cleveland. The author discusses these orphanages in the context of the Progressive movement as well as the developing field of child welfare in the United States. The author conducted interviews with orphanage alumni, which enabled her to demonstrate that the orphanages not only provided shelter and education to the children, but the employees also taught the children values which molded the children into efficient, loyal American citizens. These orphanages were praised for their progressive policies. However, the author notes that these progressive policies often came with consequences: while the orphanages taught traditional Jewish values and customs, the experience of living and being raised in a somewhat progressive environment often caused children to become estranged from their experiences and the culture with which they were familiar before they emigrated to America.

Karp, Abraham J. To Give Life: The United Jewish Appeal in the Shaping of the American Jewish Community, 1939-1978. New York: Schocken Books, 1981.

The United Jewish Appeal (UJA) has been an important actor in developing the concept of voluntarism in the American Jewish community during the past half century, in helping world Jewry to recover from the devastation wrought by World War II, and also in helping Israel to grow from a fledgling state into a more economically viable entity by the late 1970s. In 1939, the UJA was created to consolidate the fund raising efforts of the American Joint Distribution Committee and the United Palestine Appeal. Karp discusses the numerous failed efforts at integration beginning in 1840 and culminating in the 1939 effort. The 1929 riots in Palestine and Hitler's rise in Germany are identified as the two watershed events precipitating the establishment of the UJA. Throughout its existence, the United Jewish Appeal has trained large numbers of young people to assume leadership positions in the American Jewish community, played an instru-

mental role in enhancing the credibility and power of the Council of Jewish Federations, and mobilized important new human resources on behalf of Jewish philanthropy, i.e. rabbis and academics. Despite the trend towards integration with the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF), Karp argues that the UJA should not become a subsidiary of CJF because it still is too important as a fund raising mechanism and such a development would jeopardize the pluralistic nature of American Jewish philanthropy.

Kosmin, Barry A., and Paul Ritterband, eds. Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy in America. Savage, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1991.

In this anthology, academicians, policy researchers and professionals of the organized Jewish community analyze how recent developments in the American philanthropic scene are affecting Jewish giving, the changing reasons why people give, and the different uses of donations by Jewish institutions. Authors include, Barry R. Chiswick "An Economic Analysis of Philanthropy"; Barry A. Kosmin "The Dimensions of Contemporary American Jewish Philanthropy"; Mordechai Rimor and Gary Tobin "The Relationship Between Jewish Identity and Philanthropy"; Paul Ritterband "The Determinants of Jewish Charitable Giving in the Last Part of the Twentieth Century"; Madeleine Tress and Barry A. Kosmin "Tradition and Transition in Jewish Women's Philanthropy"; Alice Goldstein "Dimensions of Giving: Volunteer Activity and Contributions of the Jewish Women of Rhode Island"; Rela Geffen Monson "Patterns of Giving of Some Jewish Career Women: A Preliminary Investigation"; Samuel C. Heilman "Tsedakah: Orthodox Jews and Charitable Giving"; Egon Mayer "Intergenerational Philanthropic Slippage: The Case of Children of Major Jewish Philanthropic Families in New York City"; Arthur S. Goldberg, "Generous Fathers, Ungenerous Children: A Small City Perspective"; Norbert Fruehauf, "The Bottom Line: Major Gifts to Federation Campaigns"; Bethamie Horowitz, "Havurah Jews and Where they Give"; Ira Silverman "The New Jewish Philanthropies"; Donald Feldstein "The Changing Client System of Jewish Federations"; and Israel Katz "Israeli Society and Diaspora Philanthropy: How Well Does the Gift Perform?".

Lurie, Harry L. A Heritage Affirmed: The Jewish Federation Movement In America. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961.

Lurie provides the first comprehensive history of the Federation movement during its formative years, from 1896-1960. He examines the evolution of the Federation organizations during this time period, discussing how they were created, obstacles to their development, their changing

mission, limitations and trends. Since 1896 Federations have been organized in most cities in the U.S. and Canada with Jewish populations. They grew out of the need to serve an unprecedented number of immigrants who were in need of charitable aid. Ultimately, they became one of the most important organizations in American Jewish Communal life. Federations are unique in that they represent an ongoing effort to raise money from Jews to support welfare agencies and programs locally, nationally, and internationally. They work with local institutions to manage welfare issues in each community and operate under a governing body said to represent contributors and local agencies involved with the Federation. Federations have also become involved in activities beyond their initial mission of philanthropy, i.e. community relations, education and culture.

Morris, Robert, and Freund, Michael, eds. Trends and Issues in Jewish Social Welfare in the U.S. 1899-1958. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1966.

By 1898, new expressions of American Jewish communal activity led to the formation of the first Conference of Jewish Charities. This Conference served as a forum, assembling a variety of independent organizations of Jewish social workers and educators. Trends and Issues in Jewish Social Welfare in the U.S. 1899-1958 includes some of the most important papers presented at the Conference by the leaders of major Jewish communal institutions. These papers trace the evolution of changes which shaped twentieth-century Jewish voluntarism and philanthropy from a community which supported mainly the poverty stricken to one of Jewish philanthropy, comprising a host of services including assistance to immigrants, legal aid, and vocational guidance. Numerous organizations were established during this time period, enabling the Jewish community to address their own burgeoning communal agenda while also contributing to the development of social welfare in the larger American society. Papers are organized by the following topics: Mass Immigration and Immigrant Aid-Long Range Adjustment Programs, Services For Individuals and Families, Child Care and Protection, Responsibilities of War Time Jewish Agencies, Toward Intergroup Cooperation and Community Organization, Relation of Jewish Services to General Social Work Program, What Makes Jewish Social Work Jewish, National Organizations and Their Effect On Communal Programs, Toward a Federation of Federations, Antisemitism Reviewed; Widening Approaches to Jewish Community Relations, Organization For Refugee Service, Strengthening the Jewish Communal Base, the Jewish Health and Welfare Services, Purposes and Goals, and Communal and Educational Objectives.

Neustadt, Isaac. "The Unending Task: Efforts to Unite American Jewry from the American Jewish Congress to the American Jewish Conference." Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1976.

This dissertation sheds light on why no centralized organizational structure representing American Jewry has ever developed. Efforts of the organized Jewish community to unite during the 20th century are analyzed, particularly, the attempts of the American Jewish Congress after American awareness of the Holocaust had grown in 1943. Similar to other attempts by the American Jewish community to unite, this effort was stimulated by a political crisis of Jewish communities outside the U.S. and the perceived need to pressure the American administration to help these persecuted Jews. However, to seek unity on anything but an ad hoc basis was viewed as potentially threatening to the status of American Jews as equal citizens. Hence, no umbrella organization could claim the authority of all major organizations. Other obstacles to unity included mutual suspicions among American Jewish leaders due to past interorganizational power struggles. As a result, no leaders were willing to expose their organizations to possible exploitation by competitors. Ultimately, as the political urgency to help save Jews in Europe waned, so did interest in the concept of unifying the major Jewish organizations.

Norich, Samuel. What Will Bind Us Now. A Report On the Institutional Ties Between Israel and American Jewry. West Palm Beach, Florida: Center For Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation, 1994.

The organizations which link Israel and diaspora Jewry have become ineffective. The cultural, social, demographic, political and economic changes which have affected the world Jewish community have also resulted in the need for significant change in Jewish communal organizations. An important challenge facing world Jewry is how to restructure the institutional framework which links the diaspora and Israel so that larger numbers of Jews participate and feel connected to organized Jewish life. In this context, five proposals for change by leading academics, politicians and Jewish communal professionals are analyzed, including the Yossi Bellin proposal, the Daniel Elazar proposal, the Richard G. Hirsch proposal, the Arye Carmon proposal and the expected Council of Jewish Federations proposal. What Will Bind Us Now discusses how each of these proposals would address the organizational challenges facing world Jewry. Norich concludes that Israel and diaspora Jewry must work together to forge constructive organizational change that strengthens the links of world Jewry and nurtures the creativity and diversity of future generations.

Ostrower, Francie. "Religion, Ethnicity, and Jewish Philanthropy."

Chapter in Why the Wealthy Give. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

This chapter examines the importance of religion in elite philanthropy; more specifically, the role and contribution of Jews in elite philanthropy. The chapter deals with the following subjects: How philanthropy among the elite corresponds to religion and class; how certain religiously connected philanthropic subgroups are formed, and how they are associated with the general and principal system of elite philanthropy. The chapter highlights the emergence of Jews in elite philanthropic circles in which they were formerly denied entry, as well as how large, well-known intermediary organizations in the Jewish community are utilized to channel donated money. Based on her findings, the author dismisses the notion that Jewish philanthropists donate money primarily to Jewish organizations, and that the boundaries within philanthropy are more flexible than are the boundaries within the elite establishment.

Raphaël, Marc Lee. A History of the United Jewish Appeal, 1939-1982.

Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1982.

Raphael discusses the establishment, evolution and fund-raising prospects of the United Jewish Appeal (UJA). The UJA began functioning before World War II, raising 15-20 million dollars per year. During the mid 1970s, these numbers had increased to approximately 500 million dollars per year. After an agreement was signed in 1939 between the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the United Palestine Appeal and the National Coordination Committee for Aid to Refugees and Emigrants From Germany, UJA became the central American Jewish fund-raising institution for assisting Jews in crisis and helping immigrants adapt around the world. During the 1960s, an important new trend in fund-raising campaigns had emerged. Missions were being organized to take young leaders (under 40) to Israel. By educating and inspiring an elite group of young people, thousands of new leaders emerged on the American Jewish scene. Other organizational innovations during the 1960s included the development of a pan-movement Rabbinical Advisory Council. These religious leaders educated volunteers and staff about the religious relevance of their activities and solicited other rabbis and congregations to get involved. During the 1970s the more autocratic leadership of the previous decade had given way to one far more interested in involving and empowering lay and volunteer leaders on the national level to work with local federations. This more inclusive strategic approach to fund raising proved crucial to the UJA's continued success as volunteers applied their skills and resources to

design new fund-raising strategies, to address campaign problems and to identify new, prospective contributors.

Raphael, Marc Lee, ed. Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1979.

Since 1895 and 1896, the first Federations and Jewish philanthropies have functioned to help oppressed Jews abroad, to support the Jews in Palestine/Israel, to enhance local health, education and welfare, community relations organizations and national organizations and to promote Jewish identity and Jewish rights. Today, Federations touch most everyone involved in Jewish life. The key actors making the fund raising process succeed are volunteers and professionals. Together, their involvement determines effectiveness of the campaign (more than 100,000 Jews volunteer in American Jewish philanthropy each year). The volunteers are important not only for the money they give, but also because they convince others to give. The professionals devote all of their time to Jewish philanthropy and gain influence partly because of their special training in Jewish Social Work and partly because of their strong campaign experience. They work to insure that the entire fund-raising operations run smoothly. This anthology of essays studies the fund-raising process of American Jewish philanthropy. Articles are organized under four subject headings: Voluntarism; The Leaders and the Workers; The Campaign and Priorities; and Allocations/Interrelationships: Synagogues, Rabbis and Federations.

Sternberg, Lawrence, Gary A. Tobin and Sylvia Barrack Fishman, eds. Changing Jewish Life, Service Delivery and Planning in the 1990s. New York: Greenwood Press, 1991.

The Jewish community has built a multifaceted communal structure during the past century. This "Jewish service delivery system" affects most aspects of Jewish life in America. Since young people face conditions far different than their parents, these institutions must seek to understand the changes and to adapt their services accordingly to remain relevant. The changes occurring in the Jewish community reciprocally affect each other. Jewish population shifts influence the functioning of Jewish organizations while Jewish organizations can proactively adapt to changing conditions, possibly affecting the nature of the Jewish community. This anthology of essays from leading Academicians and Policy makers in the Jewish community analyzes the changing nature of the community and draws communal policy implications. Analyses are divided into the following three areas: "Contemporary American Jews and Jewish Identity";



Wertheimer, Jack. "Current Trends in American Jewish Philanthropy." American Jewish Yearbook 1997, Vol 97, ed. David Singer, 3-92. New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1997.

Jewish philanthropy is currently undergoing significant changes. Although large amounts of money are still donated to Jewish organizations, there has been a decrease in the amount of money going directly to Jewish Federations. The current trend points toward donors contributing directly to specific institutions, rather than donating to Jewish Federations which then allocate donated money to smaller programs and organizations. Although the base of those who contribute the most money to Jewish causes is small, it appears that there are currently even fewer large donors who contribute to Jewish philanthropic causes. This may not concern various fund raisers as much as those who want to stop the trend of donors who do not give directly to Federations. Demographic and social patterns within the Jewish community are also affecting Jewish philanthropic trends. Issues such as intermarriage and the donation trends of the baby-boom generation are expected to greatly influence the future of Jewish philanthropy in America, although to what degree is uncertain.

Woocher, Jonathan S. Sacred Survival, the Civil Religion of American Jews. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.

The American Jewish community has established a large number of educational, communal, social service and fund-raising institutions based upon the concept of voluntarism. These organizations work together to implement the "public agenda" of American Jewry. The cultural framework within which these organizations operate strengthens the links between Jews despite their differing religious and political beliefs. Sacred Survival examines the emergence of this "Jewish civil sphere" and its significance for American Jews. Woocher argues that participation in these organizations is closely linked to traditional Jewish religious values, promoting Jewish morality, and insuring Jewish continuity. However, civil Judaism represents a new means of realizing Jewish ends, through activism. The symbolic framework of civil Judaism resonates with Jews because they can validate their Jewishness without rejecting their American identity.



**ADDITIONAL
CITATIONS**

PART III.

Collected by Egon Mayer, Mark Shapiro, and Jodi Shprintzen

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**EXAMPLES
FROM THE
TORAH**

Part V.

Appendix A.

The first recorded act of kindness in the *Torah* is associated with Abraham and involves conflict resolution.

Genesis 13:1-9

And Abraham was very rich in cattle, silver and gold....And Lot (his nephew) , who traveled with Abraham, also had flocks and herds and tents. And the land was not sufficient to bear them both....And there were quarrels between the herdsmen of Abraham and the herdsmen of Lot. **And Abraham said to Lot, let there be no contention between us, for we are kinsmen. Please part from me. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; or if you go to the right, I'll go left.** And Lot saw that all the district of the Jordan (valley) was well watered, like God's own garden. And, so Lot chose the entire district of the Jordan (valley) for himself.

Soon after their parting of ways, Lot finds himself in midst of a war in which he is taken captive. Despite their prior differences over property, Abraham comes to his rescue out of a deep feeling of family loyalty.

Genesis 14: 10-16

And the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah took Lot hostage in the midst of a war, and dispossessed him of all he owned. But, one of Lot's people escaped and told Abraham what befell Lot. And when Abraham heard that of his brother — [the Bible calls Lot Abraham's brother in this instance] — he armed his best servants and pursued Lot's abductors. **And Abraham restored Lot to freedom and restored to him all the substance he had lost.**

Biblical legend has it that in the process of restoring Lot to freedom Abraham defeated the King of Sodom in battle. The interaction between the victor and the vanquished gives further evidence of Abraham's magnanimity.

Genesis 14:21-23

And the King of Sodom said to Abraham: let me keep my people and take the booty to yourself. And Abraham replied: I swore to the most high God, the possessor of both heaven and earth, that **I will not take from you even the thread of sandal...and you shall never say, 'I made Abraham rich.'**

Abraham's first acts of generosity seem to be motivated by kinship loyalty. Those are followed by acts of magnanimity, which appear to have some sort of political dimension. His subsequent philanthropic gestures seem to have a distinctly moral and universal tone.

Genesis 18: 2-8

He [Abraham] was sitting at the door of his tent in the heat of the day, and he saw three men approaching. When he saw them, he ran towards them from the entrance of his tent and said, 'Masters, if I find favor in your eyes, pass not from your servant. **Please, take a little water, wash your feet, recline in the shade, and I will give you some bread for sustenance.** Then, Abraham hastened into the tent and asked Sarah to bake fresh bread, and ran to his herd and took a tender calf for slaughter.... and he stood by the men under a tree and they ate.

Perhaps, the most dramatic example of his readiness to take initiative on behalf of others comes in his confrontation with God Himself, when Abraham learns of God's plan to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Genesis 18: 25-32

It is unworthy of you [God] to put to death the righteous with the wicked.... Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justice? And the Eternal said, if I find in Sodom fifty righteous persons, then I will spare the place for the sake of those righteous.... And Abraham spoke up, again, 'If there shall be a lack of five out of the fifty, will you destroy the city on account of the lack of those five.' And God said, if I find forty-five I will not destroy the city.

Abraham continued to bargain with God to spare a city from total destruction until God agreed that he will not destroy it even if He finds as few as ten righteous persons in the city.

These Biblical episodes describe both acts of personal generosity and also acts of personal initiative on behalf of a collectivity. Abraham's pleas on behalf of Sodom are particularly noteworthy because earlier in the Biblical narrative it is the King of Sodom whom he defeats in battle so as to regain his nephew Lot's freedom and property.

Although the Bible in this instance does not exhort the children of Abraham to conduct themselves according to any particular philanthropic principles, it is clear from the tone of the narratives that Abraham's conduct is worthy of emulation. That God Himself is won over by Abraham's pleas on behalf of Sodom suggests that those pleas are rooted in or evoke some universal principle of fairness and justice, which even God cannot abrogate at will. Curiously, the fact that in the Biblical narrative God was ready to "destroy the righteous with the wicked" suggests that there is something uniquely human about Abraham's readiness to stick up for his own kind — humankind — even against overwhelming supernatural power.

More than kindness and familial loyalty, which seem to motivate Abraham's acts of generosity toward his kinsman, Lot, his negotiations with God for the fate of the anonymous righteous of Sodom and Gomorrah are emblematic of the Jewish roots of voluntarism and philanthropy in a profound sense of fairness.

In that context, philanthropy and voluntarism — both embodied in Abraham's preparedness to confront God for the sake of others whom he himself may not know or even particularly like — represent not so much acts of generosity as much as fairness or justice. This impulse to fairness and justice distinguishes the roots of Jewish philanthropy as something quite different from charity.

First, one thinks of charity as a sentiment born of Divine grace and thus learned from or mandated by God. But, clearly that is not the case for Abraham. It is he who seems to teach God about the fundamental principle of fairness, at least in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. Second, one thinks of charity as acts born of emotions — emotions of caring, compassion, mercy. Yet, in the case of his negotiation with God over the fate of the doomed cities, Abraham seems to be driven by a deep sense of fairness that transforms **emotion into principle**.

Apart from the legends of Abraham, the remaining stories of the Bible are largely and surprisingly free of any representations of philanthropy or voluntarism or humanitarianism. Rarely if at all do the other Patriarchs or Matriarchs distinguish themselves with any selfless acts or generosity. The only other obvious philanthropic gesture found in the first book of the Hebrew Bible is in connection with the story of Joseph and his brothers.

Genesis 45:1-11

At long last Joseph revealed his identity to his brethren [who had years earlier sold him into slavery]....And Joseph said to his brethren, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, that you had sold me hither, for it is God that sent me ahead so as to preserve your life....So hasten back to the land of Canaan to my father and return with him and your families. You shall abide in the land of Goshen, and you all shall be near to me as shall be your children, your children's children, your flocks and herds and all that you possess; **I will nourish you, lest you become impoverished as the famine is expected to last for yet another five years.**

Interestingly, unlike Abraham, whose acts of philanthropy and voluntarism entailed expenditures of his own resources or personal courage, Joseph's act of philanthropy is really a gesture of *noblesse oblige*. He is, according to the Biblical legend, the Viceroy of Egypt, in charge of all food supplies. He is the Pharaoh's chief economic adviser. It appears that through his sound advice the people were largely saved from the ravages of a long famine. So, it would seem that his ability to act generously toward his brethren and their families derives from his power over the wealth of the Egyptians. Thus, he is able to use the perks of his office so to speak for the benefit of his kin.

That model of philanthropy foreshadows by nearly two thousand years the model of the *shtadlan*, the intercessor, that was to become most common in the 17th and 18th century CE in Germany.

Appendix B.

The theme of philanthropy as an expression of a universal ethical principle is articulated most explicitly by the ancient Hebrew prophets.

From the Prophet Isaiah

I am with the contrite and the lowly of spirit....
[Israel asks] Why did You [God] not see when we fasted?
We afflicted ourselves but You ignored it.
[God answers] Can such be the fast I choose, when a man
merely afflicts himself...bowing his head like a bulrush?
Is not this the fast I have chosen:
To loose the fetters of wickedness,
To undo the bonds of the yoke,
And let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?
Is it not to distribute your bread to the hungry,
And that you bring home the poor that are cast out;
When you see the naked, that you cover him,
And that you do not hide from your own flesh...
And if you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the soul of the afflicted,
Then shall your light rise in the darkness
And your gloom shall be as the noonday.



Appendix C.

Moses Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, edited by Philip Birnbaum (New York: Hebrew Publishing Co., 1944, 1967).

MAIMONIDES'

Mishneh Torah
(Yad Hazakah)

*Edited from Rare Manuscripts and Early Texts, Vocalized,
Annotated and Provided with Introductions by*

PHILIP BIRNBAUM
HEBREW PUBLISHING COMPANY
NEW YORK

FOREWORD BY PHILIP BIRNBAUM

FOREWORD

Moses Maimonides (1135-1204) accomplished a gigantic task when he compressed into his *Mishneh Torah* the Jewish lore contained in the Bible, the two Talmuds, the midrashic literature and the geonic responsa. Written in lucid Hebrew, the *Mishneh Torah* penetrated every Jewish community where it was studied by both young and old. Its influence on many generations has been incalculable. All Rabbinic writings of the past seven centuries have been greatly affected by it. Indeed, the *Arba'ah Turim* by Rabbi Jacob ben Asher (1269-1340) and the *Shulhan 'Aruk* by Rabbi Joseph Karo (1488-1575) were to a great extent drawn from the *Mishneh Torah*. Their very phraseology is borrowed from the code of Maimonides. However, the *Turim* and the *Shulhan 'Aruk* furnish instruction in the duties which are applicable only to conditions existing after the destruction of the Temple, while the *Mishneh Torah* is a repository of all Jewish

teachings from the time of Moses the lawgiver to the time of Moses the author of the Mishneh Torah or Yad ha-Hazakah ("The Strong Hand"). No detail escaped him in the vast talmudic and post-talmudic literature. Unlike his predecessors and successors, Maimonides assembled all the ethical and civil regulations which the sages had deduced from the Bible. He took no account of whether the entire material which he incorporated in the Mishneh Torah was relevant to the conditions of his age. Thus he dealt with all the laws of Judaism, making no distinction between those regarding the Temple, the sacrifices, the Jewish kings, the Sanhedrin, and those which, for example, bear on the observance of the Sabbath or the practice of charity and prayer. Truly, the Mishneh Torah is the epitome of Judaism in all its varied aspects.

Maimonides wrote the Mishneh Torah in a direct and terse style omitting the mention of sources or divergent views. Ironically enough, Maimonides' desire for clearness and lucidity was in the course of time nearly defeated by multitudes of commentaries and super-commentaries. The main purpose of these commentaries was to identify the decisions stated in the Mishneh Torah with the views expressed by the talmudic authorities. The proverbial phrase "a difficult Rambam" never refers to the meaning of any particular passage in the Mishneh Torah, for that is easily intelligible to anybody who is moderately familiar with the Hebrew language. The difficulties raised by scholars do not concern *what* Maimonides says but rather *why* he says it. As a matter of fact, the major sources of Maimonides' legal and ethical maxims have already been ascertained by illustrious scholars such as Rabbi Joseph Karo.

The Mishneh Torah is one of the most readily understood books in all the Jewish literature. In a letter to one of his correspondents, who had expressed regret that the Mishneh Torah was not open to him because it was written in Hebrew instead of Arabic, Maimonides wrote to the effect that his Hebrew style was so easy that it took one a short time to grasp it. It is indeed very unfortunate that this classical work has been neglected in Jewish education so that many a student of Jewish lore knows little beyond its name.

Bialik sought to remedy this situation when some twenty years ago he communicated with Doctor Hayyim Heller concerning a popular edition of the Mishneh Torah, "in order to make the choice parts of his (Maimonides') book equally available to all ... to revive the effectiveness of this great book and make its influence prevail on all the Jewish people of our time." For certain technical reasons, however, Bialik's proposal failed to materialize.

The present abridged edition of the Mishneh Torah is designed for the use of academies and schools, rabbis and laymen, teachers and students. Each of its sections can serve in classrooms as source material for discussion of the ethical and spiritual aspects of Judaism, on the one hand, and for examples of classic Hebrew, on the other. Because of the masterly skill with which Maimonides employed the language of the Mishnah, the student of the Mishneh Torah inevitably gains familiarity with the style of the tannaitic literature. Furthermore, the Mishneh Torah may well be regarded as an introduction to the Talmud owing to the fact that Maimonides invariably summarizes lengthy, digressive talmudic discussions in succinct, clear Hebrew. Very often one arrives at the understanding of an involved argument in the Talmud by referring to one or two crystalized *halakot* (rules, laws) of Maimonides. It is needless to add that the Mishneh Torah facilitates one's comprehension of the Rabbinic style in general.

The English explanations of words and phrases, which have been kept as brief as possible, are indicated according to line. They, as well as the vowels with which the text is furnished, aim at simplifying the use of this work by young students. Legal minutiae have been omitted. Omissions are marked by two dashes. No biblical citations are explained in the footnotes, since their meaning can readily be ascertained by reference to any good English translation of the Bible. At the end of the volume the reader will find an alphabetically arranged list of terms defined by Maimonides in the text and an index of biblical references.

For the purpose of presenting a correct text, a variety of old manuscripts and early editions, preserved at the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, have been consulted. Following is a list of some editions used: Earliest edition (presumably 1480), Soncino (1490), Constantinople (1509), Venice (1524 and 1551), Amsterdam (1702-3), and Book I (Madda') which was edited by Dr. Moses Hyamson from the Bodleian Codex (New York, 1937). To save space textual variants have been omitted.

PHILIP BIRNBAUM

Philadelphia, January 16, 1944



**SELECTIONS
FROM
MAIMONIDES,
MISHNE
TORAH**

Point of Interest:

*This text illustrates
how that which is
voluntary becomes
obligatory in the
Jewish tradition.*

VOWS

Chapter One

1. Vows are divided into two classes. The first class relates to a person who forbids himself things that are permitted to him, as when he says: "Let the fruit products of a certain country be forbidden to me for thirty days," or "forever"; or "a certain kind of the world's fruit products" or "these fruit products shall be forbidden to me." No matter what language he uses in restricting himself, those things are forbidden to him even in the absence of an oath or the mention of the divine name or its substitute. In regard to this, it is written in the Torah: "If a man makes a vow ...imposing a prohibition on himself" (Numbers 30:3); that is, he forbids himself things that are permitted. So too, if he said: "These things shall constitute a vow of abstinence for me," they are forbidden. I refer to this class of vows as vows of prohibition.

2. The second class relates to a person who obligates himself to offer a sacrifice that he does not owe, as when he says: "I pledge myself to offer a burnt-offering," — or "let this animal be a burnt-offering" or "a peace offering." The expression I pledge myself is called a vow, while this is to be is called a donation. — I refer to this class as vows of consecration.

4. The Torah commands every person to fulfill his oath or his vow, whether it is a vow of prohibition or a vow of consecration, as it is written: "You must fulfill what has passed your lips and perform what you have vowed" (Deuteronomy 23:24); and it is written: "He must carry out all that has passed his lips" (Numbers 30:3).

Chapter Eight

1. If anyone made a vow or took an oath, specifying at the same time the cause of his vow or oath, it is as if he had made his vow or oath dependent upon that cause. Hence, if the cause of his oath has not materialized, he is

released.

2. If, for example, he vowed or took an oath: "I will not marry that woman, because her father is an evil man; I will not come into this house, because there is a surly dog in it," and they died, or the father repented, he is released. For he is like one who made a vow or took an oath, saying: "I will not marry that woman; I will not enter this house, unless the injurious factor is removed." This applies to all similar cases.

3. If, however, one takes a vow or swears: "I will not marry that ugly woman," and she is found to be pretty, or "that brunette" and she is a blonde, or "that short one" and she is tall, or "I vow that my wife shall derive no benefit from me because she stole my purse and struck my son," and it has become known that she neither stole nor struck, he is released, since it was an erroneous vow.

4. Moreover, if a person saw men at a distance as they were eating his figs and he told them: "They are prohibited to you as a sacred offering," but when he came closer he realized that they were his own father and brother, they are released from his vow. Even though he failed to specify the reason for which he prohibited them, it is as if he did specify, because it is obvious that he forbade them only because he thought that they were strangers. The same applies to all similar cases.

6. If any vow has been remitted in part, it has been remitted in its entirety. The same is true of oaths. If, for example, one noticed men at a distance as they were eating his fruit products and he said: "These products are forbidden to you as a sacred offering," but upon approaching them he realized that they were his father and some strangers, they all are released from his vow along with his father. Even if he said: "If I had known this, I would have said: 'These men are prohibited, but my father is permitted,'" they are all permitted nevertheless.

9. If a man was asked to marry his relative and he refused; when he was urged he vowed or took an oath that she was never to derive any benefit from him; or if a man divorced his wife and swore or vowed that she was never to derive any benefit from him; either of these women may nevertheless derive a benefit from him, since his intent was confined to matrimony.

10. So too, if a man invited a person to dine with him, and the latter refused, swearing or vowing that he would not enter his house or drink a drop of cold water, he is nevertheless permitted to enter his house and drink his cooled beverage [on other occasions], since he merely had in mind not to eat and drink with him at this particular meal. This holds good in all similar cases.

13. If a man swore or vowed to take a wife, to buy a house, to join a caravan, or to go on a sea voyage, he should not be compelled to marry, buy, or leave immediately, but only after he has found a suitable occasion. It once happened that a woman made a vow to marry anyone who would propose to her, and some men who were not suitable to her snatched the opportunity and proposed to her. The sages thereupon declared: "This woman had in mind only a suitable party asking her in marriage (Bava Kamma 80a).

Chapter Eleven

1. A boy of twelve years and one day and a girl of eleven years and one day, who took oaths or made vows, whether vows of prohibition or of consecration should be examined and interrogated. If they know in whose name they vowed, consecrated, and took oaths, their vows are valid and their consecration is effective; if they do not know, there is no value to their vows and verbal commitments. They should be examined concerning each vow made throughout the entire year; that is, the twelfth year in the case of a girl and the thirteenth year in the case of a boy.

6. What has just been stated, namely that the vows made by a girl of twelve years and one day are valid, relates to one who is not under the control of her father or her husband; but if she is under the control of her father, even if she has grown up and become a maiden, he may annul all her vows and all her oaths on the day he finds out, as it is written: "None of her vows or self-imposed prohibitions shall stand ...since her father restrained her" (Numbers 30:6).

7. Until when may her father annul them? Until she reaches maturity. Once she has reached maturity, he may no longer annul them. All her vows and oaths have the same force as the vows of a widow or a divorced woman, concerning whom it is written: "Whatever she has imposed on herself shall be binding upon her" (10).

Chapter Twelve

1. A father may annul all his daughter's vows or oaths the day he finds out, as it is written: "All her vows and all her self-imposed prohibitions" (6). The husband, however, may annul only those vows and oaths that entail self-mortification or affect their mutual relationship, as when she has sworn or vowed not to paint her eyelids or not to make herself look pretty, as it is written: "Between a man and his wife" (17).

Chapter Thirteen

23. If a person has made vows in order to adjust his characteristic traits and to improve his behavior, he is indeed alert and deserves praise. Examples: One who was a glutton forbade himself meat for a year or two; or one who was addicted to drinking forbade himself wine for a long time, or vowed never to become intoxicated. So too, one who ran after bribes, hastening to get rich, forbade to himself the gifts or the favors coming from the residents of a particular town. So too, one who became arrogant because of his good looks vowed to become a nazirite. Such vows are designed to serve God, and concerning them the sages declared: "Vows are a fence around self-restraint" (Avoth 3:17).

24. Even though they are a form of divine service, one should not impose on himself many vows of prohibition nor make frequent use of them, but should rather abstain from things that are to be shunned, without making vows.

25. The sages have asserted: "Anyone who makes a vow is as if he built a high place for idolatry" (Nedarim 60b). If he transgressed and made a vow, it is his duty to seek absolution from his vow, so that it might not become an obstacle on his way.

Point of Interest:

As suggested in paragraph 25, voluntarism is a risky virtue.

**SELECTIONS
FROM
MAIMONIDES,
MISHNE
TORAH**

GIFTS TO THE POOR

Chapter One

1. When a man reaps the harvest of his field, he must not reap the entire field but should leave some standing grain at the end of the field for the poor, as it is written: "You shall not reap all the way to the edge of your field" (Leviticus 23:22). It is immaterial whether he reaps or plucks up by the root. What he leaves is called *peah* (field corner).
2. Just as a man must leave *peah* in the field, so must he leave a little for the poor when he picks fruit from the trees. —
4. The same law applies to gleanings: when he reaps the harvest and binds the sheaves, he must not gather up the fallen ears of grain but must leave them for the poor, as it is written: "You must not gather the gleanings of your harvest" (22)
5. The same law applies to grape gleanings during vintage; so too, the young grapes, as it is written: "You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger" (19:10). So too, if the binder of sheaves has forgotten a sheaf in the field, he must not turn back to get it, as it is written: "If you forget a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it" (Deuteronomy 24:19).
6. Just as the law of forgetting applies to sheaves, so it applies to standing grain: if he has forgotten to reap some standing grain, it belongs to the poor. And just as the law of forgetting applies to grain and the like, so it applies to trees, as it is written: "When you shake the fruit from your olive trees, do not go over the branches a second time" (20). The same applies to other trees.
7. Hence you learn that four gifts are reserved for the poor in the vineyard: single grapes, young grapes, *peah*, and the forgotten grapes; three gifts in grain: gleanings, the forgotten sheaf, and *peah*; two in trees: the forgotten fruits, and *peah*.

15. What limit is prescribed for *peah*? Biblically it has no prescribed limit: even if one left a single ear of grain he has fulfilled his duty. Rabbinically, however, *peah* should not be less than one-sixtieth part of the harvest, whether in Eretz Yisrael or in the Diaspora. One should add to the one-sixtieth according to the size of the field and the number of the poor and the yield of the harvest. Example: If a field is too small, so that one-sixtieth of it would be of no help to the poor, he should increase the rate. So too, if there are many poor people, he must increase it. If he sowed little and harvested much, having prospered, he should increase it in accord with the blessed crop. Whoever increases the rate of *peah* will receive a higher reward. There is no prescribed limit to this increase.

Chapter Six

1. Another gift, a sixth one, is reserved for the poor in the yield of the land; it is the tenth part given to the poor, which is called the poor man's tithe. The order of priestly contributions and of tithes follows:

2. When a man has finished reaping the grain of the land or picking the fruit of the trees, he sets aside one-fiftieth, referred to as great *terumah*, and gives it to a priest, as it is written in the Torah: "You shall give him the first fruits of your new grain and wine and oil" (Deuteronomy 18:4). Then he sets aside one-tenth of the rest, referred to as first tithe, and gives it to a Levite, as it is written: "The tithes set aside by the Israelites ... I give to the Levites" (Numbers 18:24); and it is written: "And to the Levites I give all the tithes in Israel"(21).

3. Then he sets aside one-tenth of the remainder, referred to as second tithe, which belongs to the owner who consumes it in Jerusalem, as it is written: "If a man wishes to redeem his tithe...." (Leviticus 27:31). "You shall set aside a tenth part ... and you shall consume it in the presence of the Lord your God in the place which he will choose" (Deuteronomy 14:22-23).

4. This order of tithing is followed during the first year of the seven-year cycle, as well as the second, fourth, and fifth. During the third year of the seven-year cycle as well as the sixth, however, one sets aside another tithe of what remains after the first tithe and gives it to the poor; it is called the poor man's tithe. During these two years there is no second tithe, but poor man's tithe.

5. During the sabbatical year, all agricultural products are considered ownerless [and available to all]. No *terumah* contributions and no tithes

are given away that year at all, neither first nor second nor poor man's tithe.

6. The Levite sets aside one-tenth of the first tithe he has received and gives it to a priest; this is called the *terumah* of the tithe.

7. The field owner gives to every poor man passing by his field some of the tithe he has, so that the poor may eat their fill, as it is written: "That they may eat their fill in your settlements" (Deuteronomy 26:12).

13. If a man and a woman come into the house, the woman is treated first; after she has been attended to, the man is given his share. In cases of a father and his son, a man and his relative, two brothers, two partners, one of whom being poor, the other may give him his tithe that is reserved for the poor.

14. If two poor persons have leased a field as land tenants, they exchange between them the poor man's tithe which they set aside.

Chapter Seven

1. The Torah commands us to give charity to the poor among the people of Israel, each according to his needs, if the donor can well afford it, as it is written: "You must open your hand to him" (Deuteronomy 15:8). "You shall maintain him; whether stranger or sojourner, he shall live beside you" (Leviticus 25:35). "Let your brother live beside you" (36).

2. If anyone noticed a poor man asking for something and ignored him, and failed to give *tsedakah*, he has broken a prohibitive command, as it is written: "Do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy brother" (Deuteronomy 15:7).

3. You are commanded to give the poor man whatever he needs. If he has no clothing, he should be provided with clothes; if he has no house furniture, it should be procured for him; if he has no wife, he should be helped to get married; if it is an unmarried woman, she should be provided with a husband. Even if an impoverished person is used to ride while a servant is running in front of him, a riding horse should be procured for him, and a servant to run in front of him, as it is written: "Sufficient for whatever he needs" (8). Though you are commanded to relieve his needs, you are not obligated to make him rich.

7. The non-Jewish poor should be maintained and clothed along with the Jewish poor for the sake of peaceful relations. A poor man who goes around begging should not be given a large donation but a small one. One must never turn a poor man away empty-handed, even if you give him a dry fig, as it is written: "Let not the downtrodden turn from you disappointed" (Psalm 74:21).

9. If a poor man refuses to take charity, he should be given it subtly in the form of a gift or a loan. A rich man who starves himself because he is a niggardly with his money, so that he neither eats nor drinks, should not be attended to.

11. It is forbidden to solicit or collect charitable contributions from an over generous person who donates more than he can afford, or deprives himself and gives to the charity collectors in order not to be embarrassed. Any collector who embarrasses and solicits such a person will eventually be punished, as it is written: "I will punish those who oppress him" (Jeremiah 30:20).

13. A man's poor relative has priority over any person; the poor in his own household have priority over the poor in his town; the poor in his town have priority over the poor of another town, as it is written: "Open your hand to your brother, to your needy, to your poor in your land" (Deuteronomy 15:11).

Chapter Nine

1. Every Jewish community must appoint collectors of charity, who are trustworthy men of repute, to go about among the people each Friday, taking from every one what he can afford to give, or what he is assessed. They are to distribute the money from Friday to Friday, giving every poor man sufficient food for seven days. This is what is called *kuppah* (fund).

2. So too, collectors are appointed who fetch bread and foodstuffs from every courtyard, as well as fruit products or money, from anyone who donates for the needs of the moment. They distribute the collections among the poor in the evening, giving each pauper his daily provision. This is what is called *tamhuy* (charity plate; soup kitchen).

3. We have never seen or heard of a Jewish community without a charity fund; as to a *tamhuy*, however, there are localities where the custom is to have one while in others it does not exist. Nowadays there is a widespread custom that fund collectors go around collecting every day and distribute

on Fridays.

5. The charity fund is collected by two persons only, since no less than two persons may hold public office dealing with money. It is, however, permissible to entrust the money of the fund to one person. It must not be distributed by less than three people, because it is comparable to any civil-law case [requiring three judges] in as much as they distribute among the poor what each needs for the week. The charity food (*tamhuy*), being indefinite, is collected by three and distributed by three [to avoid suspicion].

6. Charity food is collected daily, and the community fund each Friday. Charity food is for the poor that come from anywhere, while the community fund is intended for the local poor only.

12. If one has stayed in a town for thirty days, he should be compelled to contribute to the community fund along with the population of the town. If he has stayed there for three months, he should be compelled to contribute to the *tamhuy*; if he has stayed there for six months, he should be compelled to contribute toward the clothing of the local poor; if he has stayed there for nine months, he should be compelled to contribute to all the burial needs of the poor.

15. If a citizen travelling from town to town has run out of funds on the road and has nothing to eat at the moment, he is permitted to take charity, including the four gifts to the poor described in the Torah: gleanings, the forgotten sheaf, *peah*, and the poor man's tithe. He is not obligated to repay when he comes home, because he was poor indeed at the moment. He has the status of a poor man that has become rich, who does not have to pay back anything.

Chapter Ten

1. We must observe the precept of *tsedakah* more carefully than any other affirmative command, because *tsedakah* is characteristic of an upright person, the offspring of our father Abraham, as it is written: "I have singled him out that he may charge his children ... to do what is right" (Genesis 18:19). Only by means of *tsedakah* will the glory of Israel be reestablished and the religion of truth perpetuated, as it is written: "In righteousness you shall be established" (Isaiah 54:14). Israel will be liberated only through *tsedakah*, as it is written: "Zion shall be redeemed by justice, *tsedakah* shall be the saving of those who return" (Isaiah 1:27).

2. None ever becomes poor from giving charity, nothing bad or injurious is caused by *tsedakah*, as it is written: "The Lord will be kind and compassionate to you and multiply you" (Deuteronomy 13:18). If anyone is cruel and shows no mercy, there is reason to suspect his lineage. Cruelty is to be found only among the heathen, as it is written: "They are cruel, pitiless" (Jeremiah 50:42). All Israelites and those who associate with them are regarded as brothers, as it is written: "You are children of the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 14:1). And if a brother shows no mercy to a brother, who will be compassionate to him? On whom then should the poor of Israel depend? On the people who hate them and persecute them? Alas, they must depend only on their own brethren.

4. Anyone who gives *tsedakah* to a poor person in a surly manner and with a gloomy face completely nullifies the merit of his own deed, even if he gives him a thousand gold pieces. He should rather give him cheerfully and gladly, while sympathizing with him who is in trouble, as it is written: "Did I not weep for him whose day was hard? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?" (Job 30:25). He should speak to him graciously and comfortingly, as it is written: "I gladdened the heart of the widow" (Job 29:13).

6. He who urges and activates others to give *tsedakah* receives a greater reward than the donor himself, as it is written: "The effect of righteousness will be peace" (Isaiah 32:17). With regard to the collectors of charity and the like, Scripture says: "Those who turn many to righteousness shall be like the stars" (Daniel 12:3).

7. There are eight degrees of charity, each one higher than the other. The highest degree is to aid a Jew in want by offering him a gift or a loan, by entering into partnership with him, or by providing work for him, so that he may become self-supporting, without having to ask people for anything. In regard to this it is written: "You shall maintain him; whether stranger or sojourner, he shall live beside you" (Leviticus 25:35); that is to say, maintain him so that he may not fall and be in need of help.

8. The next, inferior degree is when he who gives charity to the poor is unaware of the recipient, who in turn is unaware of the giver. This is indeed a religious act achieved for its own sake. It is like the chamber of secrets within the Temple, where the devout used to put their gifts in secret and the poor of good family received support from it in secret. Of a similar character is the one who contributes to a charity fund. One should not contribute to a charity fund unless he knows that the man in charge of the collections is trustworthy and intelligent and knows how to manage properly, as in the case of Rabbi Hananyah ben Teradyon [who administered the communal charity funds so scrupulously that once when money

of his own chanced to get mixed with the charity funds, he distributed the whole amount among the poor].

9. The third, lesser degree is when the giver knows the recipient, but the recipient does not know the giver. The great sages used to go secretly and cast the money into the doorway of the poor. Something like this should be done, it being a noble virtue, if the charity administrators are behaving improperly.

10. The fourth, still lower degree is when the recipient knows the giver, but the giver does not know the recipient. The great sages used to tie money in sheets which they threw behind their backs, and the poor would come and get it without being embarrassed.

11. The fifth degree is when the giver puts the alms into the hands of the poor without being solicited.

12. The sixth degree is when he puts the money into the hands of the poor after being solicited.

13. The seventh degree is when he gives him less than he should, but does so cheerfully.

14. The eighth degree is when he gives him painfully (grudgingly).

18. One should ever patiently strive not to be dependent on other People and not to be a public charge. So too, the sages have enjoined us, saying: "Rather make your Sabbath a weekday [with regard to festive meals] than be dependent on men" (Shabbath 118a). If reduced to poverty, even a distinguished scholar must not disdain manual work, no matter how unworthy it is of him, in order to avoid dependence on others. One should preferably flay animal carcasses instead of telling the people: "I am a great scholar, I am a priest, provide for me." The sages have indeed commanded us to act like this. Some of the great sages derived their livelihood from chopping wood, carrying lumber, watering gardens, working in iron or making charcoal, and asked no help of the community; neither would they have accepted charity had it been offered them.

19. If anyone is not in need of relief and yet receives it by deceiving the public, he will not die of old age before becoming a public charge. Such a person is included in the biblical utterance: "A curse on him who relies on man" (Jeremiah 17:5). On the other hand, if anyone is vitally in need of relief, and simply cannot go on living without obtaining it, as in the case of an indigent old man who is ill and suffering, and yet he is too proud to accept help, he is guilty of bloodshed in committing a deadly sin. —



**SELECTIONS
FROM
MAIMONIDES,
MISHNE
TORAH**

PRIESTLY OFFERINGS

Chapter One

1. Priestly gifts and tithes are biblically applicable only in Eretz Yisrael, both during the time of the Temple and after the time of the Temple. The prophets, however, made them applicable also in Babylonia, which is close to Eretz Yisrael and many Jews commute from there. The ancient sages made them applicable also in Egypt, Ammon and Moab, because these countries are close to Eretz Yisrael.

2. Wherever Eretz Yisrael is spoken of, the reference is to territories occupied by a king of Israel, or a prophet, with the consent of a majority of Israel; it is called a national conquest [so as to give it the character of the holy Land]. On the other hand, if an individual Israelite, or members of a family or tribe, went ahead and occupied a locality for themselves, even if it was part of the land given to Abraham, it would not be called Eretz Yisrael in terms of all the mitzvot applicable to the Holy Land. For this very reason, Joshua and his court distributed all of Eretz Yisrael among the tribes long before it was actually occupied by them, so that when each tribe would ascend and occupy its share it should not be regarded as an individual conquest.

3. The lands which David occupied outside the land of Canaan, such as Mesopotamia and Aram Tzova and Ahlav, even though he was king over Israel and acted upon the decision of the supreme court, count neither as Eretz Yisrael nor as Diaspora in every respect; they are not like Babylonia and Egypt, for example, but are classified as outside the Holy Land and yet unlike it [as to special laws operative only in Eretz Yisrael]. Why are they of a lower degree than Eretz Yisrael? Because David occupied them before occupying all of Eretz Yisrael, where some remnants of the seven nations of Canaan were left. Had David occupied the entire land of Canaan with its various boundaries and then the other lands, all his conquests might then have assumed the sanctity of Eretz Yisrael, in every respect. The lands conquered by David are referred to as Syria.

4. Syria is like Eretz Yisrael in regard to certain laws, and in certain respects it is like Diaspora. If a man has acquired land in Syria, it is as if he acquired it in Eretz Yisrael with regard to heave-offerings, tithes, and the sabbatical year. All the laws pertaining to Syria are rabbinic enactments.

5. The part of Eretz Yisrael that was occupied by those who had come up from Egypt received the first consecration, which ceased to be as soon as they were exiled. The first consecration, resulting from the mere conquest, applied only for the time being [while inhabited and ruled by Israelites] and not for the future. As soon as the returned exiles came up and occupied part of the land, they consecrated it a second time with a sanctity lasting forever, both for the time being and the future. They retained, however, certain laws which had been operative in the places occupied by those who had come up from Egypt and unoccupied by those who arrived from Babylonia. These were not exempted from heave-offerings and tithes, so that the poor might rely on them during the sabbatical year.

6. Hence, the entire world is divisible into three classifications: Eretz Yisrael, Syria, and the Diaspora. Eretz Yisrael, in turn, is divisible into two parts: the one which was occupied by the returned exiles from Babylonia, and the second which was occupied only by those who had come up from Egypt. The Diaspora is divisible into two parts: Egypt, Babylonia, Ammon and Moab are lands where the special laws are to be observed by the authority of sages and prophets; while in the other countries the laws of heave-offerings and tithes are not to be observed.

Chapter Three

1. The great *terumah* [given to priests] has biblically no prescribed limit, as it is written: "You shall give him the first fruit of your new grain" (Deuteronomy 18:4); that is, anything: even one particle of wheat may exempt a heap of grain. —

2. But what proportion has been prescribed by the sages? A generous person gives one-fortieth of the crop; the average person gives one-fiftieth; the miserly gives one-sixtieth. One must not give less than one-sixtieth.

4. The priestly *terumah* is not given by measure, weight or number, because no limit has been stated in the Torah with regard to heave-offerings. One should estimate in his mind and set aside about one-sixtieth.

12. The duty concerning a *terumah* of the tithe concerns the Levite who must give to a priest a tenth of the tithe he receives, as it is written: "When

you receive from the Israelites their tithes ...you shall remove from them one-tenth of the tithe...." (Numbers 18:26). A lay Israelite may set it aside and give it to a priest and then give the tithe to a Levite, after having removed from it the *terumah* which is known as a tithe from the tithe.

23. The *terumah* and the tithe are to be set aside according to the following order: the first fruits are set aside first of all, then the great *terumah*, then the first tithe, then the second tithe, or else the tithe for the poor.

Chapter Six

1. *Terumah* and tithe of the Levite's tithe [given to priests] may be eaten by priests, whether adults or minors, males or females, and Canaanite slaves and cattle belonging to priests.

3. If the daughter of a non-priest married a priest, she may eat *terumah*. —

5 A non-priest is forbidden to eat *terumah*, as it is written: "No lay person shall eat of holy things" (Leviticus 22:10), even one who lives with a priest or is his hired worker, as it is written: "No sojourner or a hired worker of a priest may eat of holy things" (10). *Sojourner* here means a lifelong hireling, while *hired worker* denotes one hired by years. A Hebrew slave has the status of a sojourner and a hireling. If a priest's daughter married a lay person, she assumed the status of a lay person, as it is written: "No lay person," that is, neither nor his wife.

**SELECTIONS
FROM
MAIMONIDES,
MISHNE
TORAH**

TITHING

Chapter One

1. Having set apart the *terumah gedolah* [great gift or the priest's share of the crop], one must set apart one-tenth of the rest, what is known as first tithe. — This tithe is intended for the Levites, whether male or female, as it is written: "To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel as their share" (Numbers 18:21).

2. The first tithe may serve as food for a lay Israelite; he may partake of it even in a state of ritual uncleanness, since no sanctity whatever is attached to it. — Whence do we know that the first tithe is free for common use? It is written: "Your gift shall be regarded as though it were the grain of the threshing floor or the wine of the vat" (27); that is to say, just as the grain of the threshing floor and the wine of the vat are altogether free for common use, so the first tithe, from which the priest's share has been removed, is free for common use in every respect. —

3. Levites and priests who happen to own farm products set apart the first tithe so as to remove from it the priest's share of the tithe. So too, the priests set apart other *terumoth* and tithes for their own use, since they only receive from all [and are not required to give away anything to other priests]. One might think that they are allowed to eat their farm products untithed, but the Torah explicitly declares: "Thus shall you too set aside a gift" (28). Traditionally interpreted, you refers to the Levites; you too includes the priests as well.

Chapter Eight

1. The products from which the great *terumah* and the *terumah* of the tithe have been removed are called *hullin* [and are free for common use]. If one has removed the remaining tithes from them, they are termed properly-treated *hullin* in every respect.

Chapter Nine

1. In the days of Yohanan the high priest, who was after Simeon the Just, the supreme court sent men to investigate the entire Jewish territory. They discovered that all the people carefully set apart the great *terumah* [priest's share].

FIRSTLINGS*Chapter One*

1. It is a positive command to set apart every male firstborn, whether among human beings or among clean cattle or among the donkey species, whether they are unharmed or diseased, as it is written: "Consecrate to me every firstborn, man or beast; every firstborn among the Israelites is mine" (Exodus 13:2). All these belong to the priests.

2. The firstborn of a human being and the firstborn of a donkey must be redeemed, and their redemption price is given to the priests. The firstborn of clean cattle is to be slaughtered in the Temple Court, like other things holy in a minor degree.

3. If the firstborn of a clean animal was blemished, it had to be given to the priest, whether it was blemished from birth or it became blemished after it had been perfect. If the priest wanted to, he might eat it anywhere, sell it, or serve it as food to anyone he pleased, even to a non-Jew, since it was permissible for common use. —

Chapter Six

1. It is a positive command to set apart one out of ten from all clean cattle which are born to any man each year. This command applies only to herds or flocks, as it is written: "All tithes of the herd or flock ... shall be holy to the Lord" (Leviticus 27:32).

3. All are required to give tithe from cattle: priests, Levites, and lay Israelites.

Chapter Seven

1. If a man had ten lambs and he set apart one of the ten, or if he had a hundred and he set ten apart as tithe, they are not valid tithe. But how

should one act? He must gather all the lambs or all the calves into the fold and make an opening so small that two cannot get out at the same time. Their dams are left outside bleating, so that the lambs hear their voice and leave the fold to meet them, as it is written: "All that passes under the shepherd's staff" (32), meaning that each must pass under the staff of itself, and not that the owner should pull it out. When they emerge from the fold, one after the other, the owner begins to count: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and the lamb which comes out tenth, whether male or female, unblemished or blemished, he marks with red paint and says: "This is tithe."

7. Young lambs are not like untithed farm products from which it is forbidden to eat until they are tithed. — One may sell or slaughter whatever he pleases before he performs the tithing; then the tithe animal is consecrated and consumed in a legally prescribed manner.

8. The sages appointed three seasons in the year for tithing cattle, and when one of these seasons arrives one must not sell or slaughter until he has given tithe.



Contributors

Part VI.

EGON MAYER

Egon Mayer is Professor of Sociology at Brooklyn College and Director of both the Center for Jewish Studies, Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York, and the Jewish Outreach Institute, a non-profit organization committed to helping interfaith families integrate within the Jewish community. Dr. Mayer is the author of major studies in Jewish intermarriage, including: Intermarriage and the Jewish Future (1979); Children of Intermarriage; Conversion of the Intermarried (1987); and Rabbinic Officiation and Intermarriage. His widely acclaimed book, Love & Tradition: Marriage between Jews & Christians, was published by Plenum Publishing Co. in 1987. Dr. Mayer is also author of a book on the Orthodox and Hasidic communities of Boro Park, From Suburb to Shtetl, published by Temple University Press.

MARK SHAPIRO

A graduate of Penn State University where he majored in communications and minored in Middle Eastern history and business, Mark P. Shapiro is currently a graduate student in sociology at the University of Chicago. Mr. Shapiro is the recipient of a University of Chicago Fellowship and is completing a Master's thesis on network analysis and attitudinal change. His research interests involve statistics and the external environments of organizations, including the study of the populations served by nonprofit organizations.

JODI SHPRINTZEN

Jodi Shprintzen is currently a research assistant at the Center for the Study of Philanthropy, working on a documentary film of the history of Jewish philanthropy in America. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from New

York University with a double major in sociology, and Hebrew and Judaic studies. She intends to pursue a Masters degree in Jewish history and culture at the University of Southampton in England beginning in September 1998.

Center for the Study of Philanthropy

Founded in September 1986 at the Graduate School of the City University of New York, The Center for the Study of Philanthropy focuses attention on giving, voluntarism, and nonprofit entrepreneurship by individual donors, foundations, and corporations in the United States and around the world.

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Center for the Study of Philanthropy

The Graduate School & University Center
City University of New York

33 West 42nd Street, Room 1525 GB
New York, New York 10036

Main: (212) 642-2130 Fax: (212) 642- 2141
email: philanthropy@email.gc.cuny.edu

<http://www.philanthropy.org>