

I apologize for the length of this manuscript in terms of a conference presentation but this work in progress provides the larger context. For the presentation I intend to concentrate on the first 16 pages and possibly touch on 29-34 in discussion. The reader is free to do the same. MKB

Reform at Baltimore's Har Sinai Verein

by

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The experiences in the two cradles of Reform in America, Charleston and Baltimore, differ seemingly in a dramatic fashion. South Carolina welcomed Jews during the seventeenth century with its liberal Fundamental Constitutions. One of the original colonial congregations called Charleston home. Typical of the others, it followed the Sephardic rite and organizational structure even though the majority of the members were Ashkenazim. By the 1820s the Jewish community, the largest in the United States, included individuals from a variety of homelands as well as second and third generation Jewish Americans. In 1824 a group of men petitioned the adjunta of Charleston's K.K. Beth Elohim (KKBE) to bring decorum and modernity to the service. When their petition was denied, they transformed their organization into a congregation, the Reform Society of Israelites. Although they were aware of developments in the Germanic States, theirs was an indigenous movement. These American-born scions of colonial, often Sephardic Jewry sought services with decorum that would both retain Americanized Jews within the fold and be acceptable to Christian visitors. They tread their own way developing hymns, composing what has been called the first Reform prayer book, and

being more inclusive in relation to women. Small in number and the brunt of the wrath of KKBE, the congregation died out within fifteen years. Participants either moved on or rejoined the parent congregation. Yet what they had begun did not perish. Under the leadership of the Reverend Gustavus Poznanski and through their influence, KKBE moved along the path of Reform. The leaders of the Reform Society are characterized as young, well educated, acculturated, politically conscious men on the rise. They may not have been deeply involved in KKBE before the schism, but they made a major impact on the congregation.¹

The Baltimore story reads seemingly in stark contrast. The weak economy and passage of discriminatory laws discouraged Jewish settlement in Maryland. Until shortly before the American Revolution only scattered individuals entered Baltimore. An estimated 150 Jews lived in the state when they finally won full political rights with the passage of the Maryland Jew Bill in 1826. These early settlers including the native born, many of whom were already achieving economic success, did not participate when Baltimore's first congregation, Nidche Yisrael or the Scattered of Israel (later called the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation), was organized in 1830.² The congregation was established by Jews who had first settled in Richmond, Philadelphia, and elsewhere in America as well as recent immigrants from Poland, Holland, Britain, and especially Bavaria. Baltimore became a New Jerusalem for Bavarian Jews and the population increased to such an extent that it emerged as an important Jewish center within a decade. In 1840 the congregation attracted the first ordained rabbi to hold an American pulpit. Bavarian Abraham Rice (c. 1800-1862) received training in Furth and Wurzburg before being ordained by Abraham Wolf Bamburger and Abraham Bing. Lacking a university

degree, he taught and then headed a Talmudic academy in Zell before immigrating to America in 1840 for personal and economic reasons. Talmudic scholar and uncompromising defender of tradition, he failed to master English and denounced those who broke the dietary laws or intermarried. Rice directed that the congregation not respond with “Amen” if someone who did not observe the Sabbath gave the blessing before the Torah. The last straw for some congregants came when a charter member, Jacob Arens (or Aaron) (1798-1842), died.³ To Rice’s chagrin, fellow Masons and Odd Fellows conducted part of the funeral service. Rice called the lodge rites *chukkas hagoyim*, or Christian customs and threatened to refuse to officiate at future burials where such rites were observed. Accustomed to lay governance and tolerance of acculturation a small group of men broke away from the congregation and formed the Har Sinai Verein. In 1842 about six months after Arens’ death, the group conducted their first services on the High Holidays using a Bible (Baltimore Hebrew Congregation refused to lend them a Torah), held services in members’ homes, chose lecturers, and in December 1843 petitioned the state legislature for incorporation. Thus was born the first permanent congregation begun as Reform in the United States. A small group holding the first Jewish services on Sunday temporarily split away but quickly reunited.⁴

The incidents leading to the separation from Baltimore Hebrew Congregation are clear and historians have long argued that most of the early Reform congregations in America were started as Reform societies on the German model by young German immigrants. Indeed Isaac Leeser, a Rice ally born in Europe who spent formative years in Richmond and then held pulpits in Philadelphia, derisively reported “about two years ago [1842], some German immigrants commenced a miniature temple with an organ, etc,

which some European papers have dignified with the appellation of the Baltimore congregation, and represented them as having sent to Hamburg [sic] for temple prayer books, etc.”⁵ This article adds depth and nuance to previous accounts and illustrates how such events in America can be understood best through German and transatlantic lens.

A fundamental question to be asked is why the Baltimore Reformers behaved as they did. One of the congregation’s later rabbis and chroniclers, Abraham Shusterman, fudges the causes for the split: “Who knows which of these ingredients – numerical growth, dissatisfaction with Rabbi Rice, the strong Masonic loyalties of these German immigrants, or religious liberalism – was the most important?”⁶ The following explicates the underlying significance of each of these.

Anti-Rabbanism as the Philosophy of Reform

Those who revolted against Rice’s authority, according to William S. Rayner, early member, reader, and congregation historian, had “concluded that what threatened to become a Jewish hierarchy in our midst should not be tolerated any longer. They were determined to dispute Rabbi Rice’s authority.”⁷ They and not rabbis would control their personal actions. These reformers, like others of their era, termed their theoretical principle anti-rabbanism. It is a concept that is explicated in the early statements of the Reform society’s leaders and clearly informed their actions.

A logical explanation for the origins of this concept would be the American experience. No ordained rabbi had served an American congregation before the arrival of Rice. Lay leaders dominated congregational affairs in this vacuum during the colonial and early national periods. All of the first rabbis to immigrate to the United States were either fired or forced out of their first pulpits. This explanation would coincide with the

Charleston model and follow Leon Jick's argument for the Americanization of Judaism.⁸
Yet it is to the Germanic states and not the United States that we seek origins.

Why? The leadership of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation had been in America longer than the reformers. It also included individuals born in America as well as countries besides the Germanic states although many hailed Bavaria as their birthplace. With a few exceptions, the dissidents had come from Bavaria especially since 1835. Those who remained traditional and backed Rice were relatively more Americanized.⁹ The dissenters brought their Reform and the philosophy to support it from Europe.

As Michael A. Meyer persuasively argues, the first wave of nineteenth century immigrants from the southern Germanic states had not identified as Germans and rarely recalled Germany with nostalgia. The second wave had begun modernization prior to emigration and a major part of that process involved integration into German culture, language, and education, absorbing the Enlightenment concept of *Bildung*, broadly defined as educational uplift. According to Meyer, "German Jews in America continued the modernization process begun in Germany within an imported German context, thereby paradoxically slowing down their assimilation to modern America."¹⁰

Ismar Schorsch traces the origins of the "modern" rabbinate to the Germanic states from the late eighteenth century to the early decades of the nineteenth century and relates it directly to the *Haskalah*, emancipation, government edict, and the rise to prominence of German universities. Mandatory university training and rabbinical seminaries replaced traditional yeshivot as modern rabbis were called to preach regularly and in German, supervise education, complete government reports, and assume pastoral duties like visiting the sick and comforting the dying. They would now oversee kashruth

rather than personally perform ritual slaughtering. Legal functions having been assumed by the state, the rabbi became more the broker and community leader than the legal arbiter. Judaism would be transformed “from executing a prescribed action to experiencing a mood” through esthetic and orderly services and sermons designed to “uplift, edify, and ennoble.”¹¹

Yet attacks aimed at the medieval rabbi continued with assaults on the powers of the modern rabbi, what Schorsch describes as “violent anti-clericalism.” A new legacy remained of “deep suspicion toward every assertion of rabbinic prerogative.” As Jews gained political rights and elements of the general society pursued liberal republicanism, Judaism became more democratic. Laymen sought control over their own behavior and reform within the synagogue, the new center of Jewish life replacing the kehillah, or Jewish community. Congregations left rabbinic posts unfilled for years, conducted services themselves in German, and then used the terms *prediger* (preacher) or *hakham*, (the Sephardic term for prayer leader), rather than rabbi when hiring. When Isaac Bernays entered into a contract with the board of the Breslau synagogue, for example, he was “forbidden to rebuke, deprive of charity, [or] punish any native or foreign Jew for religious transgressions” – the type of behavior Rice attempted in Baltimore.

Founded in 1817, the Hamburg Temple provided leadership for much of the change under its first *predigers*, Gotthold Salomon and Eduard Kley. According to a congregation statute approved during the year the temple was established, the *prediger* could only advise the board which wielded power even over religious issues. Appointed in 1820, Salomon, who had earned a doctorate, defined the role of rabbi as teacher and preacher. Direct oversight of *kashrut* and the *mikve* or ritual bath was below his dignity

and should be left to specialists under his supervision.¹² To him, the “Oral Torah [was] a historical creation, a framework of customs, norms and ways of life which constantly developed and changed in the light of changing needs.” The Bible is fundamental but Talmudic edict is open to accommodation to new conditions.¹³

For Reformers, the Talmud symbolized rules accrued over generations that now bound individuals seemingly as much as the antisemitism and separation from general society that had contributed to their development. Reformers argued that the rabbis of the Talmud had responded to the needs of their era and that they too were free to adjust what they considered external practices to the contemporary environment. This argument freed the Reformers from many of the laws held dear by traditionalists.¹⁴ To the founders of Har Sinai, Reform meant self-determination, the freedom to reject or accept rituals on an individual basis.¹⁵ This is why continued reliance on ritual is not the key gauge to their Reform; as they stated repeatedly, it was anti-rabbanism or lay control.

Probably the earliest Har Sinai document is the letter (see appendix) alluded to by Leeser to Gotthold Salomon in which the society requested materials. The letter explains the reasons for establishing the society and for Reform in terms being used simultaneously in Germany. The “very deplorable” spiritual conditions of Jews in Baltimore are compared to those in Europe; “Superstition is greater here than even among the Orthodox rabbis of Europe whose fanaticism is limited by the authoritative decisions of the government.” Then Rice is attacked directly and as a symbol of the abuse of rabbinic authority. Like their Reform brethren in Germany, Jews in Baltimore sought a religion of reason and spirituality – a mixture of Haskalah and emotion – that reflected their status as free individuals in a democracy.¹⁶

Far from coincidentally, the temple did not hire a rabbi until 1855 but depended instead on learned laymen to conduct services. When the congregation relied on learned laymen as ritual leaders they were emulating the examples of the German reform societies and following the philosophy set out in the letter. When Har Sinai hired Einhorn, they knew they were employing a maverick advocate of radical Reform who would advance the changes in ritual and esthetics within the congregation that they had hesitated to promulgate. Why had they held back? Perhaps they did so because some of the members wanted to remain traditional but through their choice rather than under the dictates of an Abraham Rice. Every reform that Einhorn championed required and received board approval. They had not awaited Einhorn to promulgate a Reform philosophy. They had already transported theirs from Bavaria. By the time of his arrival, the founders of Har Sinai had resided in Baltimore for almost a decade since the congregation's founding. They now awaited ritual reform within the synagogue. When shortly after his arrival Einhorn protested the Cleveland Conference of 1855, the congregation passed a resolution supporting his position. Both Einhorn and the board protested largely based on the authority the conference granted to rabbis and the Talmud.¹⁷ Again in 1859 the rabbi and every member of the congregation signed a protest rejecting the creation of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites on the grounds that it was a hierarchical movement that could pose a danger to the liberties of Jews and congregational autonomy.¹⁸ Einhorn's stands were in accord with the Reform philosophy of Har Sinai's founders.

Einhorn ultimately fled Baltimore with the outbreak of the Civil War after his newspaper press was destroyed and his congregation expressed fear that his abolitionist

stance placed his life in danger.¹⁹ The congregation welcomed his return three weeks later on the condition that he would refrain from speaking out. Einhorn demanded an independent voice. In its demands, the congregation continued its legacy of lay control. Ironically, as Reform rabbis rejected the Talmud written by their predecessors, they provided the foundation for limitations on their own authority.

Although the last decades of the nineteenth century is viewed as a high point of German rabbinical leadership in America leading to the promulgation of real Reform through rabbinical conferences and other means,²⁰ the rabbis' actions and thoughts had to follow lay dictates and typically reflected lay demands. Reform in America as in Germany thus was the religious parallel to secular political, social, and economic freedom.²¹

Ironically, too, (hypocritically may be the more appropriate description), Einhorn believed that only Radical Reform fit the new age. He attacked the legitimacy of other people's beliefs and practices often employing personal invective.²² Individuals and congregations had liberty to chose but to Einhorn and his congregation it was clear what that choice should be.

The emphasis on anti-rabbanism separated Har Sinai's *raison d'être* from that of most other American congregations. Reform congregation spokespeople from Charleston to New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago argued that they were modernizing practices to bring people back to the synagogue who were being lost to indifference to ceremonies with which they could no longer associate and to a language, Hebrew, that they no longer understood.²³ Indeed, reconstituting spirituality and meaning within a decorous environment to maintain Judaism served as a core of Reform. In Baltimore, individual

choice held sway. Yet again Charleston's Reform Society of Israelites illustrates parallels with Baltimore. Isaac Harby, its major intellectual leader, rejected rabbinical Judaism and authority in favor of individual and group determinations of relevant observance and beliefs for the times. In 1841 Isaac Leeser advocated the union of American Jewish congregations through a convention, Abraham Moïse, a former Reform Society president now serving as a KKBE trustee, rejected the call as an infringement on individual and congregation autonomy and contrary to the American concept of liberty.²⁴ Moïse's statement mirrored that of Har Sinai when it later rejected the Cleveland Conference as well as contemporary statements made by culture vereine in Germany. In tracing the origins of Reform in the United States, KKBE Rabbi Maurice Mayer maintained that his congregation "argued against the eternal irrefutability of rabbanism and talmudism... [sic]" Mayer praised Har Sinai's protest against the Cleveland platform; "Even if this congregation ... had not done anything else for Reform besides publishing this protest, it nevertheless deserves the fame from now on to be considered as leader in the field of progress in our holy religion."²⁵

The Hamburg Model: Of Prayer Books and Sermons

As previously noted, the Hamburg Temple served as the model for most of the first Reform congregations in America. In fact, even the most Americanized, Charleston's K.K. Beth Elohim, was influenced by its example. The Reverend Gustavus Poznanski had lived in Hamburg and Bremen. When a fire destroyed the sanctuary, the congregation decided to re-build with an organ, a typical symbol of reform and one instituted in Hamburg. Poznanski defended the decision as keeping within tradition, while others unsuccessfully brought the congregation to court over the matter and

ultimately separated.²⁶ Some of the English hymns published by the congregation in 1842 were adopted by the Hamburg hymnal and parts of the Yom Kippur service were borrowed as well. A translation of Gotthold Salomon's was reprinted in Charleston in 1842.²⁷

Outside of Charleston (although even that congregation called itself a Reform society), the other Reform congregations beginning with Har Sinai started as cultur verein, or religious societies, like many of those in Germany.²⁸ These societies conducted services and quickly became temples. The society mantra reflected the founders' concept that they wanted to debate possible changes and experiment as well as the opening of German society to Jews through voluntary associations.

In one of its first actions the leaders of Baltimore's Har Sinai Verein requested prayer books and sermons from the Hamburg Temple. In 1839 the director of the Hamburg congregation had created a committee to revise the original prayer book of 1818. Compiled by the two readers, Salomon and Kley and three laymen, the prayer book was designed for compromise and to avoid the taint of radicalism so that the Temple would not isolate itself from other congregations. Yet a storm ensued between opponents and supporters. The prayer book upheld Reform principles already in vogue in Charleston and illustrated parallels in modernization and acculturation across the Atlantic. It rejected the concept of a personal messiah and return to Israel, implying instead that the Diaspora was actually part of God's plan to disperse the Jews and, with them, their mission to foster universal brotherhood and peace. The Promised Land was now the land of residence where Jews would reside as loyal, contributing citizens.²⁹

After lashing out at the power of rabbis in the first address given to the Reform Society of Israelites, Isaac Harby called America “This happy land.” Equally well known are Gustavus Poznanski’s 1841 dedication remarks for KKBE’s new sanctuary, “This synagogue is our temple, this city our Jerusalem, this happy land our Palestine.”³⁰ Max Sutro delivered the same message in a sermon on the Ninth of Ab (August 3, 1845), a day commemorating the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and the resultant dispersal of Jews into the Diaspora. Sutro molded his message as a question posed for the congregation’s consideration since “We have made it our task to examine each religious act as to its purpose before we commit it.” Mirroring the message of the Hamburg prayer book and readers, Sutro questioned why the occasion should be observed as a day of mourning. He responded that Judaism had continued to live and quoted a poet, “Where duty and right are being practiced, where man loves his fellow-man, there it is pleasant, there Jerusalem flourishes.” He continued, “Should our Christian fellow-citizen with whom we are forming one and the same social community not be of the opinion, when we are mourning the destruction of Jerusalem, that we are longing to return there and that our patriotism for our present homeland cannot be a true, genuine and fervent one?”³¹ These arguments resonated direct to recent immigrants. In the oath to become American citizens they swore to “absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure forever all allegiance and fidelity to every foreign Prince, Potentate, State, and Sovereignty whatever...”³²

Rice had arrived in Baltimore in 1840 just as the prayer book controversy was at its height. The following year Jews in Berlin organized a cultur verein, and reformers in Frankfurt lost patience with the slow cadence of reform advocated by the rabbis and started The Society of the Dawn, a short-lived but more radical Reform organization.

Transformed into The Society of the Friends of Reform in 1842, this group rejected the concept of a priestly caste and any distinction between rabbi and flock. Many leaders viewed even Reform rabbis with contempt. The society's declaration of principle, published with a defense in 1843, met with the opprobrium of both the traditional and reform rabbinate. It recognized the need to reject the Talmud in order to liberate the burdensome authority of rabbis.³³ The members of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation had to be aware of these and other events in Germany. Besides letters from home, a constant influx of immigrants arrived from Bavaria and one of the most ardent defenders of tradition in America, Isaac Leeser, published accounts in his *Occident and American Israelite*.³⁴

Why did the Har Sinai leaders request sermons besides the prayer books and again why from Hamburg?³⁵ It had not been unusual for rabbis to give *derashah* as part of the service. These were learned discourses on a legal problem or bible portion involving interpretations from the Talmud and other rabbis. By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in some cases *derashah* served more to showcase the erudition and brilliance of the rabbi rather than as a tool for education of the congregants. The sermon (the first modern one given in Germany in 1808), changed the form, structure, and purpose of the *derashah* and took as its model the Christian sermon designed for edification. The early Jewish preachers "were virtuosos of religion, not accredited rabbis." These included Salomon and Kley and, in fact, Salomon gained his fame as a preacher of sentimental sermons borrowing his style from Christian ministers and other rabbis. During the 1830s the Jewish preachers created a new model imbued with Jewish spirit and freed from German style using Jewish sources, history, and analysis that the

congregants could understand while having their emotions aroused. Indeed one of the key turning points toward Reform occurred during the late 1830s with the call by congregants for a second rabbi to preach in the vernacular. The German language sermon represented the beginning of a new public sphere and one of the “new institutional forms of expression.” The cultur vereins used these religious addresses as “the medium which could reach the new bourgeoisie.”³⁶ The sermons of Salomon, Kley, and Frankfurter, their associate, were so popular that Isaac Leeser felt it necessary to attack them in his newspaper,

in Hamburg, they [‘the vulgar, the genteel not less than the uneducated’] may resort to the temple as more outwardly attractive than the Synagogue, for there are elegant speakers, who, if they teach little, use the most beautiful, language in giving utterance to the few ideas they inculcate, whilst the sound of pleasant music [the organ and choir] acts as a delightful accompaniment to the easy worship which is demanded of the attendants.³⁷

Alan Silverstein maintains that clergy had to market what had become a voluntaristic religion through sermons and public lectures. In 1829 Leeser delivered the first regular sermons in the United States at Philadelphia’s Keneseth Israel at the behest of Rebecca Gratz and other female congregants. Poznanski next began giving sermons. In Albany in 1846 Isaac Mayer Wise offered the first weekly preaching alternating between German and English four years hence. Even Rice delivered sermons in German. As in Germany, both reformists and traditionalists preached.³⁸ Thus the messages and not the media delineated the distinctions.

The sermons that Har Sinai would have obtained from the Hamberg Temple by Kley and Salomon stressed family, decorum, allegiance to the host country, rejection of a personal messiah and return to Israel, and personal uplift, concepts dear to the reformers.

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The Issue of the Masonic Rite

The spark for the break with Baltimore Hebrew and Rabbi Abraham Rice's leadership seemingly should have been inconsequential. Why was Rice's reaction to the Masonic rite at Arens' funeral so harsh and why was his reaction to this more important to the secessionists than his previous calls for traditional observance? After all, Jews had long been associated with and welcomed into the Masonic Order in America. Jacob Katz' *Jews and Freemasons in Europe, 1723-1939* suggests possible answers.⁴⁰

Katz sees acculturation, antisemitism, emancipation, and Reform as interlocking phenomenon. Particularly in the Germanic states, Jews had to fight for acceptance into the Masonic Order and admission symbolized rights and democratic principles. The struggle was part of the larger battle for political rights and social access. The Masons represented those voluntary institutions emerging in Germany that facilitated interpersonal relations and individuals among the emerging bourgeoisie and transcended boundaries.⁴¹ This was a new public sphere to which enlightened Jews aspired. Those wanting admittance and who were first accepted were modernizing Jews with secular educations, rising into the middle and upper classes, and leaving behind Jewish tradition. Reform in Judaism did not have a causal relationship with Jewish desires to become Masons but the two were correlated. Reform Jewish emphasis on universal religious values coincided with the core Masonic mission of the unity of mankind. Thus entrance

into the Masons reinforced Reform Jewish values besides illustrating how far Jews could rise as long as they acculturated. German Christians viewed traditional Jews as alien and unacceptable and thus only those leaving tradition behind could aspire to equal status. The Philanthropin school, designed to provide vocational training for Jewish orphans so that they could enter occupations deemed by Germans to be productive and therefore conducive to Jewish citizenship, began Reform services in 1811. Its founders were closely associated with a Masonic lodge.⁴²

The *haskalah*, social acceptance, even as limited and begrudgingly given in Germany, and the expanding role of government control over formerly Jewish civil and judicial powers like marriage and education broke down the traditional Jewish community structure and threatened community cohesion.⁴³

Traditional Jews did not seek inclusion in gentile society. They also viewed the Christological imagery in Masonry as anathema. To them, entrance into the Masons symbolized the radicalism of Reform.⁴⁴ By opposing the Masonic funeral ceremony, Rice rejected not only Masonry but also acculturation and Reform.

Those who split from Baltimore Hebrew likely viewed his attack as a frontal assault on the very rights being fought for in the Germanic states against antisemitism. That they immediately sought aid from the Hamburg Temple was, again, no coincidence. The first minister of that congregation, Gotthold Salomon, was a Mason who openly advocated inclusion as a visitor and member of the German lodges.⁴⁵ The founders of Har Sinai craved freedom, democracy, and inclusion. Their fight against gentile opposition to entrance into the Masons informed their fight against rabbinic authority. Jews were already accepted in Masonic ranks in England, France, Holland, and the

United States. In terms of freedom and inclusion in society, the Baltimore reformers, like Rice, were motivated more by conditions in their homeland than in their adopted country.

Charleston Reformers have also been identified as Masons and their first services were conducted in a Masonic hall. Moreover the B'nai B'rith, begun in New York in 1843 as events unfolded in Baltimore, was modeled on the Masonic Order.⁴⁶ The Jewish fraternity served as a social outlet besides providing insurance services but, more importantly for this study, it offered an alternative to synagogue attendance for American Jews and the typical demographic make-up of its members largely matches that of the founders of Har Sinai.⁴⁷

Rice's attack on the Masonic rites and the reformers' dramatic reaction can only be understood within this Euro-American contextual framework.

The Membership and Leadership of Har Sinai

Like the German culture verein, Har Sinai used learned laymen as functionaries. The first readers were Joseph Simpson (1791-1856) and Abraham T. Wachtman (Wachman or Washman) (1811-). Simpson had been a member of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation as early as 1832, the first year his name appeared in the city directory. Both men had been charter members of the Irische Chevra or Baltimore's United Hebrew Benevolent Society (1834), organized to provide aid to members and their families in time of need. Offering a social outlet, this self-help and burial society included most of the leaders of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation including Jacob Arens (Aaron) and Simon Eytinge, later a charter member of Har Sinai.⁴⁸ Besides serving as readers, Wachtman worked as a watchmaker and Simpson as a lapidary and steel engraver.⁴⁹

Wachtman was born in Oldenberg while his wife Joanna (1824-) was born in Hanover. They had four children born in Maryland and one in Cincinnati where they had settled by 1860. Although most remained in Baltimore, seven men who were either charter members of Har Sinai or likely their relatives appear in Cincinnati records where they may have also influenced Reform and the growth of Jewish institutions.⁵⁰

Simpson's is an unusual story among the Har Sinai founders but one that contributes important insights to the whole. The only member born in Vilna, Russian Poland, he was tutored in Hebrew by the town rabbi at an early age and attended rabbinic school. Denied the right to enter the legal profession, the Jewish community encouraged his study of halachah, or Jewish law. Following the dictate of not earning a livelihood from Torah, he became an artist engraving in gold, silver, and stone but Russian as well as German law limited Jewish participation in trades. He traveled from place to place serving as a lapidary and tutoring youth. After living in Hungary and a stay in England he went to Göttingen in Hanover (Germany) in 1819 for professional reasons finally arriving in America in 1831. He then came to the United States for religious and economic freedom and opportunity.⁵¹

A funeral remembrance for Simpson described him as “a descendent of a family distinguished for its Talmudic knowledge. He himself had donated the prime of his life to the study of the Talmud, and other disciplines of Jewish theology.” Seemingly this is hardly the type of individual one would expect to serve as reader of this fledgling society. Yet the speaker provided the explanation and, by doing so, supports the conclusion that individual choice was a co-equal force with anti-rabbanism; “he was also very distinguished by his very liberality in matters of religion for although he was a strict

observer of every particle of our religion, nevertheless he granted every body [SIC] the fullest liberty in regard of religious views.” Further, Simpson shunned the hypocrisy of people who claimed Orthodoxy but who failed to observe ritual. Called “the Vindicator of Israel,” he wrote a pamphlet attacking Christian missionaries to the Jews. Thus Simpson shared Rice’s erudition, ritual, and pride in Jewish distinctiveness without, however, imposing it on others.

Reader Simpson was eulogized as an “honest and virtuous man” who, although he had “made a heap of money,” died without substantial assets because of his philanthropy. For example, he had joined and supported a youth organization “for the cultivation of their mind and religious feeling.” Simpson, like the other members, had brought his cosmopolitan travel experiences, skills, and background to Baltimore where he prospered. He was an individualist who flourished with freedom and sought that liberty within Judaism.

Max Sutro (1817-) served as Har Sinai’s first lecturer until he was succeeded by Moritz (Morris) Brown (Braun) (1813-) in 1849.⁵² Although the readers conducted the services using the Hamburg prayer book, much as in Germany Sutro and Brown delivered their own sermons besides those from Hamburg.

Born in Bavaria and arriving in America in 1841, Max Sutro may have been related to Rabbi Abraham Sutro (1784-1869). Abraham Sutro studied under Wolf Hamburg and was granted ordination from Rabbi Menahem Mendel Steinhardt. He taught at a consistory school in Beverungen before receiving an appointment as district rabbi of Munster and Mark, Westphalia, in 1815. The senior Sutro, a traditionalist, delivered some of the earliest German-language sermons. He defended traditionalism

against Reform but also demonstrated a certain amount of flexibility to the new age. He attempted to improve the schools and supported vocational education, a hallmark of German Jewish Bildung. Isaac Leeser, one of his students, corresponded with him for decades after arriving in America.⁵³ Another of Abraham Sutro's students in Westphalia was James K. Guttheim, who became a leader of moderate Reform in New Orleans.⁵⁴ That both Guttheim and Leeser viewed Abraham Sutro as a mentor, much as was the case with Wolf Hamburg and his students including Rice and Einhorn, reflects the malleability of Jewish education and the options open to individuals of the era. A traditional upbringing could lead one on the path to either Reform or the maintenance of tradition.

Max Sutro served as a key leader beyond his position as lecturer. Acting in behalf of the congregation, he requested Gustavus Poznanski's opinion concerning the abolition of the second day of holidays, a reform reflecting the rejection of the concept of Diaspora. Poznanski supported the change. As discussed below, Poznanski's role as authority for American Reform Judaism and congregations has not been sufficiently recognized. W. Renau, the first president of the Cultus Verein (later Emanu-El), solicited information from Poznanski "on the improvements and new directives in your temple" to lay the foundation for reforms in New York.⁵⁵

Moritz Brown had served as the congregation teacher under Sutro, conducting a day school for the study of Hebrew and German.⁵⁶ At the consecration of a new temple edifice in 1849, he served as preacher while William S. Rayner (1818 or 1822-) acted in the capacity of reader. Rayner opened with a prayer in German followed by a hymn in German song by the choir accompanied by an organist. The Torah reading, passages from Psalms, and a blessing by Rayner were in Hebrew. Brown delivered a sermon in

German and the service was concluded with a psalm song in English by the choir. Thus the service reflected multiple identities - American, Germany, and Jewish, on one hand, and Reform and traditional on the other.⁵⁷

Brown, born in Bavaria, and his wife Adelaide (b. 1821, Bavaria) had three children in Baltimore where he ran a dry goods store. Rayner, who immigrated to Baltimore from Hamburg in 1840 on the same ship as Rice, was a prosperous merchant from Oberelsbach, Bavaria and his wife Amalie (or Emily) Jacobson Rayner (b. 1822) hailed from Hamburg. His property was valued at \$7000 in 1850. After the Civil War he became a financier, and bank and railroad director, and is ultimately listed with real estate valued at \$400,000 and as a capitalist with personal property of \$100,000 with two addresses. Rayner helped Einhorn translate the first German prayer book used in Baltimore. One historian of Maryland Jewry claims that “it was mainly through his influence that David Einhorn became rabbi” of Har Sinai. Subsequently a long term congregation president, Rayner favored a Sunday service. He founded the Baltimore Hebrew Orphan Asylum donating its first building besides serving as vice president of the Baltimore Poor Association and manager for the Home for Incurables.⁵⁸

As has been shown, Brown and Rayner, like all of the religious functionaries of Har Sinai before Einhorn, followed the tradition of not making a living from the study of the Torah but rather supporting themselves and their families from other economic pursuits. They were also neither dependent on their positions within the synagogue nor were they in a superior religious role in relation to the other congregants. They gained respect in the community as businesspeople, family men, and religiously knowledgeable individuals.

Moritz Bettmann or Bettman served as Har Sinai's first secretary. In this capacity he wrote the letter to Gotthold Salomon informing him of the conditions facing Jews in Baltimore, requesting prayer books and sermons, and noting the society's decision to follow the Hamburg model.⁵⁹

Samuel Wolf Dellevie (also Dellevire) (1807-1893) was a tobacconist, or dealer in cigars, for several years in partnership with a man named Brand. Born in Hamburg, Dellevie arrived in Baltimore from Hanover in 1834 and married Pretty Naumbaugh six years later. First treasurer and future congregation president, Dellevie was a key individual for the adoption of the Hamburg model since he provided information to the members of Har Sinai concerning the Hamburg prayer book. Samuel Dellevie, Lawrence Lowman, and William Moser led the building committee for the 1849 sanctuary.⁶⁰

Moses Hutzler (1800-1889) arrived in the United States from Hagenbach, Bavaria in 1838 with his second wife, Caroline Neuberger Hutzler (b. 1804), and five children (two more were born in Baltimore). He had cousins in Richmond but he decided to settle in Baltimore where the ship debarked. Using skill learned in German, he became a ladies' tailor. When this failed he moved to Frederick and became a peddler. By 1840 he was back in Baltimore where he established a small store that, in time, expanded into a department store. After first meeting at Sarasota Street near Gay, Har Sinai conducted services in the Hutzler's home. The household remained highly observant for at least a decade after the founding of the congregation, and a son and grandson served as presidents of Associated Jewish Charities during the twentieth century. He was honored as a member of the Amicable Lodge #25 A.F. & A. Masons.⁶¹

Bavarian Isaac Hamburger (1826 -), who became a member shortly after Har Sinai was founded, started as a tailor then opened a clothing store in 1850 that became Isaac Hamburger and Sons department store. The store later branched out to include a Washington location. In later years he and his wife Rebecca (b. 1831, Bavaria) had six children born in Maryland, a nurse, a servant, and his mother living with them. Attesting to the fluidity of associations and labels, he became the first reader of Oheb Shalom when it opened in 1853. This moderate Reform congregation was largely composed of individuals involved in the clothing industry who found membership in the other congregations problematic because they frequently traveled for business. That he became the reader attests to his knowledge of Hebrew and the services.⁶²

Simon Frankenstein, the least identifiable of the founders, was a butcher.⁶³

Bernard Greensfelder (1812-1868), the congregation's first president, ran a succession of businesses. With his brother Sigmund B. Greensfelder as president, Greensfelder Brothers and Laupheimer Wholesale Druggists were "dealers in patent medicines, paints, oils and perfumery," according to an 1842 advertisement. That year he was sufficiently prosperous to purchase a warehouse at auction for \$2515. Later under the name Greensfelder and Heilbrun Variety Store and then Bernard Greensfelder and Son, he sold dry goods. By the 1850s he and his wife Hellen, both born in Bavaria, employed live-in servants from Germany as did other congregants. In 1865 he posted a \$50 bond as treasurer of the Clisophic Hebrew Literary and Dramatic Association.⁶⁴

Joseph Lavie possible appears as both Levi and Levy, a second hand dealer who becomes confectioner and clothing store owner and then a dry goods and jewelry dealer

or Joseph M. Levy, who is listed without an occupation on Pratt Street. Samuel Dellevie, Ignatz Lauer, and Simon Rosenthal also had businesses on Pratt.⁶⁵

Congregation president during the dedication ceremony in 1849, Lewis Lauer (1817-) conducted a trimming and variety store business in 1842. He was born in Hesse-Darmstadt as was his wife Sarah (1822-). Their home later included eight children born in Maryland, his brother Alexander, and four servants. He rose financially and ran an import and wholesale business by the time of his presidency.⁶⁶

Bavarian-born, Isaac (1820? -) and Lawrence (1818-) Lowman ran two Lowman and Bro. dry goods stores and ranked as merchants. In later years Lawrence owned a “ladies & gents furnishing business.”⁶⁷

William W. Moser (b. 1813, Austria) and Simon Rosenthal (b. 1826, Hanover) were partners in a wholesale and retail dry goods store and, by 1845, a lace dealership.⁶⁸ Moser had arrived in Baltimore in 1841 with his occupation noted as weaver. Unlike most members, he married a woman born in Maryland, Sarah. By 1849 Rosenthal, a Har Sinai vice president, ran the Annapolis House bar, restaurant, and pool hall in Annapolis that catered to Naval Academy cadets who sang a song extolling their experiences with the man they called Rosey-Gosey.⁶⁹

Samuel N. Pike (1822-1872), listed in the 1842 *Baltimore City Directory* as a dry goods merchant, was unique among Har Sinai’s charter members. He was born in New York, educated in Connecticut, had a grocery/dry goods business in Florida, and successfully speculated in cotton before moving to Richmond where he ran an import wine and liquor store. In Baltimore he sold wholesale dry goods but remained in the city for only two years before moving to St Louis and then to Cincinnati where he ran dry

goods, grocery, and then liquor distillery businesses ultimately opening the city's first opera house. This wanderer finally ended up in New York.⁷⁰

Samuel Wolf (1816 -), the first treasurer, ran a fancy store and became a dry goods merchant. He was born in Hamburg and his wife Matilda (1818 or 1823-) was also born in Germany. They had three children in Baltimore before moving to Cincinnati during the 1850s where he became a cigar maker.⁷¹

German-born, William S. Wolf (1818-), the first vice president, was a self employed brass founder and tinner who, at one stage, lived with William S. Rayner.⁷²

A few of these individuals participated in partisan politics. Although never aspiring to office, Joseph Simpson worked for the Democratic Party on the ward and district level. In 1856 Democrats "tender[ed] him the last honors [SIC] by tending his funeral as a political body." Moses Hutzler, on the other hand, became a Republican because of his abolitionist sentiments. With similar sympathies, William Rayner served as vice president of the Union Relief Association.⁷³

Finally Simon Eyttinge (1788-1869) ran clothing, furniture, and variety stores as well as a pawnbroker establishment.⁷⁴ He was the only charter member of Har Sinai from Holland (where his wife Ann was also born) and the only one to arrive in Baltimore by 1830. A jeweler in Philadelphia prior to his arrival in Baltimore, he had an extended family in the former city. His brothers Barnett and Philip sold fancy goods to the wholesale trade and Solomon was a merchant. Solomon had first arrived in Baltimore in 1816 and Barnett four years hence. Thus the brothers probably paved the way for Simon.⁷⁵ From 1834 to 1836 Simon served as the second president of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation. The only official to break from the parent congregation, Eyttinge may have

been close friends with Jacob Arens, a fellow Dutchman and early settler. All others with similar backgrounds remained at Baltimore Hebrew. In 1844 Eytinge became a charter member of the Hebrew Love and Friendship Benevolent Society of Baltimore along with members of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation.⁷⁶

One of Simon Eytinge's daughters, Elizabeth, married Abraham Nachman. Abraham Nachman became a critical supporter of David Einhorn and the main signer for Har Sinai for the protest against I.M. Wise and the Cleveland conference. The marriage related the family to John Dyer, and his wife, Babette, both of whom were Nachmans (they were cousins; Dyer had changed his name when he arrived in America). The Dyer family arrived in Baltimore in 1812, earlier than the members of Har Sinai. According to local historians, the Dyers' Baltimore butcher shop became the first packing house in the United States. The major organizer and first president of Baltimore Hebrew, John and his children were so integrally involved and comfortable with the parent congregation that they did not join Har Sinai. Son, Leon, for example, facilitated the purchase of the Lloyd Street synagogue and served seven years as president including during the Har Sinai schism. He quelled bread riots as acting mayor of Baltimore, won appointment as quartermaster-general of Louisiana while conducting business in New Orleans, fought for Texas independence, joined Winfield Scott's staff during the Seminole War, and served as quartermaster-general during the Mexican War. Ironically Leon Dyer planted Reform in California when he settled in San Francisco and helped found the first congregation on the west coast. The congregation rabbi, Julius Eckman, previously served at Beth Shalome in Richmond and KKBE in Charleston.⁷⁷ Another son, Isidore, fostered Reform in Galveston, Texas where he started a congregation that initially met in his home. When

daughter Rosanna Dyer Osterman drowned in a Mississippi River boat accident in 1866, she became the first major female Jewish philanthropist in America bequeathing money to Reform congregations in Galveston and Houston besides numerous other causes.⁷⁸

Much can be learned from the Eytinge-Dyer relationship and the actions of the Dyer family. The latter likely reflected their personal beliefs and again illustrate the ambiguity of the era and place.⁷⁹ One could be loyal to one's congregation while still sympathetic to Reform. In Baltimore a tradition developed of repeated congregation schisms that seemingly had little impact or relation to interpersonal relations between the memberships. Religious observance and affiliation during much of the nineteenth century was apparently a separate sphere that could nurture but not disrupt the complex web of social, familial, and business ties. The rabbis fought among themselves but the congregants came from similar backgrounds and rose equally in socio-economic, cultural, business, and civic terms. In fact Sigmund Greensfelder, Samuel's brother, and Michael Heilbrun, Samuel's partner, remained with Baltimore Hebrew as did M. Nachman, Abraham's relative.⁸⁰

In summary, of the early members and leaders of Har Sinai one each came from Austria, Holland, New York, and Russian Poland, and all of the rest from the Germanic states. Of the latter several had ties directly with Hamburg and most were from Bavaria.⁸¹ The congregants boasted a variety of occupations virtually all of which fall under the two categories of skilled crafts and store ownership. None were peddlers or clerks at the time of the congregation's incorporation. Almost all demonstrated upward mobility in succeeding decades. Thus while few could be defined as wealthy in 1842, these people were not poor. They were independent and had reasonable expectations of

rising. They, like their counterparts in the Reform Society of Israelites, can be classified as youthful, expectant capitalists. With the exceptions of Eytinge (1788), Simpson (1791), and Hutzler (1800), all charter members were born between 1807 and 1826 with eleven ages 16 to 29 and three ages 30 to 35 in 1842. Their economic status reflected their age. In contrast to the Charleston reformers, it also reflected relatively recent arrival. Pike was born in America, Eytinge arrived before 1830, Simpson in 1831, and the others within the decade of the congregation's founding. From their ages and the few known dates of arrival, it can be deduced that most came within five years of that date. Pike was the most geographically mobile and four others may have eventually gone to Cincinnati but at least two thirds remained tied to Baltimore. This contrast with the geographic mobility of Charleston Reformers reflects the decline of the Charleston economy after 1830 and the continued prosperity of Baltimore.⁸²

For Oheb Shalom, another Baltimore congregation that resulted from a schism a decade later, Marsha Rozenblit concluded that membership differed slightly in response to the needs of different occupations, but that individual preference and not a socio-economic explanation largely accounted for choice.⁸³ Generally the men who started Har Sinai illustrated negligible differences from the rank and file of Baltimore Hebrew. Although by 1842 the original members and leaders of Baltimore Hebrew were more acculturated and established financially than those of Har Sinai, the typical member of Baltimore Hebrew remained a relatively recent immigrant from Germany just beginning the road to success. Rice had only arrived in 1840 from Hamburg and German remained the main language in the parent congregation well into the 1850s.⁸⁴ Conversely a few of Har Sinai's leaders including key religious functionaries exhibited close and early ties to

Baltimore Hebrew and ancillary organizations. Although a difference in arrival date from Europe between the charter members of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation and Har Sinai is evident, new arrivals also continued to join Baltimore Hebrew. Thus the findings of this essay support Rozenblit's conclusions. Rice's actions were just more rancorous to some members of Baltimore Hebrew than others, and they made the choice to leave that freed them to plot a more dramatic course.

The Issue of Reform

Several historians have stressed the traditional nature of many early Har Sinai practices, so much so that the degree of Reform is highly questioned before the appointment of David Einhorn as rabbi. Although an organ was used, men continued to cover their heads during services, services were conducted largely in Hebrew, women sat apart and maintained dietary laws in their homes, and the traditional two days of festivals were observed. Most kept the Sabbath, many doing so strictly. Charles Rubenstein, a later congregation rabbi and historian, writes, for example, "The form of Judaism followed by the Har Sinai Verein would be today considered Orthodox or very conservative..."⁸⁵ Indeed in 1854 when services were conducted by Dr. Morris Weiner for several members on Sunday following the example of Hungarian Reform congregations, the board of trustees voted to lock the temple barring them from entrance. With Weiner as lecturer and leader, this group met as a separate congregation for six months before realizing that their split jeopardized the very existence of the mother congregation and they rejoined.⁸⁶ The stress on tradition lends weight to the interpretation that true Reform did not take place until after the Civil War when congregations built new edifices and altered practices, and finally with the creation of a

national Reform institutional framework and philosophy through a series of conferences in ensuing decades.⁸⁷

Indeed, specific reforms become a veritable litmus test for Reform. The use of an organ, removal of head coverings for men, mixed seating, and the abolition of the second day of holidays head the list. This issue came to a head a decade ago with an article by Marc Lee Raphael and rejoinder by Leon Jick.⁸⁸

Raphael largely dismisses the significance of specific alterations of ritual as a clear denotation of Reform but instead argues, “Perhaps the single best measure of ‘commitment to Reform Judaism’ before the mid-1890s is an explicit use of the term Reform...” Jick blurred the differences between him and Raphael by suggesting that Raphael’s Washington Hebrew Congregation example was simply a variation in the ambiguous pattern that Jick had already outlined in *The Americanization of the Synagogue*. To Jick “to attach labels or to define the precise moment at which a congregation is transformed from ‘orthodox’ to reform” is “not essential” and in fact leads one to “overlook the complex process of change...” And yet Jick partly contradicts himself when he writes, “once congregations arrogated to themselves the right to decide what should or should not be observed, the floodgates of change were opened.”⁸⁹

Har Sinai meets both of these criteria. It both defined itself as Reform and opened the floodgates to change. It also went one step further by basing the name and the changes on a well defined philosophy. That was the real Reform. Creating seeming ambiguity, Orthodox and Conservative congregations and their precursors could institute sermons, decorum, mixed seating, or other changes and Reform temples of the last half century could return to tradition. Yet their underlying philosophical differences, first

articulated by the leaders of Charleston's Reform Society of Israelites and Baltimore's Har Sinai Verein, is what separates the three movements.

Even given the traditional nature of many of their practices, Shusterman observes, "in their hearts they were reformers, liberals, experimentalists, innovators."⁹⁰ This article maintains that Har Sinai was begun by Reformers not only in their hearts but also in their minds and in their consistent theological theory.

Transference: Migration of People, Ideas, and Institutions

Just as ideas filtered from Germany to America, they moved within the United States. This continuous internal migration created and regenerated communities and served as a conduit for Reform.

Most of the earliest Jewish migrants to stay for a substantial amount of time in Baltimore had previously lived in Lancaster and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Richmond, Virginia. Although some had participated in congregations in those locations and indeed remained members, few of these were among the charter members of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation. From 1820 to 1830 Philadelphia was the main city of previous residence. Often members of that city's Mikveh Israel or Rodeph Shalom, several of these individuals helped found the first Baltimore congregation.⁹¹

At least three models for the introduction of Reform are evident. The initial Charleston experience exemplifies indigenous Reform as part of the Americanization process. Reforms at KKBE under Poznanski and at Har Sinai illustrate how Reform could be imported from Germany as part of the immigrants' cultural baggage. That both indigenous and imported Reform reflected acculturation argues for the transatlantic nature of the forces of modernization. Reform in Charleston and Baltimore moved across

the country with congregations begun as Reform by migrants from the parent congregations or those familiar with events in those cities thereby demonstrating the third model. Clearly Jews in the south provided critical national leadership.

In this regard Poznanski deserves credit as the first major Reform minister in America.⁹² Although members of the Reform Society of Israelites steal his thunder because he seemingly follows their lead, it was Poznanski who instituted the reforms at KKBE. The following decade Maurice Mayer concluded, “if we at all can talk about a fatherhood of reform in America, Mr. Poznanski from here in Charleston has to be accredited with it, even insofar as it concerns the ‘German congregations,’ and he deserves a much higher recognition, sine he reformed a Portuguese congregation...” Mayer argued this not only because of Poznanski’s activities in Charleston but also because his role extended to Reform congregations including Har Sinai and New York’s Emanu-El through example and counsel. Poznanski also influenced Isaac Mayer Wise and Reform in Albany, New York. In 1850 Wise visited KKBE to apply for the position vacated by Poznanski. He accepted the position only to reject it on his return to Albany.⁹³

Wise returned to Charleston to hear a debate between Morris Raphall and Poznanski.⁹⁴ Poznanski championed Reform against the traditionalist position of the New York rabbi. Since Raphall is considered the premier orator in the contemporary American rabbinate of the era, it is obvious that Poznanski was viewed as an able, if not the most important foil. During the debate Raphall asked Poznanski if he believed in a personal messiah and resurrection from the death. This was an important issue separating Reform and traditional camps. Apparently from the audience Wise responded to the question in the negative. Enemies within his Albany congregation used his apparent

heresy against him, and, after a violent confrontation, he left the Albany congregation in 1850. A new Reform congregation, Anshe Emeth, was created by Wise's supporters where he instituted the Reforms of KKBE although without the introduction of the three year cycle for Torah reading and the abolition of the second day of holidays and the last Feast of Weeks. Wise had still not traveled as far along the Reform road as Poznanski. This he would do only when he accepted a pulpit in Cincinnati where he ultimately becomes the institution builder of the Reform movement.

Wise's story is well known. It is recounted here to apply an additional meaning. With hindsight Wise, David Einhorn, and Einhorn's sons-in-law and disciples, Emil G. Hirsch and Kaufmann Kohler led nineteenth century Reform. Yet for the first decade and more Poznanski was clearly the primary leader.⁹⁵

Both KKBE and Har Sinai continued to serve as incubators for Reform. With the graduate decline of Charleston after 1830, many Jews relocated to Columbia, South Carolina where they started a congregation. Others went to New Orleans, Mobile, Galveston bringing Reform with them.⁹⁶ When Jews in Philadelphia moved in the direction of Reform, they turned to Baltimore for guidance.⁹⁷ Einhorn intervened to encourage Samuel Hirsch to serve Philadelphia's Keneseth Israel as rabbi and preacher, and with Samuel Adler to accept the pulpit at New York's Emanu-El.⁹⁸ Historian Leonard Rogoff has argued that Har Sinai served as the center for the periphery Reform congregations in North Carolina, an argument extended by Amy Hill Shevitz for Wheeling, West Virginia.⁹⁹ As previously noted Leon and Isidore Dyer gave Reform roots in San Francisco and Galveston, two cities whose Jewish communities and rabbis formed state and regional centers of Reform.

The Atlantic served more as a bridge than a boundary between rabbis and laymen plying its waters. With them came ideas and institutions. The ideas and institutions spread through American and adjusted to specifically local and American conditions through the migration of laypeople and rabbis, intertwined links of family and business, and newspaper and letter writing.

These and other insights shed light on southern history writ large as well as raise additional questions. Obviously the south has never been an area composed solely of white and black Christians. The movement of Jews into, and across the south are integral parts of the region's history that give new importance to the region in terms of national impact. Further, while many Protestants were drawn to the second Great Awakening, many of the region's Jews moved toward rationalism and secularism. Jewish actions reflected modernization, urbanization, and a cosmopolitan worldview in a region not well known for those characteristics. Yet these Jews followed these paths partly to gain acceptance in southern and American society. Why did going seemingly against the grain work? Yet the issue is obviously more complex. Perhaps Jews sought and gained acceptance generally most from the urban middle and upper class gentile society that more closely shared their values. Again this emphasizes the region's diversity.

APPENDIX

Letter from Moritz Bettmann, Har Sinai Verein secretary, to Gotthold Salomon, 1842, Baltimore Jewish Historical Society Records, 1841-1963, microfilm 829, AJA.

A noble cause will make one bold. Knowing that good causes will always be received by you, we are therefore sending you a few lines asking you also to

devote a minor fraction of your precious time to our new “Verein,” which was founded about five weeks ago.

If you ever received an account of the spiritual conditions of the Israelites living in this city, based on strictest truth, you of course know that it is very deplorable. Superstition, which has been fought so vigorously in Europe, appears to be even more unhampered and unrestrained in this free country, where good as well as evil has vast opportunities. Superstition is greater here than even among the Orthodox Rabbis of Europe whose fanaticism is limited by the authoritative decisions of the government.

There are two congregations in this city, each of them has its “shul” or synagogue. One minister, Mr. Abraham Rice, is guarding both of them. He is guarding their souls so that they may not be disturbed in their sound sleep. If reason has succeeded in rousing the stupefied soul from its rest, if it is restless and tormented by evil dreams, a soothing potion is quietly being prepared for which the precious ingredients have been taken from the larder of mystics.

Such is the man who is supposed to give a good ring to the name “Jew.” Is he the man who is supposed to make a Jew a worthy citizen of the Republic? A Jew, who has transferred to this country his haggling mind, his wrong principles, will be worse in this country. The Jew, who is finally beginning to see the light of the day, does not find encouragement in this country, and he is humbling himself under the yoke of the parson. The Jew, whose notions of religion are pure, whose reasons conquered the power of habit, is lonely in this country in the midst of a big crowd. He does not attend any public services, because they do not appeal

either to his heart or his reason. He leaves it up to chance to stimulate his soul to meditation.

In order to fight this evil condition, we have founded a "Verein" called Har Sinai and resolved to arrange services, the way they are arranged at the Temple in Hamburg. In order to be able to do this, we most respectfully request your gracious assistance, also one dozen prayer books, one dozen hymn books, the music that goes with them, and we also ask for some of your sermons to be able to start services as soon as possible on the coming holidays. We would be very glad to receive them in the near future. To buy the objects mentioned above we herewith assign to you \$40.00 payable in Bremen at sight. Should this be insufficient to cover the cost, we will gratefully remit the balance in our next letter and if the opposite should be the case, we ask for more prayer books.

Our Verein is young indeed and still very weak in every respect, but its few members are animated by the most mature zeal for the advancement and the success of the good cause and we will work for it, if you will assist us with your kind advice, for which we do not hope without reason, considering your reputation as a man, who advances all good causes.

Finally, we should like to ask you to be kind enough to notify us in which way we can receive the *Judenzeitung* by Dr. Philipson.

Most respectfully yours,

M. Bettman
Secretary – Har Sinai Verein

The author researched this paper as a Director's Fellow at the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (2004) and as a Mason Fellow (Spring 2005) at the College of William and Mary. He benefited greatly from feedback from an April 2005 presentation to the department of religion faculty at the latter and greatly appreciates the support of both institutions and the assistance of the staff at the archives and at the Jewish Museum of Maryland. The author also thanks Barabara J. Sibold for her careful reading of the article and for obtaining and translating a key article.

¹ The literature on Reform in Charleston is extensive. Key works include Gary P. Zola, *Isaac Harby of Charleston, 1788-1818* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1994); Zola, "The First Reform Prayer Book in America: The Liturgy of the Reform Society of Israelites," *Platforms and Prayer Books* ed by Dana Evan Kaplan (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002): 99-118; James W. Hagy, *This Happy Land: The Jews of Colonial and Antebellum Charleston* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1993); Theodore Rosengarten and Dale Rosengarten, eds, *A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2002); Robert Liberles, "Conflict Over Reforms: The Case of Beth Elohim, Charleston, South Carolina," *The American Synagogue: A Sanctuary Transformed*, ed. by Jack Wertheimer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 274-96; Solomon Breibart, *The Rev. Mr. Gustavus Poznanski: First American Jewish Reform Minister* (Charleston, SC: Congregation K.K. Beth Elohim, 1979); Breibart, "Penina Moise: Southern Jewish Poetess," *Jews of the South* ed by Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier with Malcolm Stern (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 31-43; Isaac Harby, "Harby's Discourse on the Jewish Synagogue," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 32 (1931): 49-51; Allan Tarshish, *Since 1749 – The Story of K.K. Beth Elohim of Charleston, S.C.: American Judaism through More Than Two Centuries* (Charleston, SC: Congregation K.K. Beth Elohim, 1976); Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in American Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Leon Jick, *The Americanization of the Synagogue: 1820-1870* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1976; 1992); and the comments on the debate between Meyer and Jick in Mark K. Bauman, "Perspectives: History from a Variety of Vantage Points," *American Jewish History* 90 (March 2002): 3-12.

² On the history of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation see Adolf Guttmacher, *A History of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Nidche Israel, 1830-1905* (Baltimore, MD: Lord Baltimore Press, 1905); Rose Greenberg, *The Chronicle of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, 1830-1975* (Baltimore: Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, 1976).

³ Ira Rosenwaike indicates that Jacob Aaron arrived in Philadelphia from his native Holland in 1820 and was in Baltimore by the following year. He was the proprietor of a second hand clothing firm and considered a "respectable citizen" according to his obituary. Rosenwaike lists Aaron's death as March 31, 1842. According to one Baltimore Hebrew Congregation historian, Har Sinai's first service was conducted May 15, 1842. With only six weeks between the events it seems extremely likely that Aaron and Arens are different spellings of the same name. The names of several members of Har Sinai appear with spelling variations. See Ira Rosenwaike, "The Jews of Baltimore: 1820-1830," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 67 (March 1978): 247-48; Greenberg, *Chronicle*, 13.

⁴ Isaac M. Fein, *The Making of an American Jewish Community: The History of Baltimore Jewry from 1773-1920* (Philadelphia, 1971); Isadore Blum, *The Jews of Baltimore* (Baltimore: Historical Review Publishing Company, 1910), 12; Ira Rosenwaike, "The Founding of Baltimore's First Jewish Congregation: Fact vs. Fiction," *American Jewish Archives* 28 (1976): 119-25. The Jewish population in 1840 has been estimated at 1,000 and in 1846, 1,500. See Lance Sussman, "The Economic Life of the Jews of Baltimore as Reflected in the City Directories: 1819-1840," 2 (term paper, Hebrew Union College, May 17, 1977), Small Collections 663, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter cited as AJA). On Har Sinai Verein's split from Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, see William S. Rayner, *Souvenir Jubilee Year Har Sinai Congregation, 1842-1892* (Baltimore: Guggenheim, Weil, and Co., 1892), 6-7; Charles A. Rubenstein, *History of Har Sinai Congregation of the City of Baltimore* (Baltimore: Kohn and Pollack, 1918); Jick, *The Americanization of the Synagogue*, 71 ff. Rayner, who had arrived in Baltimore in 1840, knew the founders and was a congregation reader and leader. Rubenstein based much of his story on Rayner's account. Rubenstein's volume included a copy of the act of incorporation. For a sympathetic view of Rice and his struggles against innovation and for tradition, see Israel Tabak, "Rabbi Abraham Rice of Baltimore: Pioneer of Orthodox Judaism in America," *Tradition* 7 (Summer 1965): 100-20.

⁵ Isaac Leeser, "The Israelites of Baltimore," *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* [hereafter *Occident*], II, February 1845. (all articles from this newspaper are available ONLINE at <http://www.Jewish-history.com/Occident>, accessed January 2006). In the same "News Items" section Lesser reported on a similar undertaking in New York, "We hear it reported that a society or congregation having in view a reform *à la mode de Hamburg*, has been established, and that a Mr. [Rev. Leo] Merzbach[er], a German, is to be the preacher. . . . [members] must be for the most part persons but lately arrived in this country, who have brought with them the spirit of 'young Germany,' allas [SIC] 'experiment in religion and politics.'" Reform at the Hamburg Temple was limited by government sanction at the instigation of the Orthodox community. According to Rayner (*Souvenir Jubilee*, 9), "Talmudic recitations which had lost all devotional interest were relinquished. Prayers in the vernacular and soul stirring hymns with organ accompaniment were introduced instead; otherwise it was a mere beginning towards reform as to dogmatic differences between it and the orthodox creed of Judaism." On the German and especially Hamburg origins of most of the early Reform congregations in America see David Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: KTAV, 1967 [orig. pub. 1907]). Later authors have largely followed Philipson's analysis. See, for example, Alan Silverstein, *Alternative to Assimilation: The Response of Reform Judaism to American Culture, 1840-1930* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1994), 18-19; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 226, 236-7 (for New York's Emanu-El and Merzbacher). Silverstein emphasizes parallels between the development of Reform Judaism and Christianity in the United States. Meyer writes, "[t]he classical Reform ideology in America was almost fully developed in Europe and merely transplanted to the United States..." Meyer highlights differences between conditions in America and Europe that made the United States a more conducive environment for the spread and development of Reform.

⁶ Abraham Shusterman, *The Legacy of a Liberal: The Miracle of Har Sinai Congregation* (Har Sinai Congregation: Baltimore, 1967), 9.

⁷ Rayner quoted in Rubenstein, *Har Sinai*, n.p.

⁸ cf. Jick, *The Americanization of the Synagogue*, 79, 80-81.

⁹ Besides the histories of Maryland Jewry and Rayner, *Souvenir Jubilee*, 5, see Jeffrey Stiffman, "Prologomena to the Study of the Jewish Community of Baltimore," (MA thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1965).

¹⁰ Michael A. Meyer, "German-Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century America," in Jacob Katz, ed., *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1987), 249, 251 (quotation), and *passim*. It is questionable that the members of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation lacked identity with Germany. Rice never mastered English and Har Sinai offered Hebrew, English, and German instruction. (Fein, *Making of an American Jewish Community*, 69) Moreover German culture was a dominant force in the city. The city hosted several German language newspapers and German was taught in the public schools until 1917. Regardless of congregational affiliation, Jews joined the Concordia German Society, German charity organizations, building and loan associations, and music and literary societies. A local company printed prayer books for Har Sinai and Oheb Shalom in German. Louis F. Cahn, *The History of Oheb Shalom, 1853-1953* (Baltimore: Oheb Shalom Congregation, 1953), 12.

The extensive literature on the concept of Bildung and its impact on Jews in Germany includes George L. Mosse, "Jewish Emancipation Between Bildung and Respectability," in Jehuda Reinhartz and Walter Schatzberg, eds, *The Jewish Response to German Culture* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England for Clark University, 1985), 1-16; Jacob Katz, "German Culture and the Jews," in Reinhartz and Schatzberg, eds, *Jewish Response*, 85-99; David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780-1840* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); H.I. Bach, *The German Jew: A Synthesis of Judaism and Western Civilization, 1730-1930* (London: Oxford University Press, 1984). One of purposes stated by Har Sinai's incorporators for joining together was "for their mutual improvement in moral and religious knowledge," a concept perfectly in accord with Bildung. The Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment involved the regeneration of Jews and Judaism. Such regeneration, or modernization, became a prerequisite for emancipation in Germany. See copy of Act of Incorporation of Har Sinai Verein Society, 1844, SC 668, AJA.

¹¹ For this and following, see Ismar Schorsch, "Emancipation and the Crisis of Religious Authority: The Emergence of the Modern Rabbinate," in Werner E. Mosse, Arnold Paucker, and Reinhard Rurup, eds, *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 German-Jewish History* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1981), 205-47, (230 for quotations).

¹² Schorsch, "Emancipation," 208-9, 228-29, 231. In 1826 the Vienna Reform congregation was led by a preacher and a cantor, a model followed by the Hamburg Temple and also in Amsterdam, Bohemia, Württemberg, and elsewhere. Philipson, *Reform Movement*, 76.

¹³ Uriel Tal, "German-Jewish Social Thought in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," in Mosse, Paucker, and Rurup, eds, *Revolution and Evolution*, 313; Bach, *German Jew*, 83. By taking the name Har Sinai, Baltimore reformers emphasized the revelation of the Ten

Commandments at Mount Sinai and the primacy of the Bible over later commentaries. Shusterman, *Legacy of a Liberal*, 12.

¹⁴ The authority of the Talmud was a key element in many of the conflicts in Germany between rabbis. This included the conflict between Abraham Geiger and S.A. Titkin. See Philipson, *Reform Movement*, chapter 3, “The Geiger-Titkin Affair,” 69-70 (for Einhorn’s rejection of Talmudic authority), 342 (for Isaac Mayer Wise). German Reformer rabbis advocated Reform through rabbinical conferences, a policy and philosophy they transported to America and reached greatest fruition under David Einhorn and his sons-in-law, Emil G. Hirsch and Kaufmann Kohler. Einhorn and Leopold Stein of Burgkunstadt, Bavaria, were two of Geiger’s defenders. Stein’s students resided in Baltimore and Cincinnati. See Meyer, “German-Jewish Identity,” 256; Philipson, *Reform Movement*, 72. Harking back to Moses Mendelssohn, Judaism was to be a natural religion based on reason rather than symbolic acts and dogma. Now lacking coercion, the religion’s tools were to be persuasion and instruction, and Judaism could be a confession without an ecclesiastical structure.” The latter implicitly narrowed the authority the rabbis. Initially lacking worldly learning, the rabbis also epitomized what was perceived as Jewish degeneracy. Sorkin, *Transformation*, 70(quotations), 77.

¹⁵ Such individual freedom and rejection of communal control was an outgrowth of the Enlightenment. Bach, *German Jew*, 81-2.

¹⁶ M [oritz] Bettmann to Gotthold Salomon, 1842, Baltimore Jewish Historical Society Records, 1841-1963, microfilm 829, AJA.

¹⁷ For Einhorn and his conflict with Wise, see Meyer, *Response to Reform*, 244-50. Orthodox stalwart Abraham Rice also rejected the Cleveland Conference on the grounds that the rabbis involved were attempting to spread Reform instead of acting as a Beth Din, or Jewish court and that they were not qualified in Talmud. Ironically Rice also argued that a council did not have the right or authority to establish a platform. Tabak describes the exchange of letters in Leiser’s *Occident* “as erudite and as bitter as any pronouncements ever published on the subject” and incorrectly identifies Einhorn as a conference supporter. Tabak, “Rice of Baltimore,” 115 (quotation) -17.

¹⁸ Rayner, *Souvenir Jubilee*, 16-17. Although Leiser’s *Occident* typically ignored Einhorn and Har Sinai when not feuding with them, it carried stories concerning rejection of the Cleveland Platform and the protest over the Board of Delegates of American Israelites. See Frank M. Waldorf, “A Study of Maryland Jewry as Reflected in *The Occident*, 1850-1861,” (term paper, Hebrew Union College, May 24, 1962).

¹⁹ Einhorn, and presumably at least some of his congregants since they did not denounce his position and they did welcome him back, associated the fight to end slavery with the 1848 revolutions in Europe and desire for freedom. Bernard Illoway, of traditional Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, supported slavery, and pled for peace and reconciliation before the war but ultimately supported the southern policy of states’ rights and the right of secession. Isaac M. Fein correlates religious observance and positions on the Civil War in “Baltimore Jews during the Civil War,” *AJHQ* 51 (December 1961): 67-96 (68-69, 70-71, 83-84, for Einhorn and Illoway). See also Shusterman, *Legacy of a Liberal*, 21-3. Meyer argues that lay leaders in America provided the foundation for Reform but that, in contrast to the argument presented here, German rabbis who came to America were required for the “intellectual foundation.” Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 236. The

doctrinal statements at rabbinical conferences were more recordings and extensions of the already extant philosophy than dramatically new theories.

²⁰ Philipson argued that Reform languished until the arrival of rabbinical leaders from Germany. Later historians, as in so many cases, followed Philipson's interpretation. Philipson, *Reform Movement*, 339; Meyer, "German-Jewish Identity," 256; Jick, *Americanization*, 70; Silverstein, *Alternative to Assimilation*, 22.

²¹ Mosse argues that the concept of Bildung was conjoined with that of Sittlichkeit which he defines in part as "the open-endedness and individualism thought necessary for character formation." Mosse, "Jewish Emancipation," 3.

²² Einhorn and I.M. Wise were bitter opponents but Einhorn also attacked Benjamin Szold, newly arrived rabbi of Baltimore's Oheb Shalom. Szold was a proponent of Zacharias Frankel's middle of the road Positive Historical School approach. The attack in the pages of *Sinai* was followed with responses in the Wise's *American Israelite*, the *Asmonean*, and the [New York] *Jewish Herald* in a typical rabbinical newspaper war. See *American Israelite*, December 9, 1859, March 30, 1860, Benjamin Szold, "Einhorn Exposed," (typed column, c. January, 1860), Har Sinai Congregation Collection, 1842-1949, MS 54, Jewish Museum of Maryland, Baltimore.

²³ Philipson, *Reform Movement*, 337.

²⁴ See Zola, *Isaac Harby*, 126-27, 141-42; Hagy, *This Happy Land*, 130-31, 146-49, 154; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 231-32, 234-35. Hagy (p. 149-50) incorrectly states that nothing like the violently anti-rabbanical statements of the Charleston reformers appeared in Europe for at least another two decades. He associates the Reform Society's statements with Sephardim in London. Hagy provides a complete analysis of interpretations concerning Charleston Reform (pp. 128-60, 236-273).

²⁵ Maurice Mayer, "Geschichte des religiösen Umschwunges unter den Israeliten Nordamerikas," *Sinai* 1 (1856), 243. This article was obtained and translated for the author by Barbara Sibold of Cologne, Germany. He greatly appreciates her assistance. See also Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism, A History* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2004), 110.

²⁶ Philipson, *Reform Movement*, 333; Allan Tarshish, "The Charleston Organ Case," *AJHQ* 54 (June 1965): 411-49; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 233-35. Jonathan D. Sarna sees the Charleston organ case as a turning point in American Jewish history because the court's decision that they lacked jurisdiction in re separation of church and state which left decisions up to congregation majorities. Sarna, "The Question of Music in American Judaism: Reflections at 350 Years," *AJH* 91 (June 2003): 195-204.

²⁷ Meyer, "German-Jewish Identity," 255; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 449, n. 32.

²⁸ Philipson, *Reform Movement*, 334-45. The Reform Society of Israelites obviously used the society title but not the cultur verein label.

²⁹ Philipson, *Reform Movement*, chapter 4, "The Hamburg Temple Prayer-Book Controversy," especially 79-85. Bernays, although in some ways reforming practice himself (he has been called the first orthodox rabbi to preach sermons regularly), forbid the use of the prayer book and attempted to revise excommunication for its adherents. Bach, *German Jew*, 87-90, 99.

³⁰ Hagy, *This Happy Land*, 146-7, 246; Eli N. Evans, "Preface," in Rosengarten and Rosengarten, eds, *Portion of the People*, xv. On Harby's anti-rabbanism, see Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 230-32.

³¹ Har Sinai Congregation Minutes, August 3, 1845, 141-43, Baltimore Jewish Historical Society Records, 1841-1963, microfilm 829, AJA.

³² Copy of Simon Eytinge naturalization, Baltimore City Court Records, September 20, 1834, p. 84; copy of Abraham Nachman naturalization certificate, Baltimore City Court Records, September 13, 1851.

³³ Philipson, *Reform Movement*, 109-23, 227 (Berlin); Robert Liberles, *Religious Conflict in Social Context: The Resurgence of Orthodox Judaism in Frankfurt am Main, 1838-1877* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), 43-48. As might be expected, this society also rejected the concept of a personal messiah, and return to Israel. In 1844 Leopold Stein was elected Frankfurt's associate rabbi and became the chief rabbi after the senior rabbi resigned in protest. His moderate reforms ultimately de-railed the more radical reform impulse. (Philipson, 137-8) Charleston's K.K. Beth Elohim, moving toward Reform under Poznanski, had published its own creedal statement in 1841 that was also condemned as heretical. Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 234.

³⁴ Isaac Leeser, "The Frankfurt Reform Society," *Occident*, II, September, 1844; Leeser, "The Congregation of British Jews, London," *Occident*, II, February 1845 (both include references to Hamburg); Leeser, "The Reform Agitation [in Hamburg]," *Occident*, III, January 1846. Although both of these articles appeared after the emergence of Reform in Baltimore, an attack on Poznanski in 1843 referred to the Hamburg Temple. It is obvious from this and numerous other accounts in Leeser's paper that all of the happenings in Germany including the rabbinical conferences were well known and debated among Jews in America. Leeser, "Letter to the Rev. G. Poznanski," *Occident*, I, August 1843; Leeser, "The Dangers of Our Position [the Brunswick, Germany conference]," *Occident*, II, November 1844 (available ONLINE at <http://www.Jewish-history.com/Occident>, accessed January 2006).

³⁵ Meyer (*Response to Modernity*, 236-37) argues that the people in Baltimore must have been aware of events in Hamburg because of the recent new building and prayer book.

³⁶ Alexander Altman, "The New Style of Preaching in Nineteenth-Century German Jewry," *Essays in Jewish Intellectual History* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1981), 190-245 (quotation: 190); Liberles, *Religious Conflict in Social Context*, 23; Sorkin, *Transformation*, 45, 81 (second quotation), 82-5, 120 (third quotation). During the 1820s and 1830s several Germanic states mandated German sermons as part of their policy to modernize Jews so that Jews could qualify as good citizens. In 1826-27 the study of oratory was made mandatory in Bavaria for rabbinic students but the preachers and teachers dominated sermons until this generation of university-trained rabbis entered the field. Sorkin, *Transformation*, 130-31. New York's Emanu-El hired a second rabbi to preach in English in 1868. Meyer, "German-Jewish Identity," 255.

³⁷ Leeser, "Reform Agitation." Surprisingly, Leeser published one of Salomon's sermons in its entirety without editorial comment. "Specimens of German Preachers: Moses and Jethro, a Sermon on Exodus 18 by Gottholt [sic] Salomon, Preacher at the Temple at Hamburg, delivered in 1842," *Occident*, II, April 1844. Leeser also used Kley's 1814 Berlin catechism as the model for his own although others were available and credited

Kley's as "the most suitable." Isaac Leeser, "Preface," *Catechism for Jewish Children* (Philadelphia, 1839) (available ONLINE at <http://www.Jewish-history.com/Occident>, accessed January 2006). This seeming irony reflected Leeser's tendency for acculturation even as he renounced it in others who went beyond him.

³⁸ Silverstein, *Alternative to Assimilation*, 23-4. Silverstein notes that Rev Braun (Brown) at Har Sinai gave sermons during the 1840s. Sermons were delivered in Charleston as early as 1791 but only for special occasions. Among other issues, the dissident reformers petitioned for the introduction of a weekly "discourse" in the vernacular. Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 228. On Gratz and her impact on Lesser see Dianne Ashton, *Rebecca Gratz, Woman and Judaism in Antebellum America* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997). On this traditionalist in America who nonetheless introduced moderate change see Lance Sussman, *Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995). Rice denounced those who rejected a personal messiah and return to Israel in "The Messiah: A Sermon," *Occident*, I, September 1843 and defended the authority of the Talmud and rabbis' right to make laws in "Editorial Correspondence: Letter of Rev. Mr. Rice – The Oral Law," *Occident*, II, August 1844. For a description of two of Rice's sermons including one in which he explains why synagogue honors during services should be given only to Sabbath-observant Jews see Tabak, "Rice of Baltimore," 104-108.

³⁹ Sorkin, *Transformation*, 87-97, 130-39. Sorkin lists numerous books of sermons by Kley and Salomon in his bibliography (226-27).

⁴⁰ Trans. by Leonard Oschry (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970).

⁴¹ See also Sorkin, *Transformation*, 17-18, 112-13. Newspapers, a key source of information on congregational life and Reform, offered an outlet for religious debate in a free society. Taken in this light, the request by Har Sinai to obtain copies of Philipsons' *Judenzeitung* complements the request for prayer books, hymnals, and sermons. Bettmann to Salomon.

⁴² Katz, *Jews and Freemasons*; Liberles, *Religious Conflict in Social Context*, 24-6.

⁴³ The challenge to religious community hegemony over the lives of Jews began in the mid seventeenth century. Sorkin, *Transformation*, 41-44.

⁴⁴ For further linkage between the Masons, Enlightenment, rights, and Reform, see R. William Weisberger, "Freemasonry as a Source of Jewish Civic Rights in Late Eighteenth-Century Vienna and Philadelphia: A Study in Atlantic History," *East European Quarterly* 34 (January 2001): 419-45, a copy of which was graciously provided by Professor Weisberger.

⁴⁵ Katz, *Jews and Freemasons*, 91, 125.

⁴⁶ Zola, *Isaac Harby*, 122, 124; Deborah Dash Moore, *B'nai B'rith and the Challenge of Ethnic Leadership* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981); Meyer, "German-Jewish Identity," 252; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 231. In 1844 Jeshurun Lodge began in Baltimore, the third B'nai B'rith lodge to be established. (Fein, *Making of an American Jewish Community*, 130)

⁴⁷ William Toll, *The Making of an Ethnic Middle Class: Portland Jewry Over Four Generations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982); Hasia R. Diner, *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820-1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 109-113.

⁴⁸ Blum, *Jews of Baltimore*, 7-8; Rosenwaike, "Jews of Baltimore, 1820 to 1830," 259, n. 26.

⁴⁹ Wachtman's son David appears in a circumcision book in 1849 with Baltimore as the residence. See Elizabeth Kessin Berman, "M.S. Pollock's Circumcision Record Book," *Generations* (Fall 1989), 15. Simpson appears in the 1833 and 1849-50 *Baltimore City Directory* and Wachtman in the 1842 and 1845 issues.

⁵⁰ US Census return for Cincinnati, 1870. The other individuals who appear on Cincinnati census returns are Joseph Greensfelder, Isaac Lowman, Samuel Wolf, William Wolf, and Samuel Pike. It is possible that these are other individuals with the same name but information on place and birth and occupation makes it likely that these were the same individuals. Rev. J. Rosenfeld, who had previously served Charleston's KKBE, occupied the pulpit of Bene Jeshurun prior to I.M. Wise's arrival in 1853. Bernhard Bettman was the first president of Cincinnati's United Jewish Charities (1896-1903) and James Lowman presided over that city's Jewish Hospital Association (1889-1904) but it has not been possible to determine any relationship to the Baltimore families. Jonathan D. Sarna and Nancy H. Klein, eds, *The Jews of Cincinnati*, (Cincinnati: HUC-JIR, 1989), 92, 95.

⁵¹ For this and the following see funeral remembrance for Joseph Simpson, 1856; eulogy for Simpson, 1856; unidentified obituary for Simpson; all in Joseph Simpson papers, Jewish Historical Society of Maryland.

⁵² United Hebrew Benevolent Society Charter, March 12, 1834, Histories, Jacob R. Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter cited as AJA); Blum, *Jews of Baltimore*, 7-8, 11-2.

⁵³ Max Sutro traveled from Bremen to Baltimore, Baltimore Immigration and Passenger Lists, 1820-1872, M255, roll 3, list 65. Lawrence Grossman, "Isaac Leiser's Mentor: Rabbi Abraham Sutro, 1784-1869," in *Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein Memorial Volume* ed by Leo Landman (New York, 1980), 151-62; Lance J. Sussman, *Isaac Leiser and the Making of American Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 23-4, 27. Grossman describes Abraham Sutro as an ardent defender of Orthodoxy and critic of Reform.

⁵⁴ Scott M. Langston, "James K. Gutheim as Southern Reform Rabbi, Community Leader, and Symbol," *Southern Jewish History* 5 (2002), 70.

⁵⁵ Mayer, "Geschichte," 199, 201.

⁵⁶ Rubenstein, *Har Sinai*, n.p.

⁵⁷ Account of dedication program reported in *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* as cited in W. Gunther Plaut, *The Growth of Reform Judaism* (New York: World Union of Progressive Judaism, 1965), 9-10.

⁵⁸ In 1856, Rayner also assisted in the reorganization of the Society for Educating Poor and Orphan Hebrew Children into the Hebrew Benevolent Society of which he became president. Samuel Dellevie, Isaac Hamburger, and Ignatius Lauer were also charter members of the later as were prominent members of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation. Dellevie served as treasurer. See US Census from Baltimore, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1890; *Baltimore City Directory*, 1890; Rayner, *Souvenir of Jubilee Year*, 4; Blum, *Jews of Maryland*, xl, 8, 17; Baltimore Hebrew Benevolent Society State Charter, November 18,

1856, AJA; *Occident*, vols 14 and 15, 1857 cited in Waldorf, “A Study of Maryland Jewry,” 17.

⁵⁹ Bettmann to Salomon, 1842.

⁶⁰ Dellevie first appears in the 835 *Baltimore City Directory*, see also 1845 and 1849-50 (where he appears as the owner of a cigar and match store). The US Census returns for Baltimore list him and his family in 1880 and 1890 with spouse Kate born in Bavaria in 1814. He is listed as a merchant traveling to Hamburg from New York in 1857 on the New York Passenger Lists, 1851-1891, roll 178, list number 1114, line 26, which would indicate continued contact with events in Germany. See also Silberg, “Baltimore Jewry Statistics;” *Occident*, April 1857, 43 (lists Dellevie as congregation treasurer); *Baltimore Sun*, November 25, 1840 (notes November 22nd wedding), September 4, 1893 (obituary); Rayner, *Souvenir of Jubilee*, Leon Dellevie, possibly a relative, was a founder of the Fell Point Congregation. For this and other possible relatives see Samuel Dellevie file, Jewish Historical Society of Maryland. Mayer, “Geschichte,” 199, n. 1, added by editor David Einhorn. Dellevie served as congregation president when this article was published in 1856.

⁶¹ US Census from Baltimore, 1840, 1850, 1860; Hutzler family tree; “Notes written by Mrs. David Hutzler in August 1932, for her daughter;” Joel Gutman David Hutzler, 75th Birthday, 23 December 1967: A Family History;” (hereafter cited as “Hutzler Family History,”), (the author of the latter disputes the claim of Mrs. David Hutzler and the other accounts that the Richmond Hutzlers were relatives) all in Hutzler folder, Jewish Historical Society of Maryland; Frances F. Beirne, *Hutzler’s: 1858-1968: A Pictorial History* (Baltimore, privately printed, 1968); Hutzler Family Tree, July 1898, AJA; Lewis I. Held, *Held Family History I* (n.p.: privately published, 1990), AJA. Hutzler’s Department Store remained in business until it was sold in 1981. Gilbert Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore: A Family Album* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 69-72, 108. Hutzler appears in the Baltimore city directories as a peddler in 1842. By 1849-50 he is listed as a dry goods dealer. *Baltimore City Directory*; Silberg, “Baltimore Jewry Statistics.” On his observance see Rubenstein, *Har Sinai*, n.p.

⁶² US Census for Baltimore, 1870; Cahn, *History of Oheb Shalom*, 15, 21-2; Blum, *Jews of Maryland*, 13. Hamburger’s department store remained in business until it was sold to Van Heusen in 1968. Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore*, 103. Besides listing Isaac as a clothier beginning in 1853, the city directories also include Aaron (beginning 1842) and Kaufman (beginning 1850) as clothiers. These men also appear with their families in the US Census from Baltimore, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880. Since Aaron and Kaufman arrived on the same ship from Germany in 1837, they were likely brothers and likely as was Isaac. Baltimore Passenger and Immigration Lists, 1820-1872, M255, roll 2, list 51; *Baltimore City Directory*; Silberg, “Baltimore Jewry Statistics.”

⁶³ *Baltimore City Directory* 1849-50; Silberg, “Baltimore Jewry Statistics.”

⁶⁴ Greensfelder first appears in the city directories in 1840. His son Moses appears in the 1860 directory as a clerk. Partner Michael Heilbrun worked as a clock and watch maker before their partnership and Heilbrun and Weil dry goods afterward. See US Census for Baltimore, 1850 (listing his date and place of birth and those of his wife, sons Moses [b. 1845, Maryland], and Samuel [b. 1847, Maryland], and two women born in Germany 1825 and 1830 and census returns for 1870 listing S. Greensfelder and family, and a

wholesale milliner, Joseph Greensfelder (b. 1819, Bavaria) and family, possibly another brother; *Baltimore City Directory*, 1845, 1849-50 (where he appears as Greensfelder and Bro. trimming dealers); Silberg, "Baltimore Jewry Statistics." The Bernard Greensfelder file at the Jewish Historical Society of Maryland includes adds from his drug business listing Lampeimer's Unrivalled Hair Regenerator and Greensfelder's Worm Confections, unidentified newspaper ads with his annotation concerning purchase of the warehouse, and Har Sinai Congregation Minutes, April 10, 1842 listing him as president, and the bond agreement for the literary and drama society.

⁶⁵ *Baltimore City Directory*, 1842 (Levi), 1845 (Levi), 1849-50 (Levy). The listings have Light Street Wharf addresses (27 ½, 107, and 101).

⁶⁶ US Census for Baltimore, 1860; *Baltimore City Directory*, 1842; Lauer Four-Generation Pedigree Chart, Lauer/Haustein file, Jewish Historical Society of Maryland. Lewis Lauer also had a brother, Ignatz or Ignatius (b. 1819, Germany), also a Baltimore resident, early member of Har Sinai, congregation secretary by 1845, trimming store proprietor (1845) and later merchant and custom house officer. By 1849-50 Lewis Lauer is listed as Lewis Lauer and Co. importer of fancy dry goods and wholesale dealer. See US Census for Maryland, 1850, 1870; *Baltimore City Directory*, 1842, 1849-50. Various other Lauers, possibly relatives, from Germany appear in these sources.

⁶⁷ *Baltimore City Directory*, 1842 and 1849-50; US Census for Baltimore, 1870.

Lawrence was married to Theresa (b. 1820, Bavaria) and they had a son, David H. (b. 1860, Maryland).

⁶⁸ *Baltimore City Directory*, 1842, 1845; US Census returns for Baltimore, 1880, indicates that Simon and Bettie Rosenthal had eight children; for Moser see US Census for Baltimore, 1880, Baltimore Passenger and Immigration Lists, 1820-1872, M255, roll 3, list 74.

⁶⁹ *Maryland Free Press*, December 1, 1849; *Maryland Republican*, December 14, 1850 (for sale of the saloon to Morris Moser); Thomas G. Ford, *History of the United States Naval Academy* (Annapolis, MD: Nimitz Library, US Naval Academy, 1979). Rosenthal's son Jacob appears in a circumcision book in 1847 with Annapolis as the residence. See Berman, "M.S. Pollock's Circumcision Record Book," 11. These sources were graciously provided by Professor Eric Goldstein.

⁷⁰ Nettie Pike, Pike Family Memory Book, AJA; Sarna and Klein, *Jews of Cincinnati*, 39.

⁷¹ *Baltimore City Directory*, 1842, 1845; US Census for Baltimore, 1850 (where they are listed as 34 and 27 years old); US Census for Cincinnati (where they appear as 52 and 42).

⁷² *Baltimore City Directory* 1849-50; US Census for Baltimore, 1850; Sussman, "Economic Life," 10.

⁷³ Simpson eulogy; "Hutzler: A Family History;" Blum, *Jews of Maryland*, xl.

⁷⁴ Eytinge first appears in the Baltimore city directories in 1833 as a pawn broker. By 1842 he was listed as a merchant. See also 1845, 1849-50 (where he appears as a furniture and variety store proprietor and where a Samuel Eytinge also appears as a furniture store owner) *Baltimore City Directory*; Francis B. Silberg, "Baltimore Jewry Statistics, 1789-1860," (term paper, Hebrew Union College, 1970).

⁷⁵ Edwin Wolf II and Maxwell Whiteman, *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1957), 353, 492. Simon Eytinge and his wife

arrived in New York from Antwerp in 1828 already classified as a merchant. See New York Passenger and Immigration List Records, 1820-1850, M237, roll 11, List 313. Henry Eytinge (b. 1848), probably a son, is listed in the US Census returns for Baltimore, 1880, as a notion store keeper. Henry's spouse, Bertha (b. 1851), was born in Maryland to Prussian-born parents.

⁷⁶ Rosenwaike, "Jews of Baltimore, 1820 to 1830," 249; Hebrew Love and Friendship Beneficial Society of Baltimore Act of Incorporation, February 1, 1844, SC 676, AJA..

⁷⁷ Abraham Nachman was from Hesse Darmstadt, Nachman naturalization certificate. Extract Abraham Nachman birth certificate, Mainz, September 16, 1823 (Dyer was also born in Mainz/Mayence); Simon Eytinge will, August 19, 1869; Samuel Cohen Eytinge birth certificate, January 7, 1825; Eytinge naturalization certificate; comments written by descendent on reverse of picture of Har Sinai Congregation presidents; all in Eytinge-Nachman Family file, Jewish Historical Society of Maryland. Copy of "Protest against a resolution of Dr. Isaac M. Wise and others 'that the Talmud is acknowledged by all Israelites as the legal and obligatory commentary of the Bible,'" signed by Rabbi David Einhorn, A. Nachman, and the entire membership of Har Sinai Congregation, November 6, 1855, document file, AJA. Blum, *Jews of Maryland*, 9-11; Guttmacher, *History of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation*, 28-31; Leon Dyer Papers, 1836-1850, Document file, AJA. Eckman had succeeded Poznanski in the Charleston pulpit and the two conflicted over the level of Reform leading to Eckman's forced resignation in 1852. See Solomon Breibart, *Explorations in Charleston's Jewish History* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2005), 121-22; Joshua Stampher, *Pioneer Rabbi of the West: The Life and Times of Julius Eckman* (Portland, OR: Institute of Jewish Studies, 1988). Eckman was impacted by moderate German Reform. Eckman's commitment to Reform is somewhat problematic. As Stampher explains, his stay at San Francisco's Emanu-El was also short lived because he was more traditional in policies and the role of the rabbi than many congregants.

⁷⁸ High Holiday services were first held in Isidore's Galveston home in 1856. When B'nai Israel was finally chartered in 1868, he served on the building committee. S.K. Labbatt, with roots in Charleston and New Orleans, was a key figure at the time of incorporation. See James Lee Kessler, "BOI, A History of Congregation B'nai Israel, Galveston, Texas," (Ph.D. dissertation, Hebrew Union College [Los Angeles], 1988). This citation was graciously provided by Hollace A. Weiner. On Rosanna Dyer Osterman, see Mark K. Bauman, "Southern Jewish Women and Their Social Service Agencies," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 22 (Spring 2003): 41. In 1838 she and her husband, a charter member of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation from Holland, purchased land in the city at the initial offering. See Hollace Ava Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas; Rabbis and Their Work* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 60.

⁷⁹ On more on this ambiguity, what Jonathan Sarna describes as, "uncertainty, inconsistency, and fluidity," see Sarna, *American Judaism*, 100.

⁸⁰ For 1849 membership list see, Guttmacher, *History of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation*, 37.

⁸¹ In at least five cases, the census taker recorded Bayern/Bavaria as the place of birth. The word Bayern, the German for Bavaria, was likely given by the individual. This is possibly an indication of less acculturation and greater identity with the mother country.

⁸² For virtually identical demographics with the other Reform societies see Silverstein, *Alternative to Assimilation*, 13-19.

⁸³ Marsha L. Rozenblit, "Choosing a Synagogue: The Social Composition of Two German Congregations in Nineteenth-Century Baltimore," in Jack Wertheimer, ed, *The American Synagogue: A Sanctuary Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Marc Lee Raphael came to the same conclusion for a traditional synagogue that broke from a Reform temple in 1869 in "'Our treasury is empty and our bank account is overdrawn': Washington Hebrew Congregation, 1855-1872," *American Jewish History* 84 (June 1996): 96.

⁸⁴ Baltimore Hebrew Congregation established a German/Hebrew school in 1851, members petitioned the congregation in German, the secretary publicized important business in German, and 79 members petitioned to have the minutes in German in 1857. See Elijah E. Palnick, "The Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, 1851-1857," (term paper based on congregation minutes, Hebrew Union College, 1957). For case studies focusing on the patterns of emigration from small communities in Germany, the backgrounds of immigrants, and their successes in the United States see Adolf Kober, "Jewish Emigration from Württemberg to the United States of America (1848-1855)," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 41 (December 1951): 225-273; Stephan Rohrbacher, "From Württemberg to America: A Nineteenth-Century German-Jewish Village on its Way to the New World," *American Jewish Archives* 41 (Fall/Winter 1989): 142-171.

⁸⁵ Rubenstein, *Har Sinai*, n.p. Rubenstein based his findings on discussions with Moses Hutzler, a charter member. See also Fein, *Making of an American Jewish Community*, 62-4; Shusterman, *Legacy of a Liberal*, 9; Jick, *The Americanization of the Synagogue*, 86-88, 163-65, 174. Jick totally discounts any Reform ideology or consistent principles at either Har Sinai before Einhorn or at KKBE under Poznanski.

⁸⁶ Both Rubenstein, *Har Sinai*, n.p. and Blum, *Jews of Baltimore*, 12 are based on Rayner, *Souvenir Jubilee*, 12-13.

⁸⁷ See, for example, Jick, *The Americanization of the Synagogue*, chapter 11; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 250-95; Silverstein, *Alternative to Assimilation*, 18-22. The difficulty of drawing a line between Reform and Orthodoxy is further exacerbated in that precursor congregations of the Conservative Movement mixed practices much as did Har Sinai. See Rozenblit, "Choosing a Synagogue," 328-29, 232-33, for Baltimore's Ohab Shalom, which considered itself Reform.

⁸⁸ Raphael, "'Our treasury is empty,'" 81-91 and Jick's, "Response: Comments on Washington Hebrew Congregation Article," 99-101. See also Marc Lee Raphael, *Towards a "National Shrine": A Centennial History of Washington Hebrew Congregation, 1855-1955* (Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary, 2005), 10-11.

⁸⁹ Raphael, "'Our Treasury is empty,'" 95; Jick, "Response," 100 (second quotation), 101 (first quotation).

⁹⁰ Shusterman, *Legacy of a Liberal*, 9-11.

⁹¹ Ira Rosenwaike, "The Jews of Baltimore to 1810," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 64 (June 1975): 291-320; Rosenwaike, "Jews of Baltimore: 1820 to 1830;" Rosenwaike, "Founding of Baltimore's First Jewish Congregation."

⁹² In contrast, Jonathan Sarna argues that during the 1840s Reform “could not boast even a single nationwide leader of status to stand opposite Isaac Leeser.” Sarna, *American Judaism*, 88. Sarna’s account closely follows the interpretation in Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 238. Both view Isaac M. Wise as the first national Reform leader.

⁹³ For this and following see Mayer, “Geschichte,” 198, 241-42; Hagy, *This Happy Land*, 236-73. The best account of Poznanski remains Breibart, *The Rev. Mr. Gustavus Poznanski* but see also Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 233-35. Meyer (p. 235) writes sagely, “The rise of the Reform movement in America after the initial Charleston episode must be attributed to both Germanizing and Americanizing trends. Neither trend alone will explain it.” Meyer provides excellent brief discussions of Reform in Baltimore and New York (236-38). Similarly to Rice’s reaction to Arens’ Masonic burial service, in 1848 when Wise introduced confirmation to his Cincinnati temple, Rice denounced it as a heathenish rite. Guttmacher, *History of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation*, 28.

⁹⁴ On Raphall and the Wise incidents and comparison and contrast between Rice, Raphall, Wise, and Einhorn, see, for example, Sarna, *American Judaism*, 94-99.

⁹⁵ Einhorn, attempting to gain recognition for his congregation, partly disputed Mayer’s claim. Granting KKBE “fatherhood concerning American Jewish Reform endeavors,” Einhorn argued that the German American congregations “brought the reformative element over here from their country.” He then cites Samuel Dellevie’s role in founding Har Sinai and describing the Hamburg Temple prayer book to the congregation. Einhorn, “Geschichte,” 198, n. 1. In *Response to Modernity* (p. 249), Meyer finds “Einhorn’s direct influence was very limited.”

⁹⁶ Belinda and Richard Gergel, *In Pursuit of the Tree of Life; A History of the Early Jews of Columbia, South Carolina, and the Tree of Life Congregation* (Columbia, SC: Tree of Life Congregation, 1996); Henry Cohen, “Settlement of the Jews in Texas,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 2 (1894): 139-56; Bertram Wallace Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969); Korn, *The Jews of Mobile, Alabama, 1763-1841* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1970); Samuel Proctor, “Jewish Life in New Orleans, 1718-1860,” *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 40 (1957): 110-132.

⁹⁷ Mayer, “Geschichte,” 243.

⁹⁸ Rayner, *Souvenir Jubilee*, 14.

⁹⁹ Leonard Rogoff, “Baltimore Diaspora: North Carolina Jews and their Ties to Maryland’s Metropolis,” presentation at the Southern Jewish Historical Society conference, Baltimore, MD, November 2005; Amy Hill Shevitz, “Religious Reforms, the National Road, and the Dismemberment of Virginia: A Study in Cultural Transformation,” presentation at the Fourth Biennial Scholars Conference on American Jewish History, Denver, CO, June 5, 2000.