# Challenge and Change:
## History of the Jews in America
### Book 1: Early Settlement Through Central European Migration

# TEACHING GUIDE




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## INTRODUCTION

The history of the Jewish people in America is filled with courageous men and women, daring ideas, and triumph over adversity. It is the story of a people who brought their religion's history and their unique traditions, language, culture, and ideas to a new land where they intermingled them with its existing inhabitants in a bold experiment in creating a new country, a new government, and a new culture. Their Judaism affected almost every aspect of their lives in their new land, and their new land shaped the way they practiced their Judaism, as they influenced the growth and development of America.

This is an exciting story, one that every American Jewish child should know and take pride in. It belongs to each and every one of them, and it is their responsibility and privilege to claim it. Doing so will help them participate in building a strong and vital Jewish community for the future.

Book 1 of *Challenge and Change: History of the Jews in America* has been written for 7th- through 9th-grade students, students who are developmentally ready to be thoughtful and critical readers, and who have a background of knowledge about American life and history in general, and Jewish life and history in particular. That background should enable them to grapple with the material in *Challenge and Change.* The book will appeal to students of varying ability levels: The language is accessible, the style and the material challenging and thought-provoking.

*Early Settlement Through Central European Migration* is the first of three books in the *Challenge and Change* series. Each book is divided into three units, each consisting of three chapters. Some chapters are organized chronologically, others topically. This approach has been carefully designed by a team of educators to provide students with the most comprehensive and provocative material possible.

## OVERVIEW OF BOOK 1
## Early Settlement Through Central European Migration

**Unit 1, "Jews in the New World,"** examines the circumstances that led Jews to leave Europe for the New World. It looks at what happened to them, in their secular and religious lives, between their expulsion from Spain in 1492 and the start of the American Revolution in 1776.

**Chapter 1, "The First Jews in America,"** summarizes the first settlers' odyssey in reaching the Americas and the establishment of Jewish communities in the colonies.

**Chapter 2, "Battling for Rights,"** explains how the Jewish colonists achieved civic, legal and financial parity with their Christian neighbors.

**Chapter 3, "The Power of Religion,"** looks at how the Jewish colonists' religion affected their lives and how their observance of Judaism was affected by their experiences as a religious minority.

**Unit 2, "The Revolutionary War and the New Republic,"** deals with the American Revolution and the period just after it. It examines why the war was important to colonial Jews, and the effects of new country's evolution on the Jews' religious and daily lives.

**Chapter 4, "Fighting and Financing the War,"** explains how and why Jews participated on both sides of the battle for the nation's independence. Jews' participation in the Revolutionary War set the stage for their full participation in the life of the new country.

**Chapter 5, "Building a Nation,"** examines the new national and state governments and the laws each adopted after the Revolution. While in some instances Jews had to fight for their rights, they made considerable gains in the new nation.

**Chapter 6, "Changes in Jews and Judaism,"** explores how the Jewish community began to grow and change with the new nation. Jews made their mark by melding their religious lives with their secular lives as Americans.

**Unit 3, "Central European Jews Come to America,"** looks at the wave of immigration from the 1830s to the 1880s and the effects that it had on Jewish life in America.

**Chapter 7, "Becoming Americans,"** discusses the events in Europe that prompted so many Jews to immigrate to the United States and examines what happened to them upon their arrival.

**Chapter 8, "Westward, Ho!,"** looks at the lives of the Jewish pioneers—those who came to America's eastern seaboard and kept going. Jews sought their fortunes in the West and made their mark on America in the process.

**Chapter 9, "Americanizing Reform Judaism,"** explores the major changes in Judaism that took hold in the United States during this period.

## TEACHING NOTES: THE STUDENT TEXTBOOK

The format of the student textbook—a central narrative interspersed with questions, definitions, interesting facts, original documents, activities, and references to websites—is intended to stimulate critical and creative reading and thinking. The activities encourage students to go beyond the text, by doing additional reading, writing, exploring, and questioning on their own. When a class begins working with *Challenge and Change,* direct students' attention to this additional material, and indicate that while they will discuss some of it in class, there is much that can be explored by themselves or with a classmate.

***Think About It*** consists of critical-thinking questions that should prompt students to stop reading and take stock of their reactions to and understanding of the material.

***Do It*** activities invite students to respond in writing directly in the textbook, or through active involvement with people, places, and things that will further their knowledge.

***Click On It*** draws students' attention to websites that will enhance their learning.

## TEACHING NOTES: THE TEACHING GUIDE

The **Teaching Guide** is divided into three sections. Information in each section is arranged by chapter, the chapters corresponding to those in the student textbook.

The first section consists of ***Introducing the Chapter,*** a summary of each chapter of the student textbook, followed by ***Teaching the Chapter,*** a carefully constructed series of teaching activities.

The ***Teaching the Chapter*** section includes:

- ***Learning Objectives,*** a statement of the specific performance objectives for the chapter.
- ***Get Ready!*** a set-induction activity designed to introduce the chapter and motivate students to think about the ideas developed in it.
- ***Use the Time Line,*** suggestions for active involvement with the time line found at the end of each unit.
- ***Reflect On It,*** which repeats the question, or questions, that appear at the beginning of each chapter in the textbook, and suggests ways to encourage students to answer these questions as they read. (Reflect On It questions are meant to alert students to important ideas in the chapter.)
- ***Read the Chapter,*** active reading technique, designed to encourage students to think about and engage the text as they read, thereby enhancing their understanding.
- ***Teaching Tips,*** practical suggestions for completing the activities included in the textbook.
- ***Final Thoughts,*** a closure activity that will help students summarize what they have learned.

The second section of the **Teaching Guide, *Enhancing the Learning,*** includes the following features for each chapter:

- ***Beyond the Text,*** additional critical-thinking questions.
- ***Extend Your Learning,*** additional activities that students may complete outside the classroom.

The third section of the **Teaching Guide** is ***People, Places, Things to Know,*** which consists of helpful background material for teachers.

Of course, you are encouraged to adapt the material to your teaching style and class schedule and your students' learning abilities. You are not expected to use all the questions and activities that accompany each lesson, and you may wish to create some of your own.

Finally, it is hoped that *Challenge and Change: History of the Jews in America* and its companion **Teaching Guide** will encourage both students and teachers to enjoy the study of the history of Jews in America, to stretch their minds and their imaginations, to go beyond the written pages, and to become involved with their communities. When we truly understand where we have been, we may better know who we are and who we might become.

## WEB RESOURCES

Teachers and students can access the following websites to obtain additional information.

### For Unit 1:

**Eyes of Glory—**(www.eyesofglory.com): Site includes a family genealogy of a Jewish–African American family, information on the colonial Jewish history of Newport, Rhode Island, information on the Touro Synagogue, and a photo gallery of artifacts.

**Jewish Museum in Cyberspace, Jewish American Hall of Fame—**(www.amuseum.org/jahf/virtour): Site contains brief sketches and quizzes covering five hundred years of Jewish history and many short articles, including ones on Judah Touro and the Touro synagogue.

**Jewish Virtual Library—**(www.us-israel.org/jsource): The Jewish Virtual Library is a comprehensive online Jewish encyclopedia.

Go to "History," then to "Modern Jewish History," and then to "Jews in America" for articles on Asser Levy ("New Amsterdam's Jewish Crusader"), and Abigail Franks and intermarriage ("Jewish 'Continuity' in Early America"), Under "Jews in America," click on "Demographics" and then "Jewish Population of the United States" for relevant statistics.

Go to "History," then to "Modern Jewish History," and then to "Events" for articles on "The Inquisition," and "The Spanish Expulsion, 1492."

Go to "History," then to "Modern Jewish History," and then to "People" for an article on "The Jews Who Sailed with Columbus."

Go to "History," and then to "Biographies" for an article on Rebecca Gratz.

### For Unit 2

**Jewish Museum in Cyberspace, Jewish American Hall of Fame—**(www.amuseum.org/jahf/virtour): See the articles on Rebecca Gratz ("Gratz, Rebecca"), Uriah Phillips Levy ("Levy, Uriah P."), Mordecai Noah ("Noah, Mordecai E."), Haym Salomon ("Salomon, Haym"), Gershom Seixas ("Seixas, Gershom M."), Thomas Jefferson's Monticello ("Monticello [VA]"), and George Washington ("Washington, George").

**Jewish Virtual Library—**(www.us-israel.org/jsource) Go to "History," and then to "Biographies" for articles on "Moses Michael Hays," "David Franks," "Rebecca Gratz," "Uriah Phillips Levy," "Mordecai Manuel Noah," "Haym Salomon," "Penina Moise," "Judah Touro," and "Gershom Mendes Seixas."

Go to "History," then to "Modern Jewish History," and then to "Jews in America" for "The Author of the Declaration and the Architect of the Constitution," "The Father of His Country," "To Bigotry No Sanction . . . ," George Washington's Letter to the Jews of Newport," and "Jefferson and the Jews."

**Florida Atlantic University Libraries—**(www.fau.edu/library/depts/judaica9.htm): The Molly S. Fraiberg Judaica Collections contain virtual exhibits of "American Jewish Heroes and Heroines from Colonial Times to 1900," including biographies of most of the people discussed in Unit 2.

**National Museum of American Jewish History—**(www.nmajh.org): The Museum of American Jewish History is located in Philadelphia. For its interactive "Fun Page" for kids, click anywhere in the box immediately below the museum's name and address. Then click on "Fun Page." For a time line, click in that same box and then click on "Timeline." For an online exploration of the evolution of Jewish identity in America, click in the box, and then click on "Creating American Jews."

### For Unit 3

**Jewish Museum in Cyberspace, Jewish American Hall of Fame—**(www.amuseum.org/jahf/virtour): See the article on Levi Strauss ("Strauss, Levi").

**Jewish Virtual Library—**(www.us-israel.org/jsource): Go to "History," and then to "Biographies" for articles on "Josephine Sarah Marcus Earp," "Isaac Leeser," "Levi Strauss," and "Isaac Mayer Wise."

Go to "History," then to "Modern Jewish History," and then to "Jews in America" for "The Americanization of Reform Judaism," and "The Jew at the Alamo."

Go to "History," "Modern Jewish History," "Jews in America," and "From Sea to Shining Sea" for "Reform Judaism: Advocates and a Critic."

**Jewish-American History on the Web—**(www.jewish-history.com): Click on "Jews in the Wild West" for "Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West," "Jewish Life in San Francisco, 1860," and "Gunfight in Portland: Reform and Orthodox at High Noon," as well as for a poem called "Ben Levi's Gold." For a virtual library of Isaac Leeser's *Catechism for Jewish Children,* go to the home page, and click on "Catechism for Jewish Children."

**Museum of the American West—** (www.autry-museum.org): The Museum of the American West, is located in Los Angeles. For an exhibit that explores the history and adventures of Jews in the American West from the 1820s to the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924, click on "Exhibitions," "Past Exhibitions," and "Jewish Life in the American West: Generation to Generation."

**Florida Atlantic University Libraries—** (www.fau.edu/library/depts/judaica9.htm): The Molly S. Fraiberg Judaica Collections contains biographies of many of the people discussed in Unit 3.

**The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archive—** (www.americanjewisharchives.org/aja/general/no_flash.html): Click on "Online Exhibits" to see the complete menu of the "Treifah Banquet."

## SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Teachers may wish to consult the following works.


### For Unit 1:

Diner, Hasia R. and Beryl Lieff Benderly. *Her Works Praise Her: A History of Jewish Women in America from Colonial Times to the Present.* New York: Basic Books, 2002.

Gurock, Jeffrey S., ed., *American Jewish History.* 13 vols. New York: Routledge, 1998.

Sarna, Jonathan D., ed. *The American Jewish Experience,* 2nd edition. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1997.

Sarna, Jonathan D. *American Judaism: A History.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.

### For Unit 2:

Faber, Eli. *A Time for Planting: The First Migration, 1654–1820,* Vol. 1 of *The Jewish People in America.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Gurock, Jeffrey S., ed. *The Colonial and Early National Periods, 1654–1840.* Vol. 1 of *American Jewish History.* New York: Routledge, 1998.

Sachar, Howard. *A History of the Jews in America.* New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

Sarna, Jonathan, D., ed. *The American Jewish Experience,* 2nd edition. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1997.

### For Unit 3:

Diner, Hasia R. *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820–1880.* Vol. 2 of *The Jewish People in America.* Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Gurock, Jeffrey S. *Central European Jews in America, 1840–1880: Migration and Advancement,* Vol 2. of *American Jewish History.* New York: Routledge, 1998.

Hoobler, Dorothy, and Thomas Hoobler. *The Jewish American Family Album.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Hyman, Paula E., and Deborah Dash Moore, eds. *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia.* 2 vols. New York: Routledge, 1998.

Libo, Kenneth, and Irving Howe. *We Lived There Too.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984.

Rochlin, Harriet, and Fred Rochlin. *Pioneer Jews: A New Life in the Far West.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin / Mariner Books, 2000.

Sacher, Howard M. *A History of the Jews in America.* New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

# SECTION 1: TEACHING GUIDELINES

# Unit 1, Chapter 1: The First Jews in America

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

In the early eighth century, Muslim invaders conquered Spain from its Christian rulers. Jews had been persecuted in Spain prior to the Muslim conquests. Under Muslim rule, however, Spain had become a favorable place for Jews to settle. Even after the Muslim conquests, small Christian kingdoms had remained in the north of Spain. Over a period of several hundred years, Christians reconquered Spain. Although Jews initially fared well under the Christian rulers, anti-Jewish attitudes increased, and many Jews were killed when riots broke out in 1391. To save their lives, many Jews converted to Christianity. Those Jews, called Conversos, were forbidden by church law to practice Judaism.

In 1233, the Catholic Church established the Holy Inquisition to find and punish people it considered heretics. In 1480, the pope granted King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella permission to initiate an Inquisition in Spain, and in 1492 the king and queen expelled the Jews. Many fled to Portugal—until the Inquisition followed them there.

Some Jews left Portugal for the Netherlands, which won independence from Spain in 1581 and was a major center for trade. The Dutch, most of whom were Calvinist, opposed the Inquisition and accepted practitioners of other religions. Despite the relatively safe haven they found in Holland, many of these Jews decided to try their luck in the fast-growing colony of Brazil, which was governed by the Dutch West India Company. This safe haven did not last, however. When the Portuguese would recapture Recife, some of the Jews headed for New Amsterdam, on the southern tip of present-day Manhattan.

Jews continued to come to the New World, settling in the British colonies and in New Netherland, which was controlled by the Dutch until it, too, became a British colony. Although they were a tiny minority, Jews established communities and founded synagogues in the East Coast port cities of New York, Savannah, Charleston, Newport, and Philadelphia. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Jewish population of the United States was between 2,000 and 2,500.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Summarize the events that brought the Jews to the New World.
- Describe the conditions in the first Jewish communities in the New World.
- Compare the effects of prejudice and intolerance in the Old and New Worlds.

### Get Ready!

Present this question to students: You are leaving your home in the Old World, heading for a new and strange land. What one thing would you bring, and why? (The question assumes that you already have food, clothes, tools, and other necessities for survival.) Give students a minute or two to think, and then proceed quickly around the room, allowing each student to answer.

### Use the Time Line

Ask students to examine the time line found at the end of the unit. Have them identify its three sections, and ask why they think the time line includes these sections. Ask them to find one or two events on the time line with which they are familiar. Then, ask them to find one or two events that come as a surprise to them or are new to them. Suggest that they refer to the time line as they read the unit.

### Reflect On It

Point out the following question, which appears on the first page of Chapter 1 in the textbook. Encourage students to attempt to answer it as they read.

*What effect did prejudice and intolerance have on Jews in the Old and New Worlds?*

After students have read the chapter, ask them to write their answer to the question in their notes, work with a partner to come up with an answer, or discuss the question briefly in class.

### Read the Chapter

Have students read Chapter 1 at home or in class, highlighting or underlining key words, phrases, and sentences that help them answer the Reflect On It question. Suggest that they place a star next to important ideas, a

question mark next to words or ideas they do not understand or would like to know more about, and a heart next to material with which they feel an emotional connection.

## TEACHING TIPS

### Hebrew Names (page 7)

Working as a class, list the Hebrew names of the synagogues in your community. (If you live in a small community with only one or two synagogues, students may add the names of other synagogues with which they are familiar.) Then, working in pairs, have students find the English translations of the Hebrew words that comprise the names in a Hebrew-English dictionary. (Each pair should take one or two names.) They should discuss with their partner why they think the founders gave the synagogue its name. The partners should then share their information with the class. Write the English names next to the Hebrew names on the list. Do students have additional ideas about why a certain name might have been selected?

### From Mother to Son (page 7)

Read the letter from Abigail Franks aloud. Have students follow along in their text and place one line under any words they do not understand and two lines under any words with unusual spellings. Explain that these are examples of the way people wrote at that time. Review any words that they have underlined once, asking for volunteers to explain a word or look it up in a dictionary. Ask students what advice Abigail offers her son. *(not to speak so freely about religion; to be more careful in his observance of certain things such as his morning prayers; not to joke about things that others think is important; to avoid having too high an opinion of himself)* Then, ask what one thing she hopes he will not do and why. *(eat at her brother's house unless it is bread and butter or eat anywhere else that is not kosher)* Have students imagine that they have come to the New World and write letters to their own children back in the Old World describing their new lives and providing parental advice.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Ask students to list ways in which Jews' minority status is evident in the United States today and ways in which Jews enjoy freedom of religion in the United States. Pair students with partners to discuss their lists. Post the lists around the room, and have students walk around the room to examine the lists. Conduct a class discussion in which students share what they have learned about themselves, their classmates, and the role of Judaism in their lives.

# Unit 1, Chapter 2: Battling for Rights

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

Although many colonists came to the New World to escape religious persecution, that did not stop them from bringing prejudices of their own. Thus, the first Jewish settlers to arrive in North America faced the intolerance and prejudice of Peter Stuyvesant, the governor of New Amsterdam, who would have denied them entrance to that settlement. Help from their fellow Jews back in Holland smoothed their way. Yet they, and Jewish settlers in other colonies still faced many restrictions. There was debate over whether Jews could become citizens, hold public office, vote, serve as witnesses in court, hire Christian servants, and be excused from laws that restricted activity on Sundays, the Christian Sabbath. The Jewish colonists persevered, however, and slowly gained the rights that the Christian colonists enjoyed.

In 1664, the British captured New Amsterdam and divided it into New York and New Jersey. Jews in those colonies were now subject to British law, which forbade aliens to participate in business. In order to encourage business, naturalization was made easier in the thirteen American colonies than it was in England. The Treaty of Breda (1667) granted the rights of trade, inheritance, property ownership, and worship to all settlers.

Jews in other colonies faced other difficulties. Many of the colonial charters contained language that furthered the Christian religion at the expense of the Jews. Other charters gave some, if not full rights to non-Christians. These were important first steps toward granting Jews and other minority groups in the colonies individual rights and the guarantee of religious liberty.

By 1776, Jews could settle in any colony, and there were no restrictions on where they could live or what jobs they could hold.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Compare life in New Amsterdam under Dutch rule and life in New York under British rule.
- Identify the battles for rights that Jewish settlers faced in others of the original colonies.

### Get Ready!

Ask students to make a list of the rights they enjoy in the United States today that are especially important to them. Distribute an index card to each student, and have students write on it the one right that is most important to them. Collect the cards, and make a class list on chart paper. Keep the list posted as the class reads Chapter 2 and discusses the rights for which the colonial Jews had to fight.

### Use the Time Line

Ask students to examine the time line carefully before they begin to read. Suggest that as they read the chapter, they enter in the appropriate place on the time line significant events that are discussed in the chapter but not already noted on the time line.

### Reflect On it

Point out the following question, which appears on the first page of Chapter 2. Encourage students to attempt to answer it as they read.

*Why and how did Jewish settlers struggle to achieve legal equality in the colonies?*

After students have read the chapter, ask them to write their answer to the question in their notes or discuss it briefly with a partner or with the class.

### Read the Chapter

Pair up students, and ask them to take turns reading the narrative sections of Chapter 2 aloud to their partner. Instruct readers to pause after each section and ask their partner questions about what they have read using the questions in the textbook or making up questions of their own.

Read aloud to the class the "Petition to the Dutch West India Company," the company's response, and the

two charters. To stimulate discussion and increase understanding, ask these questions about each original source: What are the main points in this document? Why was it written? In what ways does it increase our understanding of the event?

## TEACHING TIPS

### The Journey to the New World (page 9)

Working in small groups or as a class, students should number the places on the list to show the order in which the Jews lived or visited them in the course of their wanderings to the New World. *(Spain; Portugal; the Netherlands; Recife, (Pernambuco) Brazil; Jamaica; New Amsterdam)* Students should find these places on the map and circle them, and then draw lines to connect them.

### Becoming a U.S. Citizen (page 13)

After reading the requirements for becoming a citizen, ask students to move to one side of the room if they think the requirements are fair and the other side of the room if they think the citizenship requirements are unfair. Have students discuss their opinions in their groups and then ask each group to summarize the feelings expressed and report to the class.

Working individually, students should make a list in the space on page 13 of any conditions or procedures they would include for becoming a citizen. Share these with the class. Ask students to explain their answers.

### Create a Charter (page 14)

After reading the charters on page 14 aloud to the class, divide the students into small groups. Each group works on a charter, listing its main points. (If the class is large, more than one group can work on each charter.) *(Rhode Island: to secure the free exercise and enjoyment of civil and religious rights; no person shall be punished for any difference in religion if they behave peaceably; be able to defend against all enemies of the Christian faith. Virginia: spreading the Christian religion to people who live in darkness and ignorance of the true knowledge of God)* The group members then imagine that they are founding their own colony and creating its charter. Working individually, students list points they would include in their charter in the space on page 14. Then, they should share their lists with their group members and come to a consensus on a charter for the colony. Have each group write its charter on large chart paper and post the charters in the classroom.

### Jewish communities in the colonies (page 15)

Using colored markers, have students find and mark on their maps the major Jewish communities mentioned in the first two chapters of the text. *(New York City, Philadelphia, Newport, Charleston, Savannah)* Working individually or in small groups, have students investigate the current Jewish communities in these cities.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Ask students to create a list of the rights that Jewish colonists achieved during this time. Compare this list with the list of rights that students treasure (*see* Get Ready!). Discuss these questions with the class: Which rights have yet to be achieved by the colonists? Why are they important?

# Unit 1, Chapter 3: The Power of Religion

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

Because synagogues in the colonies, like churches, were unhampered by government interference, they were free to influence almost every aspect of the Jewish colonists' religious lives. That influence promoted discipline and encouraged solidarity within the communities, among Jewish communities and, among Jewish communities throughout the New, and Old, Worlds.

Tradition was important to the Jewish colonists, most of whom were Sephardic Jews. They continued to pray and keep the minutes of their congregational business in Portuguese, although few of them spoke that language. Their tradition also included total and unquestioning obedience to the elders of the community who could penalize or even excommunicate any member who disobeyed them, although this was rarely, if ever, enforced.

Whereas Christian communities in urban areas were led by ordained ministers, rural communities were served only by traveling pastors. The Jewish communities, like the rural Christian communities, had no professional leadership and the growing diversity of the communities would have made the selection of a single leader difficult. The absence of professional rabbis enabled lay leaders to play a significant role in the management of synagogues and the Jewish communities.

Whereas the synagogue played an important role in the settlers' religious lives, it did not control their secular lives. New World Jews were living and interacting with their Christian neighbors to a degree rarely experienced in Europe. Some Jews began businesses with Christians, and some Jews and Christians intermarried. At the same time, many Jewish colonists' observance of religious law was growing less stringent. Observing kashrut was difficult, as was earning a living while refraining from work on both Shabbat and Sunday, the Christian day of rest, when work was forbidden.

As time went on, the North American Jewish community was developing a character of its own.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain how life in the open society of the American colonies affected the settlers' practice of Judaism.
- Identify ways in which Jewish settlers' secular lives had changed in the colonies.

### Get Ready!

Ask students how being Jewish affects their daily life. Have them discuss the question. Suggest that students share one activity that they do and one thing that they avoid doing because they are Jewish. Have each group create a list and post it for the class to see. At the conclusion of the activity, ask students what they have learned from it.

### Use the Time Line

Have students work individually or in small groups to research the history of their own Jewish community during the colonial period and to add relevant events to the time line. They may work individually on this project or in small groups.

### Reflect On It

Point out the following questions, which appear on the first page of Chapter 3. Encourage students to attempt to answer them as they read.

How did life in the open society of the American colonies affect the settlers' Judaism?

How did Judaism affect the settlers' lives in the colonies?

After students read the chapter, ask them to write their answers to the questions in their notes or to discuss the questions with a partner or with the class.

### Read the Chapter

Organize students into five groups, and instruct each group to read one of the five sections of Chapter 3 silently. Have members of each group then decide together on two or three important points from their section to share with the class. Write these points on poster paper, and display them as students study the chapter.

## TEACHING TIPS

**Discover your Jewish community (page 17)**

Have students work individually or in small groups to research the services offered in the local Jewish community. Each person or group should take a category of service, such as education, burial, kosher food, and immigration, and report what they have learned to the class.

**A rose by any other name (page 18)**

Have students read and work through this activity individually. Students can each share one Hebrew name and its English meaning with the class.

**Ashkenazic or Sephardic (page 19)**

If possible, arrange a visit for the class to a Sephardic synagogue in your community if your synagogue is Ashkenazic, or an Ashkenazic synagogue if your synagogue is Sephardic. Prior to the trip, have the class create a list of questions to ask *(about food and holiday observances)* and things to look for. *(the Torah scroll; a prayer book)*. After the trip, have students share their lists with the class.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Ask students to think about the three chapters in Unit 1 and to share with a partner the most significant thing they learned about Jews in the New World from their reading of the unit. Invite students to share their choices with the class.

# Unit 2, Chapter 4: Fighting and Financing the War

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

By 1775, Jews in the American colonies numbered between 1,000 and 2,500 in a population of approximately 2.5 million. Jews in the colonies enjoyed more rights than they had generally had in Europe. They were permitted to build synagogues and worship as they pleased. Many of them were making a good living. Some, however, still experienced discrimination, and in some colonies their rights were limited.

American Jews were torn between loyalty to England and a belief in the need for independence. Colonists who favored independence called themselves Patriots or Whigs, after the opposition party in England, and identified with the Revolutionary ideals and goals. Those who remained loyal to the king of England called themselves Loyalists or Tories, after the ruling political party in Britain.

Most Jewish businessmen joined their Christian neighbors who signed resolutions protesting British laws and taxes imposed upon the colonies. But as the relationship with England deteriorated, and British soldiers were sent to enforce Parliament's laws, the Jews had a difficult decision to make. Jewish businessmen had an especially difficult choice: They had indeed been hit hard by British taxes, but they worried that if they sided with the rebels and the king's forces won, they would lose money because companies in England would not trade with them after the war. Many Jews remained uncommitted as long as they possibly could.

After the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776, and fighting spread through the colonies, the Jews—like the gentile colonists—had to decide whether to stay in their homes or flee to cities controlled by the patriots.

The Jews who sided with the patriots made important contributions to the war effort—both militarily and financially. Jews gave their talent, their money, and even their lives to assist the Revolution. And the war was important to the Jews in that it was one of the first wars in modern history in which Jews were permitted to participate actively. Their participation in the war effort set the stage for their acceptance by and participation in American society.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain why the Revolutionary War was important to the Jews of the American colonies.
- List colonial Jews who made important contributions to the patriot cause and describe each one's role.

### Get Ready!

Count out as many index cards as there are students in your class. Label one-half "Tory" and the other half "Whig," and place them in a box or other receptacle. Explain to the class that the Tories were loyal to England and the Whigs favored independence. Then, instruct students to pick a card and to meet, for approximately fifteen minutes, with the other members of their group (that is, Whigs or Tories) to decide on the three best arguments in favor of their position. Have one member of each group present the group's arguments to the class.

### Use the Time Line

Ask students to examine the time line found at the end of the unit and to identify one or two events with which they are familiar and one or two events that come as a surprise to them or are new to them. Remind them to refer to the time line as they read.

### Reflect On It

Point out the following question, which appears on the first page of Chapter 4 in the textbook. Encourage students to attempt to answer it as they read.

*Why was the Revolutionary War important to the Jews of the American colonies?*

After students have read the chapter, ask them to write their answer to the question in their notes, or to answer it in a discussion with a partner or, in a brief class discussion.

### Read the Chapter

Have students read Chapter 4 at home or in class. Instruct them to prepare to read aloud to the class one paragraph from the chapter that imparts information they believe is critical to an understanding of the chapter. Then, have them arrange themselves around the perimeter of the

classroom in the order in which their selected paragraph appears. Then have students read their paragraphs. If more than one student has selected the same paragraph, they may read it together. You may read the paragraphs that no one chose or call on volunteers to do the reading.

## TEACHING TIPS

### The Declaration of Independence and the Bible (page 25)

Have students read and work through this activity individually. You may wish to give each student a Tanach so that they can read the reference to "the image of God" in Genesis (1:27).

### Jewish Communities in America (page 26)

Look at the map of the Jewish communities found on page 15 in the textbook. Working individually or in small groups, have students select a community (other than the original five) to research. Ask students to make a presentation about the community for the class. Suggest that they design an advertisement, poster, or brochure for the Jewish community.

### War and Shabbat: A Dilemma? (page 28)

Have students read and work through this activity individually. Ask for volunteers to share their opinions with the class.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Whip around the class by quickly calling on students to say what their contribution to the Revolution might have been had they been alive at the time.

# Unit 2, Chapter 5: Building a Nation

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

As a new nation, the United States attempted to govern itself in the spirit of the Revolution. In 1787, the Northwest Ordinance, the legislation governing the newly settled territory northwest of the Ohio River, stated that settlers may not be "molested" on account of their religion. That same year, the nation's leaders met to replace the Articles of Confederation with a new form of government. The Constitutional Convention was held in Philadelphia, with George Washington presiding.

With the convention's proceedings held in secret, the general public was largely ignorant of how the new government would affect them. For the Jews, a small minority in a predominantly Christian nation, the question of how they would fare under the new government was especially worrisome. Jonas Phillips, a leading Jewish patriot, wrote to the convention, asking that Jews be granted equal rights. As it happened, the Constitution did just that.

Inspired by documents written by Thomas Jefferson and supported by James Madison, the framers of the Constitution declared that Congress shall establish no religious "test," or requirement, for holding public office in the United States. Although Jefferson was pleased, he still wanted the document to include a guarantee of individual rights, including freedom of religion. The first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, were adopted in 1791.

Happy with the rights they had achieved, even before the passage of the Bill of Rights, America's Jews joined the rest of the country in celebrating the ratification of the Constitution. Several congregations also exchanged congratulatory letters with the new nation's first president, George Washington.

Nonetheless, many state governments did not accept the idea of full equality for Jews. Some states permitted only Protestants (or all Christians) to vote and hold office, whereas others theoretically allowed anyone to hold office but required officeholders to take an oath professing their belief in or loyalty to Christianity. Rights varied by state, and Jews lacked the political force to protest effectively.

Even though many states did not grant Jews equal rights for years, America's Founding Fathers were aware of the Jews' difficult history and were responsive to their needs. The Jewish people gained important rights and freedoms in the new nation.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Summarize the events that led to religious freedom for American Jews on a national level.
- Discuss the effect that the rights and privileges of citizenship granted in the Constitution had on American Jews.
- Demonstrate the difficulties that American Jews had gaining rights on a state level.

### Get Ready!

Instruct students to write on a piece of self-sticking note paper a question they have, an opinion they hold, or an experience they have had that relates to freedom of religion. Have students attach the note to their clothing and walk around the room, reading each other's notes. After they have read everyone's notes, ask them to select a partner who has had a different experience, who holds a different opinion or an opinion they want to learn more about, or who may be able to help them clarify their own stance. Instruct partners to confer for ten to fifteen minutes. Reconvene the class, and ask each set of partners to share something they learned. (Activity adapted from Mel Silberman, *101 Strategies to Teach Any Subject* [Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996].)

### Use the Time Line

Ask students to look carefully at the time line before they begin reading the chapter. Instruct them to be on the lookout for significant events that are discussed in the chapter but are not noted in the time line and to add those events to the time line.

#### Reflect On It

Point out the following question, which appears on the first page of Chapter 5. Encourage students to attempt to answer it as they read.

How did the rights and privileges of citizenship in the new nation affect American Jews?

After students have read the chapter, ask them to write an answer to the question in their notes or discuss the question with a partner or with the class.

#### Read the Chapter

Chapter 5 contains several original documents that students may have difficulty understanding. Arrange students into four groups, and instruct them to read the narrative sections of the chapter silently. Once they have completed their reading, assign one of the documents ("A patriot's letter," "The Bill of Rights," "The big parade," or "The Jewish community and George Washington exchange letters") to each group. Have students practice reading their document aloud within their group in preparation for a dramatic reading before the class. Ask each group to choose one or several members to perform the reading, or allow a group reading if students prefer. After each document is read, ask: What are the main ideas? Why was the document written? Who wrote it? What does it say about the major issues of the time? (Questions adapted from Julia C. Phillips, "Understanding 350 Years of the American Jewish Experience: Teaching with Primary Source Documents," *Torah at the Center* [Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Department of Lifelong Jewish Learning] 7 [Fall 2003].)

## TEACHING TIPS

#### Article VI and the First Amendment (page 32)

Ask students to read Article VI of the Constitution (page 32) and the First Amendment (page 34). Have students pair up to prepare an argument explaining why the First Amendment was an important addition to the Constitution. Have each pair briefly make their argument to the class.

#### Know your rights (page 34)

Have students read the Bill of Rights and work through the questions individually. Copy and enlarge the Bill of Rights and display it in the classroom. Give each student two colored self-stick dots and ask him to place dots next to the two rights that are most important to him. Total up the dots to determine which rights are considered most important. Ask for volunteers to "defend" the rights that received the largest number of votes and the rights that received the fewest votes.

#### Create a seal (page 37)

Suggest that students read the information about the official seal of the United States and use the space on page 37 to create their own seal for the country. When satisfied with their design, students should copy it on poster board and display it in class.

#### Washington's words (page 38)

Assign students to small groups and give each group a Tanach so that they can read the verses George Washington quoted from Isaiah (2:4). Ask students to discuss why Washington chose these words. Ask: What seems particularly moving or meaningful about these verses?

Have students write individual letters to Washington explaining how they as Jews feel about the Constitution. Share the letters within the groups. Ask each group to report out to the class one thing they learned from hearing each other's letters.

#### Your state's constitution (page 39)

Individually or in small groups, assign students to research their own state's constitution and share with the class what it says about freedom of religion.

#### First Amendment issues (page 39)

Suggest that the class select two of the First Amendment issues listed on page 39 (or those of their own choosing). Divide the class into four teams, two per issue. One team will research and argue the pro side and one will research and argue the con side of each issue. Stage a class debate on the issues.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Ask students to write on a piece of paper one thing they learned from Chapter 5. Post the responses around the room. Then, have students walk around the room and place a check mark on any paper, other than their own, that contains an item that has made an impact on them. Survey the results, and have students summarize the top three things they have learned. (Activity adapted from Silberman, *101 Strategies to Teach Any Subject.*)

# Unit 2, Chapter 6: Changes in Jews and Judaism

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

As the new nation began to grow and change, so did the Jewish community. Between 1790 and 1820, the population of the United States grew from 3.9 million to 9.6 million, and the Jewish population grew from 1,500 to 2,700. Jews found opportunities in land speculation as they moved west. They also made a name for themselves in business as they became shippers, brokers, auctioneers, and shopkeepers. And in the new spirit of democracy, Jews began to sit on boards of directors, join trade and humane societies, and participate in other ways in the secular community.

Many of the noteworthy Jews of the day made their mark by melding their Judaism with their secular lives. Mordecai Manuel Noah, Judah and Abraham Touro, and Uriah Phillips Levy are prime examples. Jewish women also came to the fore. Rebecca Gratz and Penina Moise are remembered for their contributions to both the Jewish and the secular communities.

Synagogue life changed as Jews reacted to the influence of the Revolution and the changes they observed in the secular community. They made their synagogue constitutions more democratic, and they accepted help from and gave assistance to churches. They also made modifications in their religious practices, for example, substituting a prayer for America's national and state leaders for the blessing for the British royal family. These changes led the way for others. Independence, so cherished by Americans, became an important part of Jewish life, both within and outside the synagogue.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Discuss the important changes that affected the American Jewish community in the late 1700s and early 1800s.
- List the important Jews of the day and describe the contributions they made to the American Jewish community by melding their Judaism and their lives as Americans.

### Get Ready!

Tell students that several American Jews influenced the growth of the Jewish community between 1790 and 1840. Ask: What does it mean to you to be a "hero" in the Jewish community? Give each student the opportunity to say one word or phrase. Write students' responses on the board, placing check marks next to words or phrases that are repeated. Determine whether there is agreement on one or more qualities.

### Use the Time Line

Invite students to find out about the history of their own family, synagogue, school, or community between 1790 and 1840. Instruct them to add any events that they discover to the time line.

### Reflect On It

Point out the following question, which appears on the first page of Chapter 6. Encourage students to attempt to answer it as they read.

*What important changes affected the Jewish community in America in the late 1700s and early 1800s?*

After students have read the chapter, ask them to write an answer to the question in their notes or to discuss the question with a partner or with the class.

### Read the Chapter

Divide the class into five groups and assign each group a section of the chapter. Instruct students to read their section silently, marking important points with the system of stars, question marks, and hearts they used when reading Chapter 1. When they have finished reading, have them discuss the section with their group. Then, form "jigsaw" learning groups, in which each new group is composed of a member from each of the original groups. Instruct students to teach the other members of their "jigsaw" group what they learned about the section of the chapter that they discussed in their original groups. Reconvene the class, and answer any remaining questions.

## TEACHING TIPS

**Touro and Jerusalem (page 41)**

Provide a large map of the city of Jerusalem. Ask a volunteer to find the street named for Judah Touro on the map.

**The Levy family and Monticello (page 42)**

Assign students working individually or in small groups to research the history of the Levy family's ownership of Monticello and report to the class.

**Synagogue constitutions (page 43)**

Assign the students to small groups to research their synagogue's constitution or bylaws, considering questions such as: Who may join? Who may be elected to office? Do you agree with these laws? What changes would you make? Suggest that they compare this document to the Declaration of Synagogue Rights on page 43 in the textbook. Ask each group to come to a consensus on at least five bylaws for a synagogue in which they would like to be members and write them on poster paper. Give students colored markers and have them place a mark next to any bylaw written by a group other than their own with which they agree. Total the marks and compose a set of bylaws that the class can agree with. Have students compare these bylaws with their synagogue's bylaws and those in the textbook. What have they learned?

**The blessing for the country (page 44)**

Provide students with the synagogue's siddur and have them find the blessing for the country. Ask a volunteer to read it aloud. Invite the rabbi to visit and discuss this blessing with the class.

**A letter to Newport (page 45)**

Ask volunteers to read the letter on page 45 aloud, with each volunteer reading one paragraph. Ask students what they learned from the letter about the religious practices of Jews of the eighteenth century. *(that they do not chant the portion of the week from the Torah; that they do not blow the shofar)*

**Penina Moise's hymns and poems (page 47)**

Working individually, have students read the material on Penina Moise's hymns and poems and write a poem that they would like to include in a service at their synagogue. Ask for volunteers to read their poems aloud. Compile the poems into a book and present a copy to the rabbi, educational director, and to the synagogue library.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Ask: What one person or event discussed in Chapter 6 or in all of Unit 2 was the most important influence on the lives of Jews in America? Have students write the name or event on a three-by-five-inch card. Collect the cards, and read the responses to the class. Ask volunteers to defend or challenge any response. Create a list of persons and events the class agrees on.

# Unit 3, Chapter 7: Becoming Americans

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

The first big wave of Jewish immigrants to the United States arrived between the 1830s and the 1880s. Already, most of the nation's Jews were Ashkenazim. Now, their brothers and sisters from Germany and other central European countries such as Poland, Austria, and Hungary fled poverty and discrimination to join them. Getting to America was difficult, as was life in the new land. Nonetheless, most of the immigrants were determined to become American and equally determined to build a viable Jewish community in the United States.

These new immigrants contributed to the expanding American economy, especially in the realms of manufacturing, merchandising, and distributing goods. A few became wealthy bankers or department-store owners; others enjoyed more modest success as peddlers, shopkeepers, and artisans. Some remained quite poor and relied on the Jewish charitable organizations that were established to help them.

Some Jewish immigrants made their mark as community leaders and philanthropists, and a few had influential positions in government. The new immigrants established charitable, social, educational, and recreational organizations, greatly enriching Jewish cultural life. For the first time, the tradition of Jewish scholarship took hold in the United States.

Isaac Leeser was one of the most influential Jewish leaders of the day. In his determination to unite American Jews, he wrote and published many books on Judaism, especially educational materials, and America's first Jewish periodical. He also defended the Jewish community against critics and Christian missionaries. He was passionate about education and supported the growth of various types of Jewish schools.

The massive immigration of central European Jews to America greatly increased the number of Jews in the country. It also had a strong and lasting impact on the cultural, political, social, and religious lives of Jews in America.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify important contributions that the central European Jews made to the American economy and society.
- Describe the impact that the new immigrants had on Jewish communal life in the United States.

### Get Ready!

Arrange the class in a circle, and ask students to complete this sentence: I'm leaving my home in Europe to immigrate to America, and my greatest challenge will be . . ." Write students' responses on sheets of poster paper and display them around the room. Ask students to note whether more of the answers relate to religious concerns or secular concerns.

### Use the Time Line

Ask students to identify one or two familiar events in any section of the time line found at the end of the unit. Ask them to select one event in the "Jewish America" section that they want to learn more about.

### Reflect On It

Point out the following questions, which appear on the first page of Chapter 7. Encourage students to attempt to answer them as they read.

*What contributions did central European Jews make to the American economy and society?*

*What impact did the new immigrants have on Jewish community life in the United States?*

### Read the Chapter

Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group one section of Chapter 7, and allow time for students to prepare to read it aloud to the class. Each group can choose one or more volunteers to read. Instruct students to listen for the answers to the **Reflect On It** questions as each group reads its section of the chapter. Then, have them write their answers in their notes. Conduct a brief review for the class.

## TEACHING TIPS

### The Jews' journey from the old country (page 51)

Working with a partner, have students circle the places listed on the map of Europe found on page 51 of their textbooks.

### An Interview (page 52)

Working individually, ask students to find out who in their families came to America from another country and tape record or film an interview with that person. Have students share three- to five-minute segments of the interviews with the class.

### A peddler's journal (page 53)

Working individually, have students read the peddler's journal on page 53 and write a journal entry of their own.

### Shabbat *halachah* (page 54)

Ask students to find out which activities, according to *halachah,* are and are not permitted on Shabbat. Discuss the reason for these prohibitions with the class.

### Catechism for Jewish children (page 55)

Assign students to small groups, have them read the material in the box on page 55, and ask them to select a Jewish topic that they know well or one that they want to research. Have each group write its own catechism of three questions and answers on the topic. Compile the catechisms into a booklet and provide a copy to each student.

### Community organizations (page 56)

Invite representatives from key organizations in your Jewish community to a "community fair." Ask each to bring material that describes his organization. Students may circulate around the room, speaking to each of the representatives and learning about the organizations. Alternatively, if this is too difficult to organize, gather the brochures and other information and have it available for students to read. Each student can "become" the representative of an organization and present it to the class.

### B'nai B'rith (page 57)

Ask for volunteers to research B'nai B'rith, the Anti-Defamation League, and Hillel. Students can present brief reports to the class.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Have students work in small groups or with a partner. Instruct the groups or pairs to decide on a Jewish organization that they might establish in a new Jewish community. Ask them to consider these questions: Why is theirs the first organization that the community needs? What must they do to get it started? Have the groups prepare convincing five-minute proposals to present to the class. Ask the class to decide which organization it would give its initial support to and why. Ask which organizations it would establish next, after that, and so on.

# Unit 3, Chapter 8: Westward, Ho!

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

Despite common wisdom to the contrary, not all the central European Jewish immigrants to the United States settled in New York or other East Coast cities. Some of them followed the many non-Jewish immigrants of the day who sought their fortunes in the great American West. Jews could be found in almost every good-size town from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Some traveled overland by wagon train; others took the Erie Canal to Buffalo, New York and then headed west by land. Some took the difficult and dangerous route across the Central American isthmus and then boarded ships sailing north to California.

Jews who headed west found many opportunities and few restrictions. They were seen simply as "fellow pioneers." They worked as peddlers and traders, sometimes among the Indians. A few became prospectors in the Rockies; others worked as merchants, running general stores, saloons, and hotels. Men often returned east to find wives and their new communities followed a familiar pattern. The men founded congregations, cemeteries, and charitable societies and the women established their own charitable organizations. Later, they set up hospitals, schools, and other organizations. Many actively participated in the secular community as well.

A few of these immigrants became extremely successful in the West. Levi Strauss, Adoph Sutro, and Solomon Nunes Carvalho, for example, made significant contributions to the settlement of America's frontier. Thus, although their numbers were small, as America expanded westward, so did the Jewish community.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- List ways in which Jews took part in the migration to the great American West.
- Describe the contributions of several of the most successful and famous settlers.

### Get Ready!

Divide the class into two groups, and give every student a copy of the following "Recommended Supply List for Pioneers Traveling West by Wagon Train." Instruct groups to spend fifteen minutes choosing fifteen items from the list of supplies that it wants to bring on its wagon train. Tell students that if a group cannot decide in the allotted time, the wagon train will leave without them. The groups must reach a consensus. Ask each group to report its final list to the class.

**Recommended Supply List for Pioneers Traveling West by Wagon Train**

1 strong wagon
2 or 3 yoke of oxen
2 or more milk cows
3 sheep
1 musket or rifle for each male over age 12
1 pound gunpowder for musket or 4 pounds lead for rifle
1,000 pounds flour
10 pounds rice
1 pound tea
5 pounds coffee
100 pounds sugar
½ pound cayenne pepper
2 pounds black pepper
½ pound mustard
1 pound cinnamon
½ pound cloves
1 dozen nutmeg seeds
25 pounds salt
10 pounds dried apples
½ bushel beans
A few pounds dried beef
5 pounds dried peaches
20 pounds dried pumpkin
25 pounds seed grain
1 gallon alcohol
20 pounds soap
4 or 5 fishhooks and lines
15 pounds iron or steel
Wrought-iron nails

Clothing and bedding (no more than 500 pounds)
Cooking utensils: kettle, frying pan, coffeepot, tin cups, plates, knives, forks, spoons

*(List is adapted from the Museum of the American West.)*

#### Use the Time Line

Ask students to look carefully at the time line before reading Chapter 8. Instruct them to enter in the appropriate place on the time line significant events that they discover in Chapter 8 that do not already appear on the time line.

#### Reflect On It

Point out the following question, which appears on the first page of Chapter 8. Encourage students to attempt to answer it for themselves as they read.

What were some of the ways in which Jews took part in the migration to the great American West?

After students have read the chapter, ask them to write their answer to the question in their notes or to discuss the question briefly with a partner or in class.

#### Read the Chapter

Have students read Chapter 8 at home or in class. Instruct them to write questions about the material—at least one analytical question and one factual question per section—in the margins of their book as they read. Review students' questions in class.

## TEACHING TIPS

#### Jews move west (page 61)

Working individually or with a partner, have students circle the places listed on the map on page 61.

#### A letter home (page 63)

Suggest that students read the letter from an immigrant in California to his brother and then write their own letter to a family member describing their trip to a new home in the West.

#### A western Haggadah (page 65)

Assign students to read the portion of the western Haggadah and draw pictures to illustrate it. Display the pictures around the room.

#### A dietary dilemma (page 67)

Ask one or more students to volunteer to speak with the rabbi about what Jewish law would say about Carvalho's dietary dilemma and report back to the class.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Have the class stand in a large circle, and instruct students to be ready to complete the statement "I didn't know that . . ." Toss a large, soft ball to a student, instructing him or her to finish the statement based on what he or she has learned in Chapter 8. Students continue tossing the ball to each other, with each student who catches the ball completing the same statement. Continue the activity until every student has had the opportunity to respond.

# Unit 3, Chapter 9: Americanizing Reform Judaism

## INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

By the mid-nineteenth century, significant problems confronted the American Jewish community: Many of the central European immigrants were not involved in Jewish life, Protestant groups had organized to try to convert Jews to Christianity, and some Jews were intermarrying. Those were among the many issues that prompted a segment of the American Jewish community to advocate changes that they believed were necessary to preserve Judaism while adapting it to American life.

Even before the arrival of the major wave of central European Jewish immigrants, the first stirrings of reform had begun. In 1824 in Charleston, Isaac Harby led a group of congregants in petitioning the leaders of Congregation Beth Elohim for changes that they believed would make the Shabbat service more representative of American life and more readily understandable by more people. When the synagogue leaders refused, Harby's group left and founded the Reformed Society of Israelites for Promoting True Principles of Judaism According to Its Purity and Spirit, which existed for a few years before it faded away.

A fire destroyed Beth Elohim in 1838, and when it was time to rebuild, the *ḥazan*, Gustavus Poznanski, led reformers in requesting that a pipe organ be installed. The congregation approved the organ, and more traditional members of the congregation left to form their own more traditional congregation. These events paved the way for changes in congregations throughout America.

By the mid-1880s, ordained rabbis were arriving in America from Europe. Congregations were able to be selective, choosing the rabbi members preferred. Some of these new rabbis brought radical ideas with them from Germany, where the Reform movement had begun in the early 1800s. Conditions in America allowed the Reform movement to become even more radical than it was in Europe, and the number and size of Reform congregations grew quickly. Congregations even began competing for members.

The most important early leader of the Reform movement was Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise. Thinking that all American Jews would accept his style of modern Reform Judaism, he wrote extensively about his ideas and traveled around the country to discuss them. He finally garnered sufficient support to establish the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), the organization of Reform congregations, and the Hebrew Union College (HUC), a rabbinical seminary that trains Reform rabbis.

Rabbi David Einhorn, another early Reform leader, wished to make Reform even more radical. While Einhorn's influence was limited, it had a major effect on his son-in-law, Kaufmann Kohler, who convened the conference that wrote the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, the basis of American Reform Judaism at that time.

By 1860, there were twelve "organ congregations" in America; eight years later, there were thirty. The unity of American Jews that Leeser and Wise had hoped for did not materialize, however, and the gap between traditional and Reform Jews widened with the passage of time.

## TEACHING THE CHAPTER

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe the challenges that faced the American Jewish community of the mid-nineteenth century.
- Discuss the ways in which the Jewish community reacted to these challenges.
- Identify how these developments shaped Jewish life in America.

### Get Ready!

Have students write one thing that they know about Reform Judaism on a three-by-five-inch card. Collect the cards, and create a master list on poster paper. Ask whether there is anything anyone can add. Keep the list posted in the classroom to refer to after students have read Chapter 9.

### Use the Time Line

Encourage students to learn about the history of their own family, synagogues, school, and/or community from the 1830s to the 1880s. Encourage them to add relevant events to the time line.

#### Reflect On It

Point out the following questions, which appear on the first page of Chapter 9. Encourage students to attempt to answer them as they read.

*What were some of the challenges that faced the American Jewish community of the mid-nineteenth century? How did the community react? How did these developments shape Jewish life in America?*

After students have read the chapter, ask them to write their answers to the questions in their notes or to discuss the questions briefly with a partner or with the class.

#### Read the Lesson

Remind students of the things they know about Reform Judaism that they listed during the set-induction activity for Chapter 9. Then, ask them what they want to know about Reform Judaism and its development in the United States. That is, ask them what questions they still have or what aspects of Reform Judaism they wish to learn more about. Record their responses on another sheet of chart paper.

Have students work with a partner, and instruct the class to read Chapter 9 silently. Instruct one partner in each pair to determine whether the items on the list (generated in the **Get Ready!** activity) of what the class already knows are correct and the other partner to find the answers to the questions that they still have. If necessary, as determined by time constraints and class size, have each set of partners work on only one of the six sections in the chapter, assigning several groups to each section. After students have finished reading, have the partners report to the class and make any necessary corrections to the lists. Keep the lists posted for the closure activity. (The "know, want to know, what was learned" (KWL) technique was developed by the Penn Literacy Network of the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, Philadelphia.)

## TEACHING TIPS

#### Review the *halachah* (page 70)

As a class, look at the list of activities that are not permitted on Shabbat that is included in the Teaching Guide. Ask students to write a paragraph about the one that is most meaningful for them and to share it with the class.

#### Compare the prayers (page 73)

Have students read the two versions of the prayer silently and ask them to list the main differences and similarities in the space provided in their textbook. *(the language in the first version is more formal; both versions speak about peace)* Write their responses on the board. Ask: Which version of the prayer speaks to you more powerfully? Have students explain their answers.

#### The Treifah Banquet (page 75)

Assign students to small groups and provide each group with a Tanach to read the laws of kashrut in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14:4-21. Have each group create a list of the foods on the banquet menu that are treif. Ask each group to develop its own kosher menu for a banquet. Share the menus with the class.

#### Wise's views (page 75)

Ask for several volunteers to speak with Reform rabbis in order to learn how Wise's views are similar to or different from Reform Judaism in America today. Have them report to the class.

Arrange a visit to a Reform synagogue in the community and tour the sanctuary. Ask the rabbi of the synagogue to speak with the class and answer their questions about the synagogue itself as well as about Reform Judaism and its development in recent years. Prior to the trip, have the class compile a list of questions.

#### The Pittsburgh Platform (page 77)

Working individually or in small groups, read the section of the Pittsburgh Platform provided on page 77 and list the main beliefs that are expressed in it. *(acceptance of only moral laws as binding; keeping ceremonies that sanctify our lives and rejecting those that are not adapted to modern life; considering the Jewish people a religious community and not a nation that will return to Palestine)* Encourage students to read about the movement today and create a list of other beliefs that are central to Reform Judaism.

#### A debate (page 77)

Divide the class into teams and assign each team a side in the debate of whether Judaism is a religion or a nation. Present the debate to another class in the religious school.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

The final question in the KWL techniques is What was learned? Ask students to work with their partners to come up with one or two things they learned in their study of Chapter 9. Create a new list based on their responses. Save the lists to use during the class's study of the other movements in American Judaism.

# SECTION 2: ENHANCING THE LEARNING

## UNIT 1, CHAPTER 1

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.

- Given what was happening during the Inquisition, how realistic was the fear that Marranos would "Judaize" other Conversos?
- Why do you think the Dutch West India Company recruited Jews in particular?
- What would you do if someone tried to force you to convert to another religion?
- Why is religious freedom important to you?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 1.

- Ask: If you were part of a group that wanted to start a synagogue, what would you call it, and why? Have students write their responses on an index card. Collect the cards, and write the names on paper. Have the class come to a consensus on the name for the class's new synagogue.
- Ask students to imagine that they are a child whose ancestors fled the Inquisition and whose family finally arrived in New Amsterdam. Have them write diary entries describing their experiences and their feelings about them.
- Invite students to write a story, poem, essay, or song about religious freedom.
- Instruct the class to examine the time line found at the end of the unit. Encourage students to ask questions about any events with which they are unfamiliar. Ask each student to select an event, do research on it, and report on it to the class.

## UNIT 1, CHAPTER 2

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.

- How did the Jewish settlers' struggle for rights affect the observance of their Judaism and the status of other minority groups in the colonies?
- What items identify your home as Jewish? Is there one that is most important to you? Why is it especially important?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 2.

- Have students write letters to the Dutch West India Company, explaining why Peter Stuyvesant should permit Jews to settle in New Amsterdam.
- Invite students to write an editorial for a colonial newspaper, explaining why their fellow Jewish colonists should enjoy the same rights as Christian colonists.
- Remind students of the Jewish items that Asser Levy owned when he died, and ask them to think about the Jewish items that they or their family owns. Instruct them to draw or photograph the items and then to create a collage that tells something about who they are.
- Have students find out when a ceremony to administer the oath of allegiance to the United States will be conducted for newly naturalized citizens in their community, and suggest that they attend the ceremony if doing so is possible.
- Invite students to write at least five questions for inclusion in a test of American Jewish history, based on Chapters 1 and 2 of their textbook. Instruct them to construct questions that test information they believe is critical for all Jewish citizens of the United States.

## UNIT 1, CHAPTER 3

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.

- In the design of a synagogue, what aspects of the building do you consider most important?
- Think about the following quote from Ahad Ha–am: "More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews." What do you think he meant? Do you agree with it? What effect might this concept have on your observance of Shabbat?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 3.

- Have students work individually or with the class to construct a chart showing ways in which the synagogue controlled the lives of Jewish colonists, ways in which the experiences of Jewish colonists were similar to those of Christian colonists, ways in which Jewish life today is similar to Jewish life in the colonies, and ways in which Jewish life today is different from Jewish life in the colonies.
- Ask students to list ways in which the practice of Judaism in the colonies differed from its practice in Europe.
- Divide the class into small groups, and challenge each group to design its own synagogue. Suggest that students draw the building, build a diorama, use pictures from magazines, or write a description. Encourage them to think about how they would design aspects of the synagogue that they deem especially important. Display the students' pieces in a "mini-museum," and invite them to share their visions with the class.
- Discuss dietary laws, Shabbat, and holiday observances. Ask students to consider whether there are conflicts between Jewish law (*halachah*) and the customs of American society. Invite volunteers to tell the class how they handle these challenges in their own lives.
- Read the "Shabbat Dilemma" aloud, and then do a Think-Pair-Share activity. Ask students to think about the way Joseph Simon handled his situation; then, ask whether they can think of a better solution. Have students discuss the question with a partner, and invite each set of partners to share its answers with the class.

## UNIT 2, CHAPTER 4

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.

- What would you do if you, as a Jew, were asked to take an oath swearing loyalty to the United States? Do you think the Pledge of Allegiance is a loyalty oath?
- The U.S. postage stamp that honors Haym Salomon calls him a hero. Whom do you consider a hero (modern or historic), and why?
- How do you make a decision when your values are in conflict—for example, how would you choose between fighting for freedom and your country and opposing a war? Think about some modern examples of this dilemma. Judaism teaches: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4). Judaism also teaches: "If someone comes to kill you, kill him first" (Sanhedrin 72a). How can a person believe both of these teachings? How does Judaism guide you in making moral decisions of this type?
- What does freedom mean to you? What are the responsibilities that come with freedom? What does Judaism teach about freedom?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 4.

- Provide the class with this background information: The Liberty Bell was rung on July 8, 1776, to announce the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence. At a meeting of the Assembly of the Province of Pennsylvania in 1751, the superintendents were ordered to procure a bell from England. The instruction included the inscription that was to be placed on the bell: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." Have students find this verse in Leviticus 25:10 and read some of the rabbinic commentaries on it. Then, have them write a d'var Torah (brief explanation or discussion of the Torah verses) on the verse and present it to the class. To write a d'var Torah, students should ask themselves "What excites me about the text? What do I find most interesting? What bothers me? What don't I understand? What is left unanswered?" If students are

able to find more than one commentary about the text, they might comment on whether the commentaries agree or disagree. When students present their d'var Torah to the class, they should first present the material they have prepared. They can then ask the class to think about what relevance the text has for their own lives and what events in their lives illustrate the lessons of the text.

- Invite students to choose one of the Jewish Revolutionary War heroes and create a postage stamp to honor him.
- Have students create a poster or brochure that highlights the Jewish contribution to the Revolutionary War and encourages Jews to visit one of the famous Revolutionary War battlefields to learn about this piece of American Jewish history.

## UNIT 2, CHAPTER 5

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.

- How do the ideas of freedom of religion and the freedom not to follow any religion affect your life?
- George Washington's statement that "the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance" has become famous. What is the significance of these words today? Do you find them, in your own experience, to be true?
- In the same letter, Washington wrote: "All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights." Reflect on Washington's rejection of the idea of one group of people "tolerating" another as opposed to the idea of citizenship for everyone.
- During the period of the Judges, there was a loose confederation of the tribes of Israel that banded together only to fight outside enemies. It lasted until Samuel's time, when the Israelites asked for a king. In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of a central government?
- What would you have done about the lack of rights for Jews had you lived in Rhode Island, Connecticut, or New Hampshire in the early 1800s?
- Do all minorities have equal rights in the United States today? Do you believe there is any difference between the nation's written laws and the way things actually are?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 5.

- Suggest that students make a virtual visit to the famous Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island. The website is www.tourosynagogue.org.
- Instruct students to read Isaiah 2:4, from which Washington's words "shall sit under his own vine and fig tree" come. Have them read any commentary they can find on these verses and prepare a short d'var Torah to present to the class. Inform the class that the verse that says "nation shall not lift up sword against nation: And they shall no longer learn the ways of war" is also found in Micah 4:3-4. Have students compare these two sections of the Tanach. Ask what is different about them, and ask them to explain their answers. Suggest that they include their responses to that question in their d'var Torah. They might also ask themselves: "What excites me about the text? What do I find most interesting? What bothers me? What don't I understand? What is left unanswered?" If students are able to find more than one commentary about the text, they might comment on whether the commentaries agree or disagree. When students present their d'var Torah to the class, they should first present the material they have prepared. They can then ask the class to think about what relevance the text has for their own lives and what events in their lives illustrate the lessons of the text.
- Invite students to create a poster that expresses their feelings about freedom of religion.
- Provide students with the portion of the letter by Benjamin Nones that appears in this Teaching Guide, and lead the class in a discussion of the importance of Nones's public response to an instance of antisemitism.
- Ask students whether they have ever witnessed or experienced religious persecution. Invite volunteers to share their experiences with a small group. Instruct groups to brainstorm in order to come up with actions that individuals or the class might take to

prevent the recurrence of such experiences. Allow the class to decide on two or three of these actions that it would like to pursue.

## UNIT 2, CHAPTER 6

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.

- What is there about American Jewish life in the 1820s that is similar to, or different from, that of our own time?
- Do you think that Uriah Phillips Levy was influenced by his Judaism in his famous fight against flogging in the Navy? What do you know about Judaism that influenced your response?
- What impact might the new voluntary nature of synagogue participation have had on the American Jewish community?
- Some research on Rebecca Gratz and Penina Moise suggests that they never married because they opposed intermarriage. What do you think of intermarriage in the times in which those women lived? What is your opinion of intermarriage today? What challenges does it bring to the Jewish family? to the Jewish community? What is your parents' view of intermarriage?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 6.

- Have students create a picture, poem, photograph, song, dance, or other work of literature or art that expresses their feelings about America and the rights Jews have in this country.
- Distribute copies of the letter in this Teaching Guide from Benjamin Rush to his wife, describing a Jewish wedding. Ask students to compare that wedding to modern Jewish weddings with which they are familiar. Discuss in class, or have students research, alternative explanations for the customs Rush describes. Point out the last paragraph, and ask students to describe their reaction to it.
- Distribute copies of the letter in this Teaching Guide from Rebecca Samuels to her parents, about life in Petersburg, Virginia. Have students discuss the letter in small groups or with the entire class, focusing on the services and support that they believe a Jewish community should provide. Ask: What makes a Jewish community Jewish?

## UNIT 3, CHAPTER 7

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.

- The Jews who left their homes in Europe brought dried kosher food, family Bibles, and prayer books with them. What would you take with you if you were leaving your home for a new land?
- What do you think would be the most difficult part of being a new Jewish immigrant in America today or in the recent past? Why?
- Thinking about the activities that are prohibited on Shabbat, can you see a way in which such restrictions help to create a positive religious and spiritual atmosphere? What conflicts between work or school obligations and Shabbat observance do you or members of your family experience?
- Why was the business success of the central European Jewish immigrants important to the future of the American Jewish community?
- Have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination because of your religion? How did you feel about it? What did you do?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 7.

- Instruct students to write a brief article, story, or poem about, or to draw a picture describing the experiences of a member of their family who came to America from another country.
- Have students write a short story, an essay, a poem, or a song, or have them draw a picture that shows something they do to make Shabbat special.
- Invite students to play a game of "I'm a peddler, and in my pack I'm carrying . . . " Instruct the first player to name an object that starts with 'a.' Instruct the second player to repeat the first item and name one that starts with 'b.' Instruct the third player to repeat the first two items and to add one whose name begins with 'c.' Have the class continue the game until a player cannot remember what the previous players said or cannot

think of something whose name begins with the next letter of the alphabet.
- Invite students to make a poster advertising one of the Jewish charitable, social, educational, or recreational organizations in their community. You might have the class select one of the organizations and participate in a tzedakah project to benefit it.
- Have students stage a debate on the question of whether the United States should make treaties or conduct business with countries that violate the rights of their own citizens. Ask: Does this happen today? Do you know of any examples?
- Invite students to investigate, and report to the class on one of the Jewish immigrants who made important contributions to the cultural life of America. Suggest that they consider Abraham Jacobi, Joseph Pulitzer, Oscar Hammerstein, Leopold Damrosch, or Albert Michelson.

## UNIT 3, CHAPTER 8

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.
- Why do you think Jewish immigrants braved difficult conditions to leave the cities and head into the unknown West? Would you have done so?
- Why do you think the pioneers saw parallels between their experiences and the Exodus from Egypt?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 8.
- Have students view and write reviews of *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral* (1957), *The Frisco Kid* (1979), or *An American Tale: Fievel Goes West* (1991).
- Have students find out when and how their family came to the United States and to the city where they now live. Suggest that they interview family members who can tell them about the experience, and have them plot their family's journey on a map. Finally, have the class create a map that shows where each student's family came from and where they have lived.
- Tell students about the roadside system of messages called bone mail: Messages were written on sun-bleached bones and buffalo hides and left for pioneers in the wagon trains that followed. Sometimes, they gave advice like "For God's sake, do not taste this water. It is poisonous." Have students write a few "bone mail" messages of their own and post them around the classroom.
- Invite students to learn more about Otto Mears. Direct them to the web page "American Byways—the San Juan Skyway: Otto Mears" at www.rmpbs.org/byways/otto1.

## UNIT 3, CHAPTER 9

### Beyond the Text

The following questions may be used for class or small-group discussion.
- If you had been a member of Beth Elohim, would you have been a reformer or a traditionalist?
- Do you agree with Gustavus Poznanski's pronouncement about America, that "[t]his country is our Palestine, this city our Jerusalem, this house of God our temple"?
- Reform Judaism fostered a concept of Jews being *or l'goyim,* "a light to the nations." What do you understand this concept to mean?
- In your opinion, how far can one go in making changes to Judaism and still maintain its essence?
- Can you imagine a single Judaism? What would it be like?
- Why do you think this chapter is called "Americanizing Reform Judaism"?

### Extend Your Learning

The following projects and activities expand on the material presented in Chapter 9.
- Have the class stage a debate on the Reform movement's program. Remind students that traditional Jews felt threatened by the proposed changes, while the reformers argued that they were saving Judaism by accommodating it to the conditions of American life. Actually, both groups believed that their approach would preserve Judaism for future generations. Instruct students to discuss how the two viewpoints are relevant to American Jewish life today.
- Distribute copies of Ray Frank's letter that appears in this Teaching Guide. After students have read it, have them write their own letters saying what they would (and would not) do if they were rabbis.

### *Categories of Forbidden Work on Shabbat*

The work that is traditionally forbidden on Shabbat is work that was involved in building the sanctuary, or *mishkan,* in the desert. These acts have been interpreted and expanded as questions about them have arisen in modern society. The original thirty-nine forbidden acts were

Plowing
Sowing
Reaping
Sheafmaking
Threshing
Winnowing
Selecting
Sifting
Grinding
Kneading
Baking
Sheepshearing
Bleaching
Combing raw material
Dyeing
Spinning
Threading a loom
Weaving
Removing the finished article
Separating into threads
Tying a knot
Untying a knot
Sewing
Tearing
Trapping
Slaughtering
Skinning or flaying
Tanning
Scraping
Marking out
Cutting to shape
Writing
Erasing
Building
Demolishing
Kindling a fire
Extinguishing a fire
Making the final blow with a hammer
Carrying in a public place

# SECTION 3: PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS TO KNOW

## UNIT 1, CHAPTER 1

### The Jews in Spain

Under Muslim rule, beginning with the conquests of the early eighth century, Spain became a favorable place for Jewish settlement. During the tenth, eleventh, and the first half of the twelfth centuries, Jews and Christians in Muslim Spain, though not equal to Muslims, were generally protected and allowed to participate actively in the cultural life of the country. Spanish Christians regained control of Spain over hundreds of years in a process that was completed in 1492 with the capture of Granada. They called the process the Reconquista because they saw it as the act of taking Spain back from the Muslims.

### Expulsion from Spain

Jews traditionally date the expulsion to Tisha B'Av (the ninth of Av), a day when, throughout history, tragedies befell the Jewish people. These tragedies include the destruction of the First Temple, by the Babylonians in 586 BCE, and the Second Temple, by the Romans in 70 CE.

The Mishnah added the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt—the death of Bar Kokhba and the slaughter of his followers by the Romans in 135 CE—to the tragedies that are remembered on Tisha B'Av. During the Middle Ages, other events were added, such as the death of the Ten Martyrs, including Rabbi Akiba; the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290; and the expulsion from Spain in 1492. The specific date by which the Jews had to leave Spain was July 31, 1492.

### The Jews and Columbus

Sources vary as to whether Marranos accompanied Columbus on his first trip to America. As a result of analyzing a list of crew and identifying surnames that often belonged to Jews, historians have speculated that several Marranos were part of the initial crew. Among them, was believed to have been Luis de Torres, Columbus's interpreter, who stayed behind and settled in Cuba when Columbus returned to Europe. It is important to realize, however, that this is based on guesswork and that among textbooks that cite information on Columbus and the Jews, there are conflicts and discrepancies. Moreover, some converts to Christianity were sincere and did not practice Judaism secret.

### Conversos, Marranos, New Christians, and Crypto-Jews

Conversos were Jews who converted to Catholicism during the time of the Inquisition in order to save their lives. New Christian is another term for people who converted at the time of the Inquisition. Those who tried to practice Judaism secretly were called Marranos, a derogatory term, probably from the Spanish word for "swine." Crypto-Jews is another term for Jews who converted but practiced Judaism secretly.

### Sephardim and Ashkenazim

Jews from Spain and Portugal are known as Sephardim, from the Hebrew name for Spain, Sepharad. Jews from central Europe are called Ashkenazim, from the Hebrew name for Germany, Ashkenaz. The two groups developed different prayer rituals, different pronunciations of Hebrew, different Torah tropes (systems of cantillation or chanting), different liturgical music, and different religious customs. For example, when Sephardim recite "kadosh, kadosh, kadosh" in the Kiddushah prayer, they look down, whereas Ashkenazim look up and rise up on their toes. Interestingly these different customs were derived from the same source: a desire to demonstrate awe of God.

Another example of their different customs is the way in which children's names are chosen. Ashkenazim name their children after deceased relatives; Sephardim name their children after living relatives. There are also variations within each group, depending on the country from which they came. Their Torah scrolls are also different. The Ashkenazic Torah scroll lies flat when it is being read; the eastern Sephardim use a scroll that stands upright in a wooden or metal case.

### Latin American Jewish Communities

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Western Hemisphere's largest and most important Jewish communities were in South America and the Caribbean. There, Jewish settlers prospered, built strong communities, promoted Jewish learning, and even provided support to their brothers and sisters in North America.

Spanish and Portuguese New Christians had begun to settle in the Caribbean and South and Central America as early as the sixteenth century. Recife, Brazil, was the home of a thriving Jewish community. Following Portugal's recapture of that colony in 1654, however, the 600 Jews

remaining there departed. While twenty-three brave souls set sail for North America, some returned to Holland, and others settled in Curaçao, Surinam, Barbados, and Jamaica.

In Curaçao, a Dutch colony, most of the Jewish settlers became merchants who helped develop the trade in such goods as sugar, cotton, indigo, tobacco, cocoa, and hides. By the mid-eighteenth century, the 1,300 to 1,500 Jews of Curaçao made up the largest Jewish community in the New World. Their synagogue, Mikveh Israel, was built in 1703. In Surinam (then known as Dutch Guiana), a Dutch colony on the South American mainland, Jews became planters and businessmen. They played an important role in the planting and processing of sugar cane, a major industry in the region. Their community had at least two synagogues by the 1730s.

The Barbados community included Dutch and French Jews as well as Brazilian refugees. By 1715, there were 275 Jews, mostly in Bridgetown, and their congregation, Nidchei Yisrael, is one of the oldest in the English-speaking world. The Jamaican Jewish community, begun in the late sixteenth century, numbered almost 1,000 people by the eighteenth century, with at least five synagogues or prayer groups, three of which were led by rabbis.

These Jewish settlers had close family, social, and commercial ties to the Jews in North America. The Curaçao community helped build the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island. By the nineteenth century, due to general economic decline, the South American and Caribbean Jewish communities waned while those in North America grew in size and importance. However, in the twentieth century, a new influx of immigrants to some Latin American and Caribbean communities strengthened them once again.

### The French and Indian War

As the population and wealth of the British colonies increased, settlers looked west across the Appalachian Mountains for new opportunities for settlement and economic growth. The French, who claimed the area between the Mississippi and St. Lawrence Rivers—the Ohio River valley—grew worried. Several attempts to resolve the issues between England and France proved unsuccessful. In 1752, the governor general of New France was ordered to take possession of the Ohio Valley and remove all British settlers. At the same time, the lieutenant governor of Virginia was granting land in the Ohio Valley to citizens of his colony. George Washington, sent to oust the French troops from the area, was defeated, and the French claimed the entire region west of the Allegheny Mountains.

War between the French and the British was officially declared in 1756. At the outset, France prevailed, but in 1758 the tide began to turn in favor of the British. The British general met and established peaceful relations with the Indian tribes. The French, without the Indians as their allies, abandoned their major fort, Duquesne, on the site of present-day Pittsburgh. The British then took control of the upper Ohio Valley. By the end of 1759, the British controlled much of North America, other than Detroit and Montreal. By the end of 1760, these settlements also fell to the British. A little more than two years later, the Treaty of Paris (February 10, 1763) gave all of North America east of the Mississippi River (except for the territory that would come to be known as the Louisiana Purchase) to the British.

### The Economic Life of Jews in Colonial America

Jews played a significant role in the development of the colonial economy despite being only a very small proportion (about one-tenth of 1 percent) of the overall population. Most Jews settled in major towns and became traders, businessmen, or merchants. Quite a few worked as skilled artisans, such as silversmiths, while others were bakers, tailors, or wigmakers.

Among the most financially successful of the Jewish colonists were the transatlantic merchant shippers of New York, Philadelphia, and Newport, with their flourishing trade in food, forest products, molasses, rum, sugar, and consumer goods. They exported North American products such as furs, grains, meats, tobacco, rice, indigo, and lumber while importing manufactured goods, sugar, and slaves from England, the Caribbean, and Africa, respectively.

Some Jewish merchants set up barrel-making, shipbuilding, rum-distilling, sugar-refining, fish- and whale-processing, furniture-making, and candle- and soapmaking businesses. Jews were also involved in the manufacture of clothing, shoes, and other products.

A few hardy souls set out for the frontier—western Pennsylvania and northern Maryland—where they worked as fur traders, peddlers, and investors in land. While only a small number of Jews were involved in agriculture, a few became plantation owners. Despite the initial restrictions on them, colonial Jews eventually entered a variety of

occupations and made significant contributions to the economic life of the colonies.

#### The Touro Family and Synagogue

Isaac Touro, born and educated in Holland, arrived in Newport, Rhode Island in 1758 to serve as *ḥazan* of the town's new synagogue, Yeshuat Israel. He was married to Reyna Hays, and they had two sons, Abraham and Judah. When the Newport synagogue was closed during the Revolutionary War, Touro moved to New York, where he became religious leader of Shearith Israel. He later moved to Kingston, Jamaica, where he died.

Abraham Touro became a prosperous shipbuilder and established a shipyard in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He made many bequests to Jewish and secular charities upon his death, in 1825. Judah Touro became famous for his support of philanthropic causes, both secular and Jewish. He was a successful importer in New Orleans and supported the first public library and the first public infirmary in that city. His will, which became known as the Will of the Century, provided funds to the New Orleans and Newport synagogues, the Society for Indigent Jews in Jerusalem, the New Orleans Almshouse Fund, and the New Orleans Female Orphan Asylum, among other Jewish and non-Jewish institutions.

Both Touro brothers were committed to supporting the Newport synagogue and cemetery. Abraham bequeathed ten thousand dollars for the restoration of the then unoccupied building, and Judah bequeathed another $10,000 to support an officiant's salary and the maintenance of the cemetery. The synagogue, which was consecrated in 1763, is the oldest synagogue standing in the United States today.

## UNIT 1, CHAPTER 2

#### Peter Stuyvesant

As the governor of New Amsterdam, Stuyvesant tried to prevent the Recife Jews from settling in his colony. He placed "tranquility, peace, and harmony" at the top of his list of priorities, claiming that religious homogeneity would preserve the social order within the colony. He resisted all efforts to grant religious freedom to non-Calvinists, whether they were Lutherans, Catholics, Quakers, or Jews. His efforts to exclude Jews from the colony failed because the directors of the Dutch West India Company in the Netherlands, who controlled the colony, believed that his policy would stifle immigration and inhibit economic growth. In addition, Jewish shareholders in the company protested. Thus, Stuyvesant was ordered to allow Jews to settle, trade, and worship in New Amsterdam as long as they did so "in all quietness" and made sure that "the poor among them" did not become a burden to the community.

#### Naturalization

Historians' understanding of British policy on naturalization is that Britain permitted only native-born or naturalized English citizens to participate in trade. All resident aliens were naturalized in 1683; afterward the right to naturalization was technically restricted to Protestants. Jews could undergo endenization, a form of naturalization that allowed them to take part in trade. The process was not easy, however, and in some colonies it was made even more difficult for Jews.

The Uniform Naturalization Act of 1740 declared that all aliens would be qualified for citizenship if they were born or had lived for seven years in a British colony. It specifically exempted Jews from the Protestant sacrament and removed the words "upon the true Faith of a Christian" from the oath required of naturalized citizens. Thus, the Jews in the colonies had an easier time undergoing naturalization than those in England.

Jews of the West Indies were the first to benefit from the act, with about 150 undergoing naturalization between 1740 and 1776. In the colonies, thirty-five Jews in New York, about twenty in Pennsylvania, and one each in South Carolina, Massachusetts, and Maryland became citizens before the American Revolution. The significance of the act went far beyond these small numbers, however, as it marked an important step on the road to full legal equality for colonial Jews.

#### James Oglethorpe

Sources conflict regarding James Oglethorpe, colonial governor of Georgia. Some sources imply that he initially tried to prevent the entry of Jews into the colony. The colony's charter specifically barred only Catholics, but the colony's board of trustees recommended barring Jews as well. Eventually, however, Oglethorpe raised no further objections, and forty-one Jews were permitted to settle in the colony by 1734. By 1765, two Jewish settlers in Georgia had been elected port officials.

## UNIT 1, CHAPTER 3

### Intermarriage

Intermarriage was a difficult issue in the small American Jewish community of colonial America. During the colonial era, approximately 10 to 15 percent of all marriages involving Jews were to non-Jews. Men were more likely to intermarry than women, and Jews living in remote areas were especially likely to do so. Nonetheless, Jews were less likely to intermarry than were members of some other religious groups at the time.

Jews who intermarried were dealt with on an individual basis. Some remained part of the community, even having their sons circumcised and arranging to be buried as Jews. When Phila Franks, the daughter of Abigail, married a wealthy Huguenot merchant, Oliver Delancey, her mother refused to see her again. However, her father tried to reconcile the family, declaring: "Wee live in a small place & he is Related to the best family in the place." (Quoted in Jonathan Sarna, "The Jews in British America," in *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450–1800,* ed. P. Bernardini and N. Fiering [New York: Berghahn Books, 2001].)

### *Hidur Mitzvah*

*Hidur mitzvah* is the concept of "beautifying the mitzvah," according to which Jews attempt to make every object that is used to fulfill a mitzvah—be it a Kiddush cup or the synagogue building itself—as lovely as possible. Although the Jewish colonists did not wish to compete with the elaborate churches of their Christian neighbors, they did wish to fulfill the mitzvah of *hidur mitzvah.*

### *Ḥerem*

Excommunication began as a method of discipline during the time of Ezra, in the fifth century BCE, as a means of "purifying" the Land of Israel, to rid it of idolatry and the effects of the intermarriages that had taken place during the Babylonian exile. Other measures taken at the time were harsher, with some offenders being condemned to death. During the period of the Second Temple, every Jew was expected to behave in every aspect of life in ways approved of by the Jewish community. If members of the community did not, the religious authorities imposed the penalty of excommunication.

There were several kinds of excommunication, varying in their severity. Beginning with the Talmudic period, the two main forms were *niddui* (from the Hebrew *niddah,* "cut off") and the great *ḥerem. Niddui* was imposed by the Bet Din (religious court) as a punishment for religious and moral offenses. Lasting thirty days, it required the offender to go into formal mourning: He could not bathe, cut his hair, wear shoes, or have contact with anyone outside of his immediate family. If he did not repent promptly, the court could also ban his children from school and his wife from attending synagogue services. Among the offenses that might bring about *niddui* were violating the second day of a holy day, insulting a rabbi or scholar (even one who was dead), and owning a savage dog or a broken ladder that might cause injury to another person.

As terrible as *niddui* was, the great *ḥerem* was even more severe. Lasting for years or even a lifetime, it forbade contact with other Jews, even the offender's own family, whose members were required to renounce and shun him immediately. (Based on Nathan Ausubel, *The Book of Jewish Knowledge* [New York: Crown, 1964].)

## UNIT 2, CHAPTER 4

### Whigs and Tories

For a long time, American Jewish historians tended to suggest that virtually all Jews took the patriots' side in the Revolution. This view was even endorsed by the American Jewish Historical Society in 1913. The only problem is that it is not true. While most Jews did take the side of the Whigs, British records show more than a handful of Jews seeking compensation from the royal government for what they lost as a result of taking the side of the Tories during the war. Many of those who chose to side with the loyalists were born in England; they were interested in maintaining the status quo, which for the most part had been good for the Jews. They also did not wish to risk losing their trading partners in England.

### Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Savannah, and Charleston

These five cities were home to most of the colonies' Jews. Newport, once a prominent site of colonial Jewish life, suffered a great deal of damage during the war. Its port was destroyed, its Jews fled, and the Jewish community never regained its prominence. Savannah's Jewish population similarly declined during the war, whereas Philadelphia and Charleston saw their Jewish populations thrive and grow during the war years. Like that of Newport, the Jewish population of New York City was split between the two sides,

and many Jews fled, leaving about thirty Jewish families there during the British occupation. Of the 1,000 or so New Yorkers who signed a pledge of loyalty to England, sixteen were Jews. After the war, many of the loyalists returned to England with the British troops or fled to other British colonies. Most of New York's Jewish patriots returned to the city from Philadelphia or wherever else they had sought refuge. Twenty-two New York Jewish Revolutionary soldiers and other patriots are buried in Congregation Shearith Israel's cemetery in Manhattan.

### Gershom Mendes Seixas

Gershom Seixas was born in New York in 1746 (a time when that city boasted the colonies' only significant Jewish population). Although of mixed Sephardic and Ashkenazic ancestry, Seixas served as *ḥazan* of Shearith Israel, New York's Sephardic synagogue, leading the congregation from colonial days until 1816.

Seixas's family joined the Revolutionary movement early. In 1770, his father and another Jewish businessman, Isaac Pinto, joined other colonial merchants in endorsing documents to maintain the city's five-year-old agreement to bar the importation of goods from England. Seixas demonstrated his own patriotism when the war began: In April 1775, after the Continental Congress called for a day of fasting and prayer, Seixas prayed "to put in the heart of our Sovereign Lord, George the Third, and in the hearts of his Councellors, Princes and Servants, to turn away their fierce wrath from our North America."

Slightly more than a year later, Seixas urged members of Shearith Israel to back the Revolution by leaving New York. He knew that Jewish merchants who left the city would be sacrificing opportunities to do business with British loyalists, but he made the plea anyway. He gave a farewell address on August 22, 1776, and five days later, General George Washington evacuated the city after being defeated in the Battle of Long Island. Seixas lived in Stratford, Connecticut, for four years and in 1780 fled to Philadelphia, where many New York Jews had settled. There he dedicated Philadelphia's first synagogue. He returned to New York in 1784.

### Haym Salomon

For many years when Jews wanted to learn about the role of Jews in the American Revolution, they heard primarily about Haym Salomon. Many stories sprang up about him, but most contemporary historians believe that the claim that he raised much of the money to finance the Revolution is exaggerated. He did play an important role as a broker, selling government securities, helping to supply the Continental army with food and equipment, and providing loans, often interest free, to members of the Continental Congress, including James Madison. In a letter in 1782, Madison wrote: "The kindness of my little friend in Front Street will preserve me from extremities but I never resort to it without mortifications as he obstinately rejects all recompense . . . to a necessitous delegate he gratuitously spares a supply (of money) out of his private stock."

One popular story that students may come across is that of George Washington's appeal to Salomon for funds for the war on Yom Kippur. It is said that Salomon suspended services, secured financial pledges from fellow congregants, and then resumed the service. There is no evidence that the story is true, however.

Salomon worked closely with the new superintendent of finance for the Continental Congress, Robert Morris. The American government had so little cash that frequently there was not enough money to pay the soldiers. There are more than one hundred entries in Morris's diary regarding his business with Salomon. Salomon sold bills of exchange from France, Holland, and Spain to raise cash for the war. It was his skill at finance and his reputation for honesty and reliability that made these transactions possible.

Salomon married Rachel Franks, whose brother Isaac was a lieutenant colonel on Washington's staff. When Salomon died, at age forty-five, he left her and their four children penniless.

### Moses Michael Hays

Hays was a native-born American of a distinguished family that, after a period of vacillation, supported the Revolution. After the war he became a well-respected citizen of Boston, where his was the only Jewish family at the time. He was elected grand master of the Grand Lodge of Masons of Massachusetts, with Paul Revere as his deputy. He helped found one of the first banks in America, the Bank of Massachusetts, in 1784.

Prior to the Revolution, the Rhode Island Assembly asked Hays to sign a declaration of loyalty that was required only of suspected enemies of the Revolutionary cause. Hays, a known patriot, refused, saying,

*I have and ever shall hold the strongest principles and attachments to the just rights and privileges of this*

*my native land and ever have and shall conform to the rules and acts of this government and pay as I always have my proportion of its exigencies. I always have asserted my sentiments in favor of America and confess the War on its part just. I decline subscribing the Test at present from these principles, first, that I deny ever being inimical to my country and call for my accusers and proof of conviction; second, that I am an Israelite and am not allowed the liberty of a vote or voice in common with the rest of the voters though consistent with the Constitution and the other Colonies; thirdly, because the Test is not general and consequently subject to many glaring inconveniences; fourthly, Continental Congress nor the General Assembly of this nor the Legislatures of the other Colonies have never in this contest taken any notice or countenance respecting the society of Israelites to which I belong. When any rule order or directions is made by the Congress or General Assembly I shall to the utmost of my power adhere to the same.* (From Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Rhode Island Archives, *General Assembly Papers,* "Revolutionary War, Suspected Persons, 1775–1783," p. 16.)

### Jewish Support for America

Records show that more than 100 Jews fought in the Continental army, most in state and local militias. This is a high percentage since there were only about 2,000 Jews in a population of 2 million in the colonies. Many Jews served as officers, and at least four attained the rank of colonel. One account refers to a company of the South Carolina Militia as the "Jew Company" because about twenty-seven of its sixty members were Jews.

Jews also supported America in other ways. Joseph Simon and other Jewish gunsmiths produced arms for the troops, and Jewish merchants and traders helped provision them. Jewish officials assisted in the movement of the army, and Jewish-owned ships were used in the war effort. Many Jews—including Mordecai Sheftall, David Salisbury Franks, Benjamin Levy, Samuel Lyons, Isaac Moses, and Benjamin Jacobs—contributed significant amounts of money to the war effort.

### Jewish Thought on War

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, in *Jewish Wisdom* (New York: William Morrow, 1994), explains that Jewish laws about war are a combination of common sense and mercy. He cites Deuteronomy 20:1, 5–8, explaining that it would be cruel to draft a person who has just started a business or married, only to have that person be killed and another take over his business or marry his widow. The Talmud, however, says that when a country in which Jews live under equal rights is invaded, all deferments (except those for men who are so fearful that they cannot fight and might be dangerous to others) are suspended. "In a war of self-defense [an obligatory war] all go out to do battle, even a groom from his room" (Mishnah *Sotah* 8:7).

Telushkin also explains that while the Jewish tradition considers universal peace an essential component of the messianic time ("And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" [Isaiah 2:4]), the prophets (and, later, the rabbis) did not believe that all war is wrong. ("If someone comes to kill you, kill him first" [*Sanhedrin* 72a]). Jewish tradition allows people to defend themselves and does not require them to "turn the other cheek," as it says in the Christian Scriptures. According to Telushkin, Judaism holds that while fighting a war is always unfortunate, it is not always evil; sometimes it is the moral thing to do.

Some Jews once thought that they were commanded to die rather than violate Shabbat. In response, Rabbi Telushkin quotes the Babylonian Talmud (*Shabbat* 132a): "The saving of life supersedes the Sabbath." He also cites Maccabees I (2:3–41), which tells about a group of Jews who were killed after refusing to fight the Syrian emperor's troops on Shabbat. The Book concludes: "That day they decided that, if anyone came to fight against them on the Sabbath, they would fight back, rather than all die as their brothers . . . had done." From then on, Telushkin explains, all Jewish sources have ruled that saving human life takes precedence over observing Shabbat.

### *Pikuaḥ Nefesh*

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* defines this term as "regard for human life." It refers to the duty to save human life in a situation in which it is imperiled, whether directly, due to illness or imminent danger, or indirectly, as a consequence of a physical condition that might deteriorate. The principle is derived from Leviticus 19:6, which states: "Neither shall you stand idly by the blood of your neighbor." According to the Talmud (*Yoma* 85a), this duty supersedes even observance of Shabbat. The rabbis understood this from

Exodus 31:16: "The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath." On Shabbat (or a festival), every type of medical treatment must be provided to a dangerously ill person. Only in cases of minor illness or physical discomfort should violations of the Sabbath be kept to a minimum.

The Talmud discusses the problem of a person who is faced with the choice of saving his own life or that of his companion. Rabbi Akiba, whose opinion prevailed, ruled that one should save one's own life. Only when faced with a choice between dying and committing idolatry, unlawful sexual intercourse, or murder is martyrdom to be preferred. One must also sacrifice one's own life rather than submit to what may be seen as a renunciation of Judaism through the public violation of any religious law.

## UNIT 2, CHAPTER 5

### The Politics of the Time

America's Founding Fathers were inspired by Enlightenment thought, which recognized common bonds among members of various religious groups and paved the way for freedom of religion and the separation of church and state. The Declaration of Independence was an extraordinary document because it called for dramatic changes in government and promised equality for all Americans. Although it was written after the fighting officially began, it stated the goals of the Revolution. After the war, in 1781, the states, eager to limit the power of the central government so as to preserve their autonomy, united under the Articles of Confederation.

However, this form of government was weak because Congress depended on the states financially to enforce federal legislation. In addition, with each state negotiating trade agreements on its own, the central government received little respect abroad. To address these issues—and to design a stronger federal government—the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia in 1787. The Constitution that was crafted was a conservative document directed at establishing and maintaining order in the new nation. It was ratified in 1788 and took effect in 1789.

### Thomas Jefferson and the Jews

Thomas Jefferson, who identified himself with no established religion, was a strong advocate of equal rights for Jews. Jefferson, like Benjamin Franklin, was a deist, holding that rational thought should be valued over religious faith. Deists believed that science demonstrated God's existence, although their God was removed from the day-to-day events on earth. They also rejected the belief in supernatural revelation but did accept the idea of a rewarding afterlife.

While Jefferson thought that Jews should have the same religious freedom as members of other religions, certain aspects of Judaism disturbed him. He explained his beliefs in a letter to his nephew that warned him to be skeptical of "those facts in the Bible which contradict the laws of nature," such as the portion of the Book of Joshua that says the sun stood still for several hours. He also doubted that God wrote the Ten Commandments on two tablets and then rewrote them after Moses destroyed the original stones.

Jefferson believed that the biblical God was "a being of terrific character, cruel, vindictive, capricious and unjust." He was also troubled that a strong belief in an afterlife was not universally accepted in Judaism, since he felt that fear of punishment and anticipation of reward beyond the grave were essential to good behavior. Yet despite his beliefs about religion in general and Judaism in particular, Jefferson never lost his commitment to freedom of religion for all Americans.

### Virginia's Battle over Religious Freedom

In 1776, James Madison wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the state's new constitution. It stated "[t]hat Religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practise Christian forbearance, love, and charity, towards each other." It was unclear, however, how the declaration would be carried out and how, with no taxes to support it, the church would survive.

Thomas Jefferson presented a bill to the Virginia Assembly in 1779 declaring that people should be free to hold their own opinions in matters of religion, that their practice of religion ought not affect their civil rights, and that churches would have to depend on voluntary contributions. These were extremely controversial ideas, and one response supported a Christian state in which "Jews, Mahomedans, Atheists or Deists" would be second-class citizens, excluded from public office, not allowed to publish their views, and forced to pay for the

support of Christian religions." Both Jefferson's bill and the bill establishing the Christian religion were defeated.

In 1784, Patrick Henry proposed a plan that allowed taxpayers to designate payments to a Christian religion of their choice but made no provision for other religions. James Madison attacked Henry's proposal as an establishment of religion and compared it with the Inquisition. The plan failed, and Jefferson's 1779 bill, was reintroduced as the "Act for Religious Freedom," and with slight changes became law in 1786. It gave full equality to Virginia's Jews and set the stage for Jefferson and Madison to take the lead at the Constitutional Convention the following year, writing a Constitution that made religious freedom the law of the land.

### Benjamin Nones

Benjamin Nones fought for the patriots during the Revolution and returned to Philadelphia after the War. He was active in politics, in an antislavery society, in his synagogue, and in charitable activities. Like many other Jews, Nones was a Jeffersonian Republican. After he attended a Republican convention in Philadelphia, the city's major Federalist newspaper, *The Gazette of the United States,* published an attack against him, calling him "a Jew, a Republican, and poor," Nones responded in an article published in *The Philadelphia Aurora,* a Jeffersonian newspaper:

*I am accused of being a* Jew; *of being a* Republican; *and of being* Poor.

*I am a Jew. I glory in belonging to that persuasion, which even its opponents, whether Christian or Mahomedan, allow to be of divine origin . . . which has preserved its faith secure and undefiled, for near three thousand years. . . . To be of such a persuasion, is to me no disgrace; though I well understand the inhuman language of bigoted contempt, in which your reporter by attempting to make me ridiculous, as a Jew, has made himself detestable, whatever religious persuasion may be dishonored by his adherence. . . .*

*I am a Jew, and if for no other reason, for that reason am I a republican. . . . In republics we have rights, in monarchies we live but to experience wrongs. And why? Because we and our forefathers have not sacrificed our principles to our interest, or earned an exemption from pain and poverty, by the dereliction of our religious duties, no wonder we are objects of derision to those, who have no principles, moral or religious, to guide their conduct.*

*How then can a Jew but be a Republican? In America particularly. Unfeeling & ungrateful would he be, if he were callous to the glorious and benevolent cause of the difference between his situation in this land of freedom, and among the proud and privileged law givers of Europe.*

### Solomon Etting and the "Jew Bill"

Although the Constitution and the Bill of Rights had been ratified, Jews did not have religious equality in many states. In 1797, Solomon Etting of Baltimore and others petitioned the Maryland Assembly "to be placed on the same footing as other good citizens." Although the petition was called "reasonable," it was not acted on. In 1818, Thomas Kennedy, a member of the Maryland House of Delegates; Colonel William G. D. Worthington; Judge Henry M. Brackenridge; and others began an eight-year battle over the bill, which came to be called the Jew Bill. Speeches in favor of it were included in a book of Brackenridge's speeches published in 1829, called *Speeches on the Jew Bill.*

One of Kennedy's speeches was published in an 1823 pamphlet called *Civil and Religious Privileges.* It stated, in part:

*What does our test law say to the Hebrews: It tells them that they shall perform all the duties, and bear all the burdens of citizens without enjoying common privileges. . . . We tell them your son may be all that is wise and good . . . he never can represent the people in the legislature, or command them in the militia . . . this bill ought to pass even if it is only to do justice to the long oppressed Hebrew; but it is not for their benefit alone; it is establishing a general principle . . . sanctioned by reason, by religion and by common sense . . . approved by the patriots of the revolution. . . . Let us pass this bill . . . even on a dying pillow it will comfort us to think that we have done at least one good act in our lives . . . establishing religious freedom in Maryland.*

A bill granting Jews citizenship was passed in 1825 and confirmed the following year. That same year, Solomon Etting was elected to the Baltimore City Council and later became its president.

### America's Biblical Heritage

Even though the Constitution and the Bill of Rights provide for freedom of religion and the freedom to follow no religion, America has a strong religious tradition. Portions of an essay by Professor Moshe Davis point out examples:

*In the American tradition, the Bible is the source of the common faith, a cohesive force in national aspirations. . . . As the most widely read book in America during the colonial era and the nineteenth century, the Bible was the unimpeachable source for both supportive and conflicting opinions in the struggle for political independence. . . . In trying as well as glorious times of American history, prophets and idolators, kings and commoners who lived centuries ago in ancient Israel rose to play contemporary roles.*

*The Fathers of the Republic, for example, did not cite Holy Scriptures in the past tense, but as living, contemporary reality. Their political condition was described as "Egyptian slavery"; King George III was Pharaoh; the Atlantic Ocean nothing other than the Red Sea; and Washington and Adams—Moses and Joshua. What could have been a more appropriate seal for the underlying purpose of the Revolution, according to a committee composed of Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson, than the portrayal of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt? . . . The inscription—a motto by Benjamin Franklin—read: "Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God." . . .*

*The Bible was more than a predominating influence on free American institutions. It influenced the individual lives of new Americans, immigrants who came to settle in their "Promised Land." . . . To a great extent, this search was centered in the family circle, as its members drew together to study the Bible. . . .*

*Another manifestation of spiritual folklore is the map of America itself. If one's child was to be called by a biblical name, why not one's home, one's town and city? Thus began to appear along America's expanding frontier hundreds of place-names of biblical origin. . . . Indeed, as one views the "biblical" map of America, one senses how a spiritual folklore was instituted by founders with an intimate knowledge of scriptural sources. . . .*

*As biblical ideas and images pervaded early American consciousness, the bible became The Book of common knowledge. From it children were taught reading; and as they grew and matured, the indelible pages of the Scriptures, their First Reader, served as their guide.* (Moshe Davis, ed., *With Eyes Toward Zion* [New York: Arno Press, 1977])

### Freedom of Religion and Holding Office in the United States

George Washington believed that religion would not be a barrier to any man in the new nation. In a letter to the New Church in Baltimore, Washington wrote: "In the enlightened Age and in this land of equal liberty it is our boast, that a man's religious tenets will not forfeit the protection of the Laws, nor deprive him of the right of attaining and holding the highest Offices that are known in the United States." Yet more than two hundred years later, only one Roman Catholic—John F. Kennedy—and no Jews have held the highest office in the land. In the extremely close 1960 election, it is believed that many traditional Democrats voted for the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon, because of Kennedy's religion. In the 2000 election, for the first time in the nation's history, a Jew, Joseph Lieberman, was the vice presidential candidate on the Democratic ticket headed by Al Gore. Although the Democrats won the popular vote, the Republican candidate, George W. Bush, became president when the courts ruled that he had won a majority in the Electoral College by carrying the state of Florida. Lieberman's candidacy aroused interest—in the Jewish community and in the nation—in the possibility of a Jewish candidate running for president.

## UNIT 2, CHAPTER 6

### The Politics of the Time

The first two presidents of the United States, George Washington and John Adams, belonged to the Federalist Party. Because of his prominence, Washington won unanimous approval from the presidential electors chosen by each state. Nonetheless, an opposition party, the Democratic-Republicans, was gaining strength. Representing this group in 1796, Thomas Jefferson ran against Adams and lost. In a rematch four years later, Jefferson, representing what was then called the Republican Party, won the election.

The Republicans were actually the forerunners of the modern Democratic Party. By favoring greater equality, they appealed to the average citizen. The Federalists, in contrast, favored hierarchical rule by the elite and showed concern with maintaining stability.

Although Washington, as president, refused to be addressed by any titles—such as His Royal Highness—that bespoke a monarchy, some Americans of the time believed that his party's most outspoken member, Alexander Hamilton, wanted to be king. Hamilton never got the chance to seek higher office, however; he was killed in a duel with Jefferson's first vice president, Aaron Burr, in 1804.

After Jefferson's election, the Federalist Party withered away. Three Republican presidents in succession served two terms apiece: Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe. Monroe faced no opposition when he sought reelection in 1820. In 1824, four major candidates ran, none winning a majority in the Electoral College and John Quincy Adams was selected by the House of Representatives. Andrew Jackson won in 1828 as an ideological successor to Jefferson, but by this time party members identified themselves as Democrats. In the years that followed, two candidates from the Whig Party were elected president: William Henry Harrison and Zachary Taylor, both of whom died in office. Both the Federalists and the Whigs opposed the party of Jefferson and Jackson, but they had very different agendas. While the Federalists very much wanted close ties to England and a system of rule by the elite, the Whigs were more open to the common man and pushed for the federal government to take responsibility for transportation improvements and other programs. The Whigs ultimately evolved into Abraham Lincoln's Republican Party. The roots of today's Republican Party did not fully sprout until 1856, when John Frémont ran unsuccessfully against the Democrat James Buchanan. Abraham Lincoln was the first Republican president.

### Synagogue Membership

In Christian churches, one could be a member and make either mandatory or optional donations, depending on the church's denomination and the time period. Nevertheless, any Presbyterian could walk into any Presbyterian church and take part in the service. In contrast, because seating carried special significance in synagogues and because small Jewish communities saw the synagogue as the center of their community, a greater differentiation was made between members and nonmembers. Jews who settled in a given area were expected to join a synagogue and make their membership in that synagogue part of their Jewish identity. In time, however, mandatory membership was abandoned, and membership became a less significant requirement for participation in synagogue rituals. Voluntarism (voluntary participation in synagogue and communal activities), a new feature of Jewish life, was particularly evident in America.

### Intermarriage

Between 1776 and about 1840, Jews became increasingly less stringent in their religious practices. Almost one-third of Jews intermarried. In a book he edited: *The American Jewish Woman: A Documentary History* (New York: KTAV, 1981), historian Jacob Rader Marcus writes that intermarriage was a problem in the American colonies from the beginning. In fact, it was almost inevitable. Communities were small and separated by great distances, and relationships among the colonists were casual. When men, more so than women, wanted a spouse and no Jews were available, they married outside the faith.

Many of these Jewish men would have been happy to see their wives convert to Judaism. However, the Jewish community did not encourage such conversions. In 1763, Shearith Israel in New York passed a rule forbidding the acceptance of converts or marriage to a convert. Members may have believed that they did not have the proper religious authority to permit conversions or that they were following English practice in not permitting them. They were also trying to maintain their status as a distinct religious entity.

In 1793, Moses Nathans, a member of the Philadelphia Jewish community, wrote a letter about his problem with intermarriage to his congregation. He had never married the gentile mother of his children, although she was willing to convert and have a Jewish wedding. The matter was referred to the Bet Din of the Spanish Portuguese synagogue in London. Records show that the couple married in 1794 according to Jewish ritual.

### Jewish Religious Life

In discussing the Jewish culture of the time, Jacob Rader Marcus points to letters written by Rebecca Samuels, who was living in Petersburg, Virginia, to her

parents in Hamburg, Germany. The letters, in Yiddish, discuss a variety of issues, such as anti-Jewish prejudice, the religious education of children, and separation of church and state. Samuels tells her parents that she and her family are preparing to move to Charleston, South Carolina, in order to find a more observant Jewish community. In one letter, she writes:

*The whole reason why we are leaving this place is because of [its lack of]* Yehudishkeit *[Jewishness]. . .*

*Jewishness is pushed aside here. There are here [in Petersburg] ten or twelve Jews, and they are not worthy of being called Jews. We have a* shoḥet *[ritual slaughterer of animals and poultry] here who goes to market and buys* terefah *[nonkosher] meat and then brings it home. On Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur the people worshipped here without one* sefer torah, *and not one of them wore the tallit or the* arba kanfot *[a four-cornered garment with fringes worn by religious Jewish men under their shirts]. . .*

*You can believe me that I crave to see a synagogue to which I can go. The way we live now is no life at all. We do not know what the Sabbath and the holidays are. On the Sabbath all the Jewish shops are open, and they do business on that day as they do throughout the whole week. But ours we do not allow to open. With us there is still some Sabbath. You must believe me that in our house we all live as Jews as much as we can. . . .*

*As for the Gentiles, we have nothing to complain about. For the sake of a livelihood we do not have to leave here. Nor do we have to leave because of debts. . . . You cannot know what a wonderful country this is for the common man. One can live here peacefully.*

### Mordecai Manuel Noah

Mordecai Noah was born in Philadelphia in 1785. He was the grandson of Jonas Phillips, who wrote to the Constitutional Convention urging equal rights for Jews, and the first cousin of Uriah Phillips Levy, who made his name in the U.S. Navy. Educated in Philadelphia, he was elected to the post of major in the Pennsylvania Militia in 1808, when he was only twenty-three; thereafter, he was always known as Major Noah. After moving to New York, Noah wrote several plays that celebrated freedom, the best known of which was *She Would Be a Soldier.* A noted orator, he spoke in defense of the Jews of New York when they were attacked. He responded forcefully to bigots who did not like the fact that a Jew was the sheriff of New York and to missionaries who wanted to convert Jews to Christianity.

In 1810, Noah requested that James Madison's administration appoint him to a consular position, and he was made consul to Tunis (in North Africa) three years later. He lost the job, however, over a mishandled hostage situation.

Noah received a letter stating that the government had not realized that his Judaism would be an obstacle to his service in a Muslim country. Furthermore, the letter suggested that his financial accounts were not in order. In fact, Noah's religion was only an excuse for his dismissal: The true reason had to do with Madison's not wanting to reveal the details of the semisuccessful venture or allow anyone to know about the agent Noah had chosen. Although foreign diplomats, American politicians, and American Jewish citizens wrote letters of support, the government stood by its decision.

Noah fought back, publishing a pamphlet defending his name and demanding that the government clear him of the charges. Eventually, he received a statement that his accounts were clear and confirming that he was honest. Of the attack on him as a Jew he wrote,

*I find my own government insulting the religious feelings of a whole nation. O, shame, shame. The citizens of the United States who profess the Hebrew religion have merited, by their exemplary conduct, the rights which they enjoy. Forty years of freedom have strengthened their devotion to a country which had broken down the barriers of superstition in proclaiming civil and religious liberty. The brightest link in our chain of union is religious liberty, the emancipation of the soul from temporal authority.*

In 1820, Noah petitioned to buy Grand Island in the Niagara River to establish a Jewish colony that he planned to call Ararat. Ultimately he gained possession of the land, but it was little more than a wasteland, and he was never able to set up the colony he had dreamed of. Later in life, Noah advocated the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. He was a renowned American Jew; when he died, in 1851, crowds lined the route of his funeral cortege.

### Uriah Phillips Levy and Monticello

When Thomas Jefferson died, he left his debt-ridden estate, Monticello, to his daughter. She sold it to someone

who let the property deteriorate. Eventually the Marquis de Lafayette wrote to Uriah Phillips Levy, asking what had happened to it. Levy's investigations led to his buying the property in 1836. Almost none of the original furnishings remained. He restored the house and bought back some of Jefferson's furniture. He then asked his mother, Rachel Machado Phillips Levy, to live there. Her grave is on the grounds.

When Levy died, he left the estate to the "People of the United States" for use as an agricultural school for the orphaned children of naval officers. His wife contested his will, however, and for nearly two decades there were court battles between Levy's widow and his brother Jonas. During the Civil War, Confederate soldiers occupied Monticello, causing further damage to the house.

In the early 1870s, Jonas's son, Jefferson Monroe (J. M.) Levy, began buying out the other heirs, and he soon owned the property. He decided to restore the house and grounds, believing that private ownership with limited public access was the best way to preserve the estate. In 1911, Mrs. Martin Littleton, wife of a New York congressman, campaigned to establish the estate as a national memorial. She was offended that the house contained portraits of the Levy, as well as the Jefferson family. Levy refused to sell.

Several years later, in poor health, Levy relented and offered to sell the house to the federal government as a presidential summer home. Congress approved the purchase, but with the start of the World War I, the funds were diverted. By 1923, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation had raised the money to purchase the property. The foundation sold the Levy family's pictures and furnishings at auction, leaving only the gravestone of Rachel Levy to mark the presence of the Levy family at Monticello. (Based on Michael Feldberg, ed., *Blessings of Freedom: Chapters in American Jewish History* [New York: KTAV and American Jewish Historical Society, 2002].)

### The Gratz Family

Bernard Gratz came to America from Poland, by way of England, in 1754. He supported the Revolution, signed the nonimportation agreements to boycott British goods, and supplied goods to the Continental army. He and his younger brother, Michael, helped found Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel synagogue. Michael's son, Hyman, bequeathed funds to found Gratz College in Philadelphia, one of the first Jewish teacher's colleges in the country.

Michael's daughter, Rebecca, though brought up in luxury, was concerned about the welfare of those less fortunate than she in both the Jewish and the non-Jewish communities. She became known as the foremost American Jewess of her day. Her beauty was renowned; her portrait was painted by several of the most important artists of the time.

Rebecca disapproved of Jews who had little interest in their religion. When her brother Joseph was about to visit New Orleans, she wrote to him: "At New Orleans, there are many who call themselves Jews, or at least whose parentage being known are obliged to acknowledge themselves such, but who neglect those duties which would make that title honorable and then respected."

The "legend" of Rebecca Gratz holds that she remained unmarried perhaps because she would not marry outside her religion. She wrote in a letter, "My most cherished friends have generally been worshippers of a different faith than mine and I have not loved them less on that account." However, she also wrote, "[I]n a family connection, I think both must have the same religion."

Historian Dianne Ashton notes, however, in *Rebecca Gratz: Women and Judaism in Antebellum America* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), that she found no evidence to support the claim that Gratz remained unmarried because of unrequited love for a non-Jewish man. Instead, she explains that in Gratz's day, marriage was supposed to be the result of romance, and many women, not finding that great romance, were content to live a life of public service, a model that Gratz certainly followed.

When Gratz founded the Hebrew Sunday School Society, Rabbi Isaac Leeser visited the school and spoke to its students. Leeser also dedicated his Jewish catechism (summary of the principles of a religion, in the form of questions and answers) to Gratz. Gratz eventually limited membership on the faculty of the school to women who had graduated from it, giving American Jewish women their first public role in religious training.

### Penina Moise

Penina Moise was the first American Jewish woman to publish a book of poetry. *Fancy's Sketch Book* won national notice when it was published in 1833. While most female authors used pseudonyms, Moise published the

work under her own name. The book addressed such serious issues as states' rights, Turkish oppression of Greeks, and Irish home rule.

In her writing, Moise also advocated for the rights of Jews around the world and proposed that oppressed Jews in Europe immigrate to the United States. She protested the denial of full rights to Jews in England by the House of Lords in 1833 and the arrest and torture of Jews in Damascus in 1840. She was also an early Jewish nationalist, writing about the time when Jews would again live in the Holy Land.

Throughout her life, Moise wrote hymns and poems on Jewish themes. A collection of her hymns was the first Jewish hymnal printed in English in America.

Although her poems, stories, and essays appeared in such national magazines as *Godey's Lady's Book* and in such newspapers as *Occident* and *American Jewish Advocate,* Moise never made a living from her writing or her teaching (she was the head teacher of the religious school of Congregation Beth Elohim in Charleston). She lived with and nursed her mother, making fine lace and embroidery to supplement her income. She never married; some said this was because she disapproved of intermarriage and the only man she was interested in was not Jewish.

### Antisemitism

Many modern scholars prefer to write *antisemitism* without a hyphen. They reason that there is no word *Semitism* to which one might be opposed. The historian Jonathan Sarna believes that because Arabs, too, are Semites, this spelling clarifies the meaning of the word, which is "hatred of Jews."

### Dr. Rush Describes a Jewish Wedding

There were only about 2,000 Jews in all of the United States in the late eighteenth century, and many Americans had never seen a Jew. Dr. Benjamin Rush, a doctor and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was invited to the wedding of Jonas Phillips's daughter Rachel of Philadelphia to Michael Levy of Virginia. (One of their children was Uriah Phillips Levy.) Dr. Rush wrote the following letter to his wife, describing the wedding:

*Philadelphia, June 27, 1787*

*My dear Julia, . . .*

*The ceremony began with prayers in the Hebrew language, chaunted by an old rabbi . . . followed by the whole company. As I did not understand a word except now and then an Amen or Hallelujah, my attention was directed to the haste with which they covered their heads with their hats as soon as the prayers began and to the freedom with which some of them conversed during . . . this part of their worship. As soon as these prayers were ended, . . . about twenty minutes, a small piece of parchment was produced, written in Hebrew, which contained a deed of settlement and which the groom subscribed in the presence of four witnesses. . . . This was followed by the erection of a beautiful canopy of white and red silk . . . supported by four young men (by means of four poles) who put on white gloves for the purpose. As soon as this canopy was fixed, the bride, accompanied with . . . a long train of female relations, came downstairs. Her face was covered with a veil which reached halfways down her body. She was handsome at all times. . . . She was led by her two bridesmaids under the canopy. Two young men led the bridegroom . . . directly opposite to her. The priest now began again to chaunt an Hebrew prayer, . . . followed by part of the company. After this he gave to the groom and bride a glass full of wine, from which they each sipped. . . . Another prayer followed . . . after which he took a ring and directed the groom to place it upon the finger of his bride . . . as in the marriage service of the Church of England. This was followed by handing the wine to the father of the bride and then . . . to the bride and groom. The groom after sipping the wine took the glass . . . and threw it upon a large pewter dish which was suddenly placed at his feet. Upon its breaking into a number of small pieces, there was a general shout of joy and a declaration that the ceremony was over. . . . I asked the meaning . . . of the canopy and of the wine and breaking of the glass. I was told . . . that in Europe they generally marry in the open air and that the canopy was introduced to defend the bride and groom from the . . . sun and from rain. . . . Partaking of the same glass of wine was intended to denote the mutuality of their goods, and the breaking of the glass . . . to teach them the brittleness and uncertainty of human life and the certainty of death, and thereby to temper their present joys. . . .*

*Upon going . . . upstairs to ask how Mrs. Phillips did, who had fainted downstairs under pressure of the heat . . . , I discovered the bride and groom supping a bowl of broth together. Mrs. Phillips apologized for*

*them by telling me they had eaten nothing (agreeably to the custom prescribed by their religion) since the night before. Upon my taking leave, Mrs. Phillips put a large piece of cake into my pocket for you, which she begged I would present to you with her best compliments. . . .*

*During the whole of this new and curious scene . . . I was carried back to the ancient world and was led to contemplate the Passovers, the sacrifices, the jubilees, and other ceremonies of the Jewish Church. . . . After this, I . . . anticipated the time foretold by the prophets when this once-beloved race of men shall again be restored to the divine favor and shall unite with Christians . . . in celebrating the praises of a common and universal Saviour. . . .*

*With love . . . I am your affectionate husband, B. Rush*

(From *The Letters of Benjamin Rush,* ed. L. H. Butterfield, quoted in *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 42 [1952–53].)

## UNIT 3, CHAPTER 7

### The Napoleonic Wars

Napoleon Bonaparte, known as Napoleon I, declared himself emperor of France in 1804 and a year later claimed the crown of Italy. In 1806, he seized control of all of Europe except Britain. Although a number of European nations had fought him several times, Napoleon was not ultimately defeated until the British did so in 1815 at Waterloo, near Brussels, Belgium. Ten years of warfare had created hardships for Europe's poor, including many Jews. In the backlash against Napoleon's policies following his defeat, rights that Jews had won were rescinded, and virulent anti-Jewish violence broke out in many places, a factor that promoted Jewish emigration from central Europe.

### Germany

At the time of the migration of Jews from central Europe, what we now call Germany was comprised of a loose federation of states plus the nation of Prussia. Germany did not become a strongly unified nation until 1871, when Prussian military victories solidified Germany under Prussian rule. German-speaking Austria was not part of Germany, although Jews from Austria would have been considered German Jews because German was their native tongue.

### The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution is usually defined as the period between 1750 and 1850, when Britain became an industrial economy. The industrialization of national economies occurred in other European countries as well around that time and, somewhat later, in the United States. In Germany, the Industrial Revolution did not fully take hold until after 1850, although its initial effects were felt earlier.

The Industrial Revolution was marked by the development of factories in which specialized tasks were carried out. With industrialization, farmers gave up agriculture and moved to urban areas, where they found jobs as unskilled workers. In some countries, Jews were prohibited from holding certain jobs, thus limiting their ability to benefit from industrialization. Such prohibitions were another motivation for emigration.

### A "German" Migration

Migration patterns of Jewish immigrants during this period paralleled those of other central European immigrants. Although some European immigrants came from places other than the German states, the migration that took place between the 1830s and 1880s is often referred to as a German migration. According to historian Hasia Diner, German Jews made up a slim majority of the Jewish immigrants. The largest group came from Bavaria, and many came from southwest Germany. Others came from Poland (especially Poznań [called Posen by the Germans], a province that had been taken over by Prussia in 1793), Bohemia, Moravia, Galicia, Alsace (all regions with significant German influence), and parts of Russia and Lithuania. The Jews of Poznań spoke Polish, but German was the province's official language. Because so many of the immigrants came either from Germany or from German-speaking areas, the overall character of the migration was German.

There is debate among historians about the self-identity of these Jewish immigrants. Once they arrived in the United States, many of them participated in German-American choral groups, literary societies, theater groups, athletic clubs, newspapers, lodges, labor organizations, and so on. Many used German in their sermons, synagogue services, lodge and society records, newspapers, educational curricula, and prayer books at first, although they eventually shifted to English.

Most of the early "German" immigrants were uneducated, preoccupied with earning a living, and uninterested in German culture. However, quite a few of the later immigrants found German culture appealing and preserved a sense of German identity, which they gradually shed as they became more "American." Some historians argue that many of the immigrants, at least initially, had a strong sense of German identity. Others believe that while many participated in German-American cultural activities, the extent of this participation has been exaggerated and was mostly limited to members of the intellectual elite.

### Cultural Contributions of the Central European Immigrants

The central European immigrants enriched all aspects of American life. The following men were among the best known of those immigrants: Abraham Jacobi, from Vienna, became the first professor of pediatric medicine at Columbia University; he served as president of the American Medical Association and has been called the Father of American Pediatrics. Joseph Pulitzer, who arrived from Hungary in 1864, worked as a reporter for a German-language newspaper, bought the *New York World* and other newspapers, and left bequests that provided for both the School of Journalism at Columbia University and the prizes given in his name. Oscar Hammerstein, who arrived from Germany during the Civil War, built several theaters and the Manhattan Opera House. His grandson was the composer, Oscar Hammerstein II. Leopold Damrosch, who came from Germany in 1871, was the choral director of New York's Temple Emanuel, founded the New York Symphony Society (forerunner of the New York Philharmonic), and was a conductor of the Metropolitan Opera. Albert Michelson, who came from Poland in 1852, became the first American to receive the Nobel Prize in physics, for his discoveries regarding the speed of light.

### Shabbat and "Work"

Some central European Jewish immigrants reacted strongly to having to "profane" the Sabbath by carrying on their trade. The term *melachah,* work that is prohibited on Shabbat, relates to activities that were necessary for the construction and outfitting of the *mishkan,* the Sanctuary built by the Israelites as they wandered in the desert. Exodus 20:10 states: "The seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God: You shall not do any work." The thirty-nine forbidden acts, which have been interpreted and expanded on through the years, are plowing, sowing, reaping, sheafmaking, threshing, winnowing, selecting, sifting, grinding, kneading, baking, sheepshearing, bleaching, combing raw material, dyeing, spinning, threading a loom, weaving, removing the finished article, separating into threads, tying a knot, untying a knot, sewing, tearing, trapping, slaughtering, skinning or flaying, tanning, scraping, marking out, cutting to shape, writing, erasing, building, demolishing, kindling a fire, extinguishing a fire, making the final blow with a hammer, and carrying in a public place.

### Joseph Seligman

After attending university in Bavaria, Germany, Joseph Seligman came to the United States in 1837, where he landed his first job in a small Pennsylvania mining town. He soon brought his brothers to America, and working together as peddlers, they expanded into Alabama and Missouri. In 1846, they made New York their headquarters for a wholesale clothing business. They eventually concentrated the family's interests in banking in New York City, became prominent in the city's German Jewish society, and contributed generously to Jewish and secular charities.

### Isaac Leeser and the Jewish Press

In April 1843, Isaac Leeser began publication of the *Occident* and *American Jewish Advocate,* known as the *Occident.* He was influenced by the development of national Jewish periodicals in Germany, France, and England, as well as by a desire to unify the American Jewish community. Leeser described his newspaper as an "advocate" for Jewish interests, and its aim was the "diffusion of knowledge on Jewish literature and religion." Thus, the *Occident* published news from American Jewish communities as well as Jewish communities abroad, in addition to sermons, editorials, historical articles, book reviews, innovative policy proposals, religious philosophy, and articles against missionaries and others who Leeser believed were trying to harm the Jewish community. He opened the paper to a wide variety of contributors, including non-Jews and those with whom he disagreed. There were limitations to what Leeser would print, however. He wanted to project an image of Jewish consensus and therefore rarely published divisive debates on slavery and the Civil War.

The *Occident*'s success led to the publication of Jewish newspapers in such cities as New York, New Orleans, Cincinnati, and San Francisco. The movement was toward narrowly focused local or regional papers. Most were weeklies modeled on American religious and family newspapers. Therefore, their format was different from the *Occident*'s; they looked like newspapers rather than magazines and aimed to entertain. (Information from Jonathan D. Sarna, "Booster or Watchdog? The Story of Jewish Journalism in the U.S.," *Jewish Week,* June 13, 2003.)

#### Isaac Leeser's Books for Children

In 1835, Isaac Leeser published a book for children called, *Catechism for Younger Children,* the first two editions of which carried this name. Editors of the third edition changed the name to *Catechism for Jewish Children.* Nonetheless, the editions are numbered as if they all had the same title.

#### The Birth of B'nai B'rith

B'nai B'rith (Sons of the Covenant) was the first Jewish fraternal society in the world. Henry Jones and eleven other German Jews—including two shopkeepers, two jewelers, a tailor, a shoemaker, a barber, a *ḥazan*, and a synagogue clerk—founded the organization in New York on October 13, 1843. There were eight synagogues in New York at the time, and very little unity among them. Thus the group assumed "the mission of uniting Israelites in the work of promoting their highest interests and those of humanity." Since a few of the functions that B'nai Brith assumed had been the purview of synagogues in Europe, there was some hostility to the organization for fear that Jewish life would be diverted from religious to secular preoccupations.

The preamble to the organization's original constitution states:

*B'nai B'rith has taken upon itself the mission of uniting Israelites in the work of promoting their highest interests and those of humanity; of developing and elevating the mental and moral character of the people of our faith; of inculcating the purest principles of philanthropy, honor and patriotism; of supporting science and art; alleviating the wants of the poor and needy; visiting and attending the sick; coming to the rescue of victims of persecution; providing for, protecting and assisting the widow and orphan on the broadest principles of humanity."* (Quoted in Morris Schappes, ed., *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States, 1654–1875* [New York: Citadel Press, 1950].)

## UNIT 3, CHAPTER 8

#### Jews throughout the West

### In Utah

The Latter-Day Saints, or Mormons, considered Jews and all other non-Mormons to be "gentiles." Nonetheless, Mormons and Jews lived cooperatively, and by 1890 the Utah Territory was home to more than 200 Jews, who earned livings in mining, transportation, and business.

Fanny Brooks was the first Jewish woman to arrive in Utah, having come with her husband, Julius, in 1854. The family lived, at various times, in California, Oregon, and Idaho and established several businesses and a boardinghouse in Salt Lake City. Their daughter, Eveline, married Sam Auerbach of a well-known merchant family. Frederick Auerbach had gone to California during the Gold Rush. Beginning with a tent store in Rabbit Creek, California, they expanded to other stores in California and Nevada. The family then moved to Utah and the Auerbach Department Store became a fixture until 1979. In 1865 Fred Auerbach led High Holiday services in a meeting hall provided by Brigham Young.

### Jews in the Southwest

Jewish merchants established small communities in Arizona and New Mexico. Jewish traders, bankers, and dry-goods dealers did business with the U.S. Army, American Indians, and Mexican Americans. Some returned to the East Coast or even to Europe to find wives. Others married gentiles, since there were so few eligible Jewish women in that part of the country. Many artifacts from the period show the interaction of Mexican, Native American, and European Jewish immigrant cultures.

Charles Ilfeld arrived in America in 1865 and traveled to Santa Fe, New Mexico, by ox wagon. He eventually started a mercantile business, and as it expanded he became known as Tio (Uncle) Carlos. Charles and his wife, Adele, became leaders in the social and civic life of the city.

Jake Gold's Free Museum and Old Curiosity Shop was well-known in Santa Fe, New Mexico, selling Indian relics and "curiosities" to tourists, mail-order customers, and retailers from around the country. Jake's father, Louis, was

a Polish immigrant who worked as a merchant and trader in Santa Fe in 1849.

### Jews on the Great Plains

The Homestead Act of 1862 opened the Great Plains to settlement. By the 1880s, a small number of Jews had settled in the Dakota Territory. They faced a difficult challenge: barren land that produced little despite their hard work. However, Jewish settlers continued to arrive, even after some settlements had disbanded. They tried to practice Judaism and educate their children in their faith. Laymen traveled through the territory, providing religious leadership to the small groups of Jews who were scattered in small communities across the region. Nathan Colman, for example served as a justice of the peace, performing marriages and leading High Holiday services. In 1879, he officiated at the first Jewish wedding in the Black Hills. An account of a family's struggles to maintain their Jewish identity as settlers in North Dakota, *Dakota Diaspora: Memoirs of a Jewish Homesteader,* was written by Sophie Trupin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

### Jews in the Rockies

During the Pikes Peak Gold Rush of 1858, Jews came from Europe and across the United States to start stores in the mining towns. Jews in Denver founded their first synagogue in 1874. When Colorado became a destination for people with tuberculosis, Denver's Jews founded a hospital for treatment of the disease in 1889. The local chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women was formed in 1893 to help the new immigrants, called greenhorns, adjust to life in America. They provided free cooking classes, night school, kindergarten education, and reading rooms, as well as free public baths.

Frances Weisbart Jacobs, known as the Mother of Charities, came to Colorado as the young bride of her brother's business partner. Her husband became the mayor of Central City in 1876, and she was a founding member of the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society. She also was a founding member of the Community Chest in 1887, when hundreds of immigrants became ill with tuberculosis. (Material above adapted from the guide to the Museum of the American West exhibit, "Jewish Life in the American West: Generation to Generation.")

### Otto Mears and the San Juan Skyway

Known as the Pathfinder of the San Juans, Otto Mears was born in Russia in 1840 and immigrated to the United States in 1850. After some time in California, he became a successful storekeeper in Colorado.

One of the problems in living and working in the gold- and silver-mining towns in the San Juan Mountains was getting supplies into the towns and transporting the ore to the mills. Between 1867 and 1886, Mears constructed a series of toll roads between the various mining towns of southwest Colorado. He was responsible for the construction of at least a dozen wagon roads. His most famous achievement was known as the Million-Dollar Highway, which was built along the steep sides of the Uncompahgre Gorge. Eight miles long and 500 feet above the floor of the canyon, it took three years to complete and was said to have cost $10,000 per mile.

Mears was also responsible for building many railroads in the region, including the Rainbow Route, one of three railroads that carried ore from the mining camps to the smelters in Silverton. He is also credited with introducing the reaper and the steam grain-threshing machine to Colorado.

Through his work on several treaties, Mears helped facilitate moving the Ute Indians onto a reservation. Today, scholars are divided on whether he was a friend to those Indians or whether he tricked them. Mears was a government supplier of cattle, vegetables, and flour to the Utes. After the discovery of mineral deposits in the area, Mears talked the tribe into ceding 4 million acres of land to the federal government for the interest on $500,000 dollars for the tribe and a salary of $1,000 a year for the chief. He then offered each Indian who signed a treaty $2 for his signature. For those actions, Mears was ordered to Washington, D.C., to stand trial for bribery. However, Secretary of the Interior Samuel Kirkwood exerted pressure on Mears' behalf, and the charges were dropped. Eventually, Mears returned to Colorado to supervise the removal of the Indians. He was elected to the State Legislature in 1882.

Mears left Colorado in the late 1890s and moved to the East Coast, where he helped start the Mack Motor Company, famous for producing the Mack truck. He returned to Colorado to manage his railroad, then moved to California, where he died in 1931. While he identified as a Jew, Mears was not known to be active religiously.

## UNIT 3, CHAPTER 9

### Reform Judaism

The Reform movement began in Germany in the early 1800s as a response to the events of the day. The liberal political climate had allowed some Jews to live outside the ghetto and to become part of the larger society, and thus some Jews were balancing the challenges of living in two worlds. Some, therefore, were lost to Judaism through assimilation and conversion. Jews in other areas engaged in a protracted struggle for emancipation and felt that they were under great pressure to prove themselves "worthy."

Many Jews of the early nineteenth century were influenced by the political, educational, scientific, and philosophical advances of the Enlightenment. In addition, many Jews no longer found traditional Judaism meaningful; they no longer believed in the divine revelation of the Torah, in the coming of a personal messiah, or in the resurrection of the dead on the coming of the messiah. Thus, many of the traditional prayers no longer seemed appropriate.

In America, Reform flourished because the challenges facing the American Jewish community and the democratic nature of the country created a situation in which people were ready, willing, and able to accept—and even seek—change. The rabbis who met to write the Pittsburgh Platform decided that only Judaism's ethics, and not its rituals, would be binding. Some rituals, they believed, needlessly isolated Jews from their non-Jewish neighbors and impeded the Jewish mission of social activism. Some of the changes made by the reformers are explained below.

### The Musaf Service

The musaf service was added to the Shabbat morning and festival morning services. It basically repeats much of the Amidah prayer recited earlier in the service, adding some passages about sacrifices.

The Reform movement eliminated the musaf service for several reasons: First, the movement was opposed to preserving liturgical references to the sacrifices; second, the musaf prayers spoke about hopes for a return to the Promised Land, and the reformers did not believe that this was necessary; and third, the recitation of the musaf service was thought to lengthen the service unnecessarily.

### The Messiah and Resurrection

Traditionally, Jews believed that the arrival of the messiah would bring the resurrection of the dead. Graves would open, and people's souls would return to their purified bodies. Then, everyone would go before God for a day of judgment. Reform Jews did not believe this and therefore eliminated any prayers that refer to it. Instead, they teach that when someone dies, only the body is dead; the soul lives forever.

*Gates of Prayer,* the Reform prayer book published in 1975, reintroduced many prayers that had been removed from earlier Reform prayer books. It contains virtually all the themes of traditional Judaism except for the messianic hope of restoring the ancient sacrifices.

### The Temple

Traditionally "the Temple" refers to the Temple in Jerusalem. Reform Jews use the word to refer to their synagogues, since they are not praying to return to Jerusalem.

### Peoplehood

The early reformers eliminated the belief in a Jewish peoplehood. They argued that Judaism is a religion and that Jews no longer need to hope for a return to the Land of Israel. They also held that Jews have no special feelings of kinship with other Jews, especially those living in other countries. This belief is not held by the modern Reform movement, and the idea of a Jewish peoplehood, including support for the State of Israel, has been restored.

### Belief in God

Reform Judaism coined the term *ethical monotheism* to describe the belief that one God, who desires ethical behavior from people, rules the world. This belief is completely consistent with the Torah's ethical teachings.

### Ray Frank

Ray (Rachel) Frank (1861–1948) came as close to being a rabbi as any woman in the late nineteenth century. Originally from San Francisco, Frank was a schoolteacher, writer, and lecturer. She traveled the country, urging Jews to devote themselves to Judaism. By 1890, she was a celebrity on the West Coast, having published a critique of American rabbis in response to an article in a New York newspaper asking people to respond to the question, "What would you do if you were a rabbi?" Instead, Frank chose to write what she would not do:

*I would not say to my fancied inferiors, "I am the rabbi," and you must therefore do this or that; but I would reach their actions through their hearts.*

*I would try and remember that example is better than precept. I would not imagine myself a fixed star around which lesser lights must move.*

*I would try the effect of a gentle demeanor, a quiet voice, an earnest will, and a helping hand. . . .*

*I would not say my services are worth a salary of so much per annum because I do this or that, or because I preach oftener or more learnedly than Mr. A. or Rev. B.; but, after satisfying my own wants in a modest way, I would use amounts expended on "high living," . . . toward enlightening the ignorant of my people—if not in my own town . . . then I would use it for the poor and oppressed abroad. . . .*

*If I were a rabbi of what is termed the reform type, I would not be funny or sarcastic at the expense of my orthodox brother. If I were orthodox, in my ideas, I would not apply harsh names nor deny a state of future bliss to my brother of modern opinions.*

*If I were a rabbi, I would not direct my sermon to the costliest sealskin, handsomest bonnet, and smallest brain, but I'd divide my attention, as well as my remarks, among my audience.*

*If I had a Sabbath-school, I would so conduct it that each boy and girl should see in my conduct that which I preached in my sermon. . . .*

*There are many other things, too numerous to mention, which I would not do.*

Shortly after the article appeared, Frank became "the one Jewish woman in the world, maybe the first since the time of the prophets" to preach from a synagogue pulpit (in Spokane, Washington) on the High Holidays.

By 1893, she was known throughout America. Her message was the virtues of Judaism, the Jewish family, and Jewish women. She attacked the divisions in the Jewish community and spoke of peace, spirituality, and righteousness in Jewish life. When the National Council of Jewish Women was organized that year, she was invited to make one of the principal addresses. In 1898, Frank traveled to Europe, where she married Simon Litman, an economist. They did not return to America until 1902, which ended her public career.

## THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT TEAM

**Shelley Kapnek Rosenberg, Ed.D.**

Dr. Shelley Kapnek Rosenberg is the author of *Raising a Mensch: How to Bring Up Ethical Children in Today's World,* (2003) and *Adoption and the Jewish Family: Contemporary Perspectives* (1998). Dr. Rosenberg earned her Ed.D. in psychoeducational processes from Temple University. Since 1994, she has worked for the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education.

**Alice L. George, Ph.D.**

After twenty years as an editor at newspapers such as the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Philadelphia Daily News,* Alice L. George left journalism to earn a Ph.D. in history at Temple University, which she received in 2001. Her award-winning doctoral dissertation has been turned into a book, *Awaiting Armageddon: How Americans Faced the Cuban Missile Crisis* (2003).

**Reena Sigman Friedman, Ph.D.**

Dr. Reena Sigman Friedman is Associate Professor of Modern Jewish Civilization at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. She is the author of *These Are Our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880–1925* (1994) and numerous articles and publications. Dr. Friedman is also a faculty member of the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School.

**Jonathan D. Sarna, Ph.D.**

Jonathan D. Sarna is the Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University. Dr. Sarna has written, edited, or co-edited twenty books. Articles, reviews, and commentaries by Dr. Sarna appear regularly in scholarly and popular journals, as well as in Jewish newspapers across North America. He is the author of *American Judaism: A History* (2004).

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Nancy Messinger has been the Director of Educational Resources at the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education for the past thirteen years. She is also the website coordinator for www.acaje.org. Ms. Messinger earned a B.H.L. from the Jewish Theological Seminary, a certificate of Jewish librarianship from Gratz College, a B.S. in history from Columbia University, and an M.S. in counseling from Villanova University.

**Rochelle Buller Rabeeya**

Rochelle Rabeeya is the Director of Educational Services at the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education. She holds an M.A. and an honorary doctorate in Jewish education from Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion and has done post-graduate studies in educational psychology. At ACAJE, she focuses on training school committees, helping schools develop a systemic approach to Jewish education, developing curriculums and coordinating staff development.

**Helene Z. Tigay**

Helene Z. Tigay has been the Executive Director of the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education since 1990. She has a B.S. in psychology from Columbia University, a B.R.E. in Hebrew literature from the University of Pennsylvania, and has been in the doctoral program in psychological services at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education. She has written articles on a variety of topics and is a recipient of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism's Ateret Kavod Award.

**Julia Prymak**

Julia Prymak is the owner of Pryme Design, a graphic design and production services company that manages all aspects of clients' print and promotional needs. She earned her B.F.A. from Rochester Institute of Technology.

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Nancy Isserman is the Director of the Challenge and Change: American Jewish History Curriculum Project, and the Associate Director of the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History at Temple University, where she has been since 1992. She is currently working on her dissertation on the determinants of political tolerance in Holocaust survivors at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. She holds an M.S.W. from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University.

**Murray Friedman, Ph.D.**

Dr. Friedman has been the Director of the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History at Temple University since its inception in 1990. He is Director Emeritus of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Jewish Committee, where he worked for forty-three years. He was vice chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1986–1989. Dr. Friedman received his Ph.D. from Georgetown University, in American political and social history. He has written numerous articles and books on American Jewish history.

## NOTES

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