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Patterns of Rabbinic Succession in Modern France

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Despite disparate geographical, political, and cultural conditions distinguishing one Jewish community from another, the rabbinate in late medieval and early modern Europe was a remarkably uniform institution. Irrespective of locale, rabbis serving the traditional Ashkenazic kehillot exercised comparable judicial prerogatives in the areas of religious and civil law, and functioned as authoritative teachers and interpreters of Torah. Their authority was, nonetheless, subordinated to that of the lay communal leadership which set the terms of the contractual relationship between the rabbi and the community. Much of modern scholarship has emphasized these widely shared characteristics, while producing a composite picture of the rabbinate. Our understanding of these general patterns owes a major debt of gratitude to the pioneering work of Jacob Katz. Combining the use of typological categories with more conventional methods of historical research, he succeeded in richly reconstructing and describing the prevailing norms of institutional life in the European Jewish community at the end of the Middle Ages.[1] Divergences from this model are routinely viewed as minor variations on its general themes.

The present study approaches the modern history of the rabbinate from a different perspective. Beginning from the proposition that the French rabbinate was profoundly fashioned by local and regional forces, as certainly was the case elsewhere, we shall explore the dynamic interplay between social, political, and cultural conditions on the one hand, and the phenomenon of rabbinic succession, on the other. By "succession" we will refer to a broad range of issues concerning appointment and tenure, as observed over a period of approximately a century, beginning in the mid 1700s. Drawing on details of the procedures which communities followed when filling a rabbinic post, as well as data which we have assembled on the origins, background, and training of rabbis appointed to

positions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, we seek to identify the most important long-term trends in rabbinic succession, paying particular attention to the impact of the revolutionary upheaval on Jewish communal life. Regrettably, however, the fragmentary nature of the available data represents a methodological challenge that the reader will, it is hoped, bear in mind.

By reconstructing the patterns of rabbinic succession in Alsace-Lorraine, we hope to make clear how the rabbinate itself had already begun to be transformed by the forces of modernization in the years preceding the Revolution. This transformation is evident in the progressive consolidation of rabbinic duties, in the differentiation in the roles of rabbi and communal leader, and in the growing independence of the rabbinate from commercial dealings. Our second goal is to relate the detailed knowledge of rabbinic succession to the broader concerns of modern French Jewish history by expanding the scope of investigation to include the intellectual and cultural realms. The largely unexamined question of the implications of appointing native or foreign rabbis punctuates a larger theme which the subject of rabbinic succession can help clarify: What was the relationship of the communities of Alsace-Lorraine to the legacy of Ashkenazic culture beyond the French border? During most of the *ancien régime*, the region of northeastern France was still an integral part of the cultural orbit of central and eastern Europe. However, the history of rabbinic appointments in the region reveals that Alsatian Jewry was slowly becoming culturally self-reliant in the last decades before 1789. Under the full impact of the Revolution, the Terror, and the Napoleonic regime, a genuine break with the religious and cultural traditions of their coreligionists to the east occurred, while an autochthonous Franco-Jewish identity emerged during the same period. The evolving patterns of rabbinic succession offer a valuable perspective on the dynamics of these institutional and cultural changes.[2]

Rabbinic Succession in the Ancien Régime

The Ashkenazic communities of the *ancien régime* were concentrated in the provinces of Alsace, Lorraine, and in the vicinity of Metz. Political, economic, and legal conditions varied from region to region, affecting not only the status of the Jews but also their internal communal life. In the five cantons of pre-revolutionary Alsace, which included Upper and Lower Alsace, the territories of the bishopric of Strasbourg, the territories of the directory of the noblity of Lower Alsace, and the county of Hanau-Lichtenberg, grand rabbis assumed overall responsibility for religious affairs, judicial matters, contracts, marriage, and divorce. The two grand rabbis of the Upper and Lower Alsace were elected by an assembly of parnassim and delegates of the cities and most important *bourgs* of the region, and were officially appointed by the king. In the

évêché of Strasbourg, the bishop received authorization from the king to name rabbis; in the lands of the directorate of the nobility of Lower Alsace, it was the directorate; and in the county of Hanau-Lichtenberg it was the prince of Hesse-Darmstadt. In smaller towns and villages of Alsace deputy-rabbis were elected by an assembly of heads of households. By law, these elections were to be confirmed by the regional rabbi, and subsequently by the general parnassim; the election of the regional rabbi required the procurement of *lettres patentes* from the seigneurial suzerain. From 1738, the three other cantons received authorization to appoint rabbis in their territories.[3] Various confirmation procedures offer evidence of the chain of authority that linked the royal government to village Jews, and of the hierarchical structure of the French rabbinate.

The chief rabbinate of Metz bore responsibility for religious and judicial affairs in the Metz kehillah itself, and in the surrounding countryside as well. The nomination of the chief rabbi was made by a body of approximately fifty electors drawn from various sectors of the population, though most heavily from the ranks of community officials and the wealthy: (1) six communal leaders, either syndics or members of the administrative council; (2) the 18-20 members of the rabbinic tribunal, that is, all those who were eligible to be chosen as the *assesseurs* of the grand rabbi; (3) a total of 30 men selected by lottery from each of the three economic classes of the community. The *lettres patentes* of 1657 required that the choice be submitted to the approbation of the king.[4] In the duchy of Lorraine, of which much less is known, there was one regional rabbinate, based near Nancy. From 1737, when *medinat Lotharingen* was organized along with the creation of the office of grand rabbi, until the end of the century there were only three grand rabbis, Nehemiah Reischer, Jacob Perle, and Jacob Schweich. Other rabbinic functionaries, serving in the rural countryside with the authorization of the chief rabbi, formed a sub-rabbinate. The authority of the chief rabbinate of Lorraine was subordinate to that of the Metz rabbinate. It is not clear that there was a standing *beit din*; in some instances, the Metz *beit din* was called upon to adjudicate more difficult matters. The rabbi of Lorraine was elected by a convocation of parnassim and community representatives, totalling thirty.[5]

Two principal models of succession predominated at the regional level. From the mid-seventeenth century, the Metz kehilla followed a tradition prohibiting the appointment of any rabbi with relatives in the city to the position of *av beit din*, and therefore only foreign-born rabbis could be considered. In Alsace, where conditions were much more complex, there was a general preference for rabbinic candidates who were native to the northeastern provinces. Metz' restrictions on rabbinic eligibility enabled the community to remain largely free

of the problems that typically accompanied rabbinic appointments in Alsace.[6] Intended to ensure that the rabbinate remain independent of special interests, this precautionary measure went hand in hand with an effort to define the office of rabbi more precisely. During the half-century following the reestablishment of the Jewish community of Metz in 1595, the range of rabbinic duties had not been carefully delineated. Local rabbis assumed various teaching and judicial functions that would later be included among those of the grand rabbi.[7] Moreover, the duties of communal rabbi, dayyan, and director of the yeshiva were typically performed by men who also assumed the functions of parnas. However, in the eighteenth century the community required a dayyan, if elected parnas, to temporarily relinquish his duties.[8]

A dispute over rabbinic succession in 1625 prompted the Metz kehilla to adopt its noted policy against hiring local rabbis. R. Joseph Lévy, who served thirty-two years as chief rabbi (along with two colleagues) and parnas, opposed the election of Maram Zey to the position of dayyan and member of the rabbinic triumvirate to succeed his deceased father, relying on Jewish law's exclusion of a judge who is related to the parties. Evidently overruled when the dispute was brought before the governor, Lévy left Metz for Frankfurt. Nevertheless, out of the controversy emerged two important precedents. First, the kehilla decided after Lévy's departure that the idea of limiting candidates to those with no relatives in the city ought to be scrupulously observed, and Lévy's successor, R. Moïse Cohen (1627-1632) of Prague, was the first to be imported from abroad to serve as rabbi of Metz. Second, the nomination of a foreign rabbi would henceforth require the king's approbation, as later formalized by the *lettres patentes* of 1657. Thus, permission was granted to Nathan of Frankfurt, who was elected by the community in 1643, to reside in Metz and to fulfill the duties of rabbi, in accordance with Jewish practice and the royal edicts.[9] Beginning with the rabbinate of Moses Cohen Narol (1649-1659), a native of the Ukraine who fled Poland at the time of the Chmielnicki persecution, the duties of grand rabbi were consolidated. It was also from this point that Metz was able to attract several of the most renowned scholars in Europe to the position, including Gershon Ashkenazi, Abraham Broda, Jacob Reischer, Jacob Joshua Falk, Jonathan Eibeschütz, Samuel Hilman, and Aryeh Loeb Günzberg.[10] The Metz kehilla's refusal to hire local rabbis did not extend to lower-level rabbinic positions, however. Various charitable foundations that were established for the higher education of poor children provided employment for scholarly relatives of the founders. Moyse Belin, for example, who established a foundation that supported twenty-four poor children from Metz and Alsace, was able to arrange for his son-in-law, R. Itzig Pousweiler, to head the local *kloiz* (a privately endowed academy) and to receive a communal tax exemption.[11] Other positions,

including rabbinic directors of the publicly-funded *beit midrash* and assistant communal rabbis, were consistently filled by members of the local kehilla.[12]

Within the province of Alsace, patterns of succession varied from region to region. In the préfecture of Haguenau (Bas-Rhin), rabbinic appointments bore the imprint of Metz for much of the century. Most of the rabbis serving the Haguenau community were either natives of Metz or had come there to study in the renowned yeshiva, perhaps with the sole exception of R. Samuel Halberstadt who was appointed to his position with the assistance of his mentor, Metz *av beit din* Jonathan Eibeschütz, under whom Halberstadt had studied in Prague.[13] With the appointment of Halberstadt's successor, Lazarus Moyses Katzenellenbogen (1755-71), a son-in-law of R. Samuel Hilman (*av beit din* of Metz after Eibeschütz), the direct connection to Metz resumed, only to be interrupted by the appointment of Rixheim rabbi Jacob Jeqil Gugenheim. In 1805 the community invited Hirsch Katzenellenbogen, son of Lazarus, to return from Frankfurt-an-der-Oder in order to assume the position of *av beit din*.[14] In the bishopric of Strasbourg (Mutzig), the position of *av beit din* consistently passed to sons-in-law, following the initial appointment of R. Aron and his son Loeb Aron (known as Loeb Elsass). Beginning with the 1784 appointment of Simon Horchheim, Loeb Aron's son-in-law, this pattern continued until after the mid-nineteenth century. In Upper Alsace, in the lands of the directorate of the nobility of Lower Alsace (Niedernai), and in the county of Hanau-Lichtenberg (Bouxwiller), the list of appointees included rabbis either born or trained in Metz, native Alsatians, and on rare occasions, immigrants from central Europe. Except for the aforementioned appointment of Loeb Aron to replace his father, R. Aron, there were no instances in Alsace where the position of *av beit din* passed from father to son.[15]

If the grand rabbinate of Alsatian Jewry was in the hands of natives of the region, the lower-level rabbinic positions in northeastern France tended to be filled by immigrants from central Europe and from Poland, until the mid-eighteenth century. Although rabbis elected by rural communities had no officially sanctioned authority, their immigrant status nonetheless was a reflection of an important cultural trend. Rabbinic peregrinations and appointments attested to the religio-cultural unity characterizing the area from Metz in the west to Prague in the east, as did modes of Talmud study, religious customs, and liturgical rites. Marriage and study frequently brought rabbis, teachers, cantors, *shohatim*, and yeshiva students to the region; this pattern undoubtedly gave expression to, and in some instances facilitated, the bonds uniting northeastern France with territories to the east.[16] The long list of shared religious customs practiced in the communities of western Ashkenaz was also a product of the fluidity of movement that characterized the area as a whole, while

offering evidence of considerable cultural homogeneity as well. This can be observed both in the occasional emigration of Alsace-Lorraine natives to Germany to assume rabbinic positions there,[17] and in the arrival of rabbis and students from the east. The list of rabbis in the mid-eighteenth century community of Rosheim, for example, included mostly foreigners (three of four), as were nearly all of the teachers, and the cantor and assistant cantor. A similar trend may be noted in the Papal States, where most of the rabbis serving in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were either from Poland, Prague, or other eastern localities.[18] This phenomenon may be explained by two factors. First, for much of the eighteenth century, the region of Alsace-Lorraine was a point of attraction for a steady stream of eastern immigrants in search of better economic conditions and opportunities.[19] Second, until the mid-eighteenth century, there were no institutions of any sort in Alsace-Lorraine, with the exception of the renowned yeshiva in Metz, where students could pursue advanced talmudic and halakhic studies; most communities were therefore heavily dependent upon talent imported from abroad.

These demographic trends notwithstanding, the tendency to appoint native Alsatians to rabbinic positions intensified over the course of the eighteenth century. This was as true for rabbinic positions at the community level, as for regional rabbinic offices.[20] The growing preference for native-born rabbis attests to the powerful influence wielded by the wealthy on the selection process, and rested on the assumption that any rabbi serving in a judicial capacity ought to be familiar with royal ordinances and regulations issued by regional authorities.[21] Finally, only with the creation of several yeshivot in Alsace, such as in Ribeauvillé in 1753 and Bouxwiller in 1767, do we see evidence of a heightened interest in advanced study – undoubtedly reinforced by the arrival of eastern immigrants – along with the first signs of the emergence of a rabbinate indigenous to the region.

The course of rabbinic succession in Alsace was determined largely by the close connections forged between leading rabbis and the wealthy families who had come to dominate communal affairs at the regional level.[22] This was reflected in the fact that the post of rabbi was an honor that typically could be purchased by the candidate or his supporters – a phenomenon that corresponded to trends in the appointment of government officials. In the last years of the seventeenth century, when France became immersed in nearly a quarter-century of warfare beginning with the War of the Grand Alliance, the resultant strain on the economy forced the government to find new sources of revenue, including the sale of offices, even municipal magistracies. These positions were life-appointments and remained in families for generations. In 1704 it was decreed that lower-level magistracies would be brought under the same regulations.[23] In

such an environment there emerged a natural alliance between the rabbinate and the wealthiest Jewish families, not unlike a parallel phenomenon among the higher Catholic clergy.[24] The purchase of rabbinic offices dates from the fourteenth century; it became especially widespread in Poland, beginning in the sixteenth century,[25] as it did in Alsace two centuries later. The highest rabbinic offices were occupied overwhelmingly by members of the families of the general (regional) parnassim. Samuel Lévy, a son of parnas Cerf Lévy and son-in-law of parnas Abraham Mayer Schwab, was appointed rabbi of Upper Alsace before becoming treasurer for the duke of Lorraine. His nephew by marriage, Elie Schwab, gained his initial appointment in Haguenau thanks to the influence of his father, Jacob, a provisioner of services to the *garde des sceaux en coeur.*[26] R. Samuel Sanvil Weyl was a son of parnas Baruch Weyl and brother of general parnas Jacob Baruch Weyl, and R. David Sintzheim, president of the Napoleonic Sanhedrin and first consistorial grand rabbi of France, was a brother-in-law of Cerf Berr.[27] Issachar Carmoly (1735-81), a native of Ribeauvillé who attended the local yeshiva, pursued advanced talmudic studies in Metz, Frankfurt-am-Main, and Fürth before returning to Alsace-Lorraine where he married the daughter of Joseph Reinau, a wealthy banker, parnas in Soultz, and a syndic-general of the Jews in the lands of the bishopric of Strasbourg. Reinau was able to persuade the bishop to authorize the creation of a new rabbinic post in Soultz, while arranging for his son-in-law to be named *av beit din.*[28] The extensiveness of this phenomenon, as well as its clear susceptibility to abuse, explains the Metz regulation that the *av beit din* be selected among candidates with no relatives in the community.

With the entanglement of the rabbinate in commercial affairs, competing Jewish factions routinely vied with one another in order to gain control over rabbinic nominations. Detailed evidence of the rift concerning the appointment of the territorial parnas in the *seigneurie* of Ribeaupierre at the turn of the eighteenth century reveals some of the complexities surrounding rabbinic appointments and succession. In 1699 the new territorial (seigneurial) parnas, Baruch Weyl, a munitions supplier and financier, was selected by the prince Chrétien de Birkenfeld, lord of Ribeaupierre, to direct the affairs of the Jews, serve as judge, impose fines, announce marriages, and not violate the seigneurial rights when bringing Jews before tribunals outside the district of Ribeauvillé. However, on the basis of a complaint that was brought by Alexandre Doterlé (father-in-law of the previous parnas) and supported by the parnassim of Ribeauvillé, Bergheim, and Obernai, the Conseil Souverain prohibited Baruch Weyl from assuming the position. In the end, the Intendant confirmed the appointment of Doterlé, together with Samuel Lévy. The latter was subsequently elected rabbi of Upper and Lower Alsace by parnassim of the two provinces.[29]

The battle between Weyl, supported by the prince,[30] and Doterlé, who was supported by R. Lévy, was at once a struggle for control of the rabbinate and for the accompanying right to provide goods for the army, and a clear indication of the continuing strains between royal and provincial authorities.[31] Following the departure of Lévy in 1710, Baruch Weyl succeeded in regaining his influence when his son Samuel Sanvil Weyl was elected rabbi of the Haute-Alsace.

The newly elected rabbi aggressively undertook to extend his authority throughout Alsace, as did Haguenau rabbi Elie Schwab in a more limited manner.[32] This became possible because of the failure of the various *lettres patentes* to delineate the precise territorial boundaries of rabbinic districts. Weyl devoted much of his energy over the course of his rabbinic career to expanding the spheres of his influence through the commercial dealings of his family, through the purchase of rabbinic offices, and by filling newly vacant posts of deceased colleagues. In 1713 the new *lettres patentes* he procured from the king's advisor authorized him to exercise the functions of rabbi in the lands and seigneuries of the marquis de Chamlay in Alsace.[33] The following year, the Jewish communities in the *abbayé* of Murbach were incorporated into the rabbinate of Weyl, although in some locales Jews refused to recognize his authority. By virtue of the ordinance of 7 July 1716, Weyl received confirmation of his authority over all the Jews of Haute-Alsace. Insofar as the seigneurie of Ribeaupierre was not included in the *lettres patentes* accorded by Louis XIV, Weyl proceeded to obtain authorization (in 1718) to exercise his functions in Ribeauvillé and Bergheim, the only two localities in the seigneurie where Jews resided.[34] In 1722, following the death of R. Azriel Seligmann Bloch, rabbi of the territory of the directorate of the nobility of Lower Alsace, Liebmann and Mathis Weyl, parnassim of the Jews in the Directorate, were able to have their brother appointed as Bloch's successor. Similarly, in 1731, following the death of R. Issachar Baer Wiener of the county of Hanau-Lichtenberg, Weyl obtained authorization to extend his jurisdiction to the *évêché* of Strasbourg, an area that had also been under Wiener's authority. In 1738, Weyl agreed to withdraw his opposition to R. Elie Schwab's receiving *lettres patentes* on the condition that the latter not extend his rabbinic jurisdiction to the communities of Obernai, Rosheim, and Scherrwiller.[35] Evidence of subsidies that were paid to Baruch and Meyer Weyl, and through them to the rabbi, indicates that the seigneurie's interest in extending Weyl's jurisdiction was consistently motivated by financial concerns.[36] By the end of his career he controlled the rabbinate of Haute-Alsace, the lands of Klinglin, the *abbayé* of Murbach, the county of Ribeaupierre, the county of la Noblesse-Immédiate, and the *évêché* of Strasbourg. Weyl's ambitious efforts engendered a reconfiguration of the region's rabbinic jurisdictions, thus forging a first step toward centralization in the *ancien*

régime.[37] Moreover, it is clear that the map of communities corresponded to the demarcation of areas under rabbinic jurisdiction.[38]

Whatever power accrued to the rabbinate as a consequence of its alliance with the wealthy class was tenuous and impermanent, and was ultimately eclipsed by the progressive empowerment of the highly influential parnassim. From the 1730s and 40s rabbinic predominance in communal affairs in Alsace-Lorraine was increasingly challenged by lay leaders. Territorial parnassim, and to a much smaller extent local parnassim, began to assume duties formerly performed exclusively by rabbis, although this occurred later than in most kehillot of Europe. Seigneurial parnassim, who generally bought their charges from the local seigneur, enjoyed far greater power than local officials, while posing a more serious challenge to rabbinic authority. Named by Alsatian dynastic rulers to direct, with the rabbis, the affairs of the Jews in the district of the *seigneurie*, these territorial parnassim had functioned in the *évêché* since the mid-1600s, and in the territories of the nobility, of Hanau and the county of Ribeaupierre since the end of the century. They were on an equal footing with the rabbi with whom they shared power, and were largely independent of conventional controls. Their status, which derived from their economic power and from their ability to pass the office down from father to son, tended to be most elevated in those principalities where the dynasties defended their rights against the encroachments of royal power.[39] By contrast, rabbis recognized that the royal government was the main source of their own authority, whereas the territorial parnassim were appointed by regional powers. Much of the conflict over rabbinic and communal appointments, then, was a reflection of the ever-present tensions between the central authority of the king and the propensity toward independence in the provinces.

Several of the tensions accompanying rabbinic appointments in the eighteenth century are evident in the election of R. Süssel Moïse Enosch to the rabbinate of Ribeauvillé. His predecessor, R. Samuel Sanvil Weyl, had served as chief rabbi of Upper Alsace, and of the bishopric of Strasbourg as well, for more than forty years.[40] Upon his death in 1753, the community of Ribeauvillé took upon itself to find a successor. One of Weyl's sons-in-law, R. Jacob Wolff Gugenheim, a native of Obernai and resident of Ribeauvillé, was presumably the natural choice to succeed Weyl; another candidate was Joseph Steinhardt, *av beit din* of Niedernai. Nevertheless, the two Alsatians were bypassed in favor of Enosch, a native of Frankfurt-am-Main, who was then serving as rabbi in Creuznach. Enosch owed his appointment to the efforts of his son-in-law, Lippmann Moyses, a *shtadlan* of the Upper Alsace region and son of a parnas of Bergheim who exercised much influence with government officials. Using various tactics, including economic pressure, defamation, deception, and

manipulation of the election procedure, he succeeded in winning support for his father-in-law over the two other candidates.[41] Toward the goal of undermining Gugenheim's candidacy, Moyses sent a *mémoire* to the *Intendant* of Alsace, M. de Luce, arguing that because the sizeable Jewish population was under the authority of the prince (Palatin des Deux-Ponts, possessor of the county of Ribeaupierre), and since the rabbi is authorized by law to exercise civil jurisdiction among the Jewish population, it was in the best interests of the prince that the position be filled by a person of exceptional competence and experience. Enosch, not Gugenheim, he maintained, was perfectly suited for this position. Underlying Moyses' argument was the assumption that the authorities have a genuine and legitimate interest in ensuring that the appropriate candidate fill vacant rabbinic positions.[42]

Questions concerning the legality of Enosch's appointment were raised by Samuel Weyl's widow, Esther, and by her son-in-law, Gugenheim.[43] The main argument in their complaint centered on the fact that as a foreigner, Enosch could not be sufficiently acquainted with the royal ordinances and the legislative acts of the *Conseil Supérieur d'Alsace* with which every rabbi must be familiar, and had failed to provide any confirmation of his moral uprightness. The petitioners argued further that the appointment of Enosch was in violation of a standard electoral procedure requiring that when a rabbinic office becomes vacant, all of the parnassim representing each of the Jewish communities of the province are to be convened. Although there were approximately fifty Jewish communities in Upper Alsace, Lippmann Moyses convened only thirty of the fifty parnassim and then found reason to disqualify several more, reducing the number to sixteen. Using his economic influence to intimidate the electors, he also insisted on an open vote instead of the customary secret ballot. Moyses thus succeeded in swaying the vote in favor of Enosch.[44]

Ironically, the election of Enosch, the first non-native to be appointed regional rabbi in Alsace, was a turning point in the creation of an indigenous Alsatian rabbinate. Shortly after Enosch's arrival, a new yeshiva under his direction was formed in Ribeauvillé. While little is known of the yeshiva itself, or of its founding, its impact was highly significant. The only extant list of students at the Ribeauvillé yeshiva reveals its exclusively Alsatian character.[45] Moreover, virtually every one of the dozen students who studied there went on to assume important rabbinic positions in Alsace. Following the lead of Ribeauvillé, several small yeshivot and *kloizen* dotted the terrain of the region, in localities such as Bischeim, Bouxwiller, Ettendorf, Mutzig, Nancy, Niedernai, Jungholtz, Westhoffen, Rosheim, and Sierentz. These academies contributed to the proliferation of advanced talmudic studies in northeastern France,[46] enabling communities to become moderately self-reliant in making rabbinic appoint-

ments. This new turn adumbrated the sharp break with the cultural legacy of eastern and central Europe in the half-century following the Revolution, and the concomitant emergence of a distinct Franco-Jewish identity. Changes in Alsatian Jewry's position vis-à-vis rabbinic appointments corresponded closely to significant developments in its regional consciousness and organization. The impetus toward centralization in the 1760s and 1770s reflected, in part, an awareness among community leaders that the solution to certain problems, such as the recruitment and training of rabbis, demanded a regional approach. Ironically, in the two decades before the Revolution, during the period when the authority of the community had eroded considerably, especially in the civil sphere, the provincial bodies reaffirmed rabbinic authority in religious matters.[47] This flurry of activity was subsequently counterbalanced by an economic reversal that adversely affected all aspects of communal life. As a result, the capacity of communities to hire and train rabbis was severely limited.

The End of the Ancien Régime *and the Era of the Revolution*

In the last two decades before the Revolution, neither Jewish life and culture nor rabbinic succession remained impervious to declining economic conditions in Alsace-Lorraine. As the competition posed by German yeshivot and communities in the last third of the century suggests, talmudic academies in Frankfurt, Fürth, and Mayence attracted many students from the French territories, while far fewer came in the opposite direction.[48] Naphtali Hirsch Katzenellenbogen, a grandson and student of R. Samuel Hilman in Metz, was sent to study in Silesia following the death of his grandfather in 1765. In 1794 he was appointed rabbi of Frankfurt-an-der-Oder where he would remain until after the turn of the century.[49] Metz native Daniel Jacob Rottembourg, a student of R. Aryeh Loeb Günzberg at the Metz yeshiva, was sent to the Fürth yeshiva in 1782; after the completion of his studies he remained in Germany, assuming the position of rabbi of Boedigheim (Baden), until his death in 1845. Several accomplished Alsatian scholars also felt the attraction. R. Wolf Reichshoffen, *av beit din* in Bouxwiller and head of both the Ettendorf yeshiva and Bouxwiller *kloiz*, was invited in 1786 to become rabbi of Mayence, but in the end declined the offer.[50] Earlier, in 1763, R. Joseph Steinhardt, head of the *beit din* and yeshiva in Niedernai, could not resist a similar opportunity. Despite his general satisfaction with conditions in Alsace, he accepted an offer as *av beit din* of the Fürth community and head of its yeshiva.[51]

Owing to the disruptive effects of the revolutionary upheaval and of the Reign of Terror, numerous Jewish communities in Alsace-Lorraine found themselves in the throes of a severe crisis that was to leave its mark on Jewish life throughout much of the nineteenth century. Schools, yeshivot and synagogues

were closed, and the two Hebrew presses in Metz and Lunéville ceased to operate. As a result of the deterioration of conditions in Alsace-Lorraine, virtually an entire generation of yeshiva students and rabbis emigrated to Germany where they pursued their studies. Loeb Sarassin, a native of Bischeim, had attended the local yeshiva until it closed in 1796; he subsequently left for Germany to study at the yeshivot of Mayence, Mannheim, and Frankfurt-am-Main, only to return to France in 1813 when he was appointed rabbi of Ingwiller. Similarly, Rabbi Samuel Wittersheim of Metz settled in Westphalia after having been ruined financially by the Revolution, and remained there until 1813 before returning to Metz. Others were not as fortunate in returning to their native land. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Lunteschütz (1757-1818), born in Romanswiller, saw the collapse of the yeshiva he directed in Westhoffen, lost his fortune, and was imprisoned during the Reign of Terror. Failing to find a position in France, he was later selected as rabbi of the communities of Endingen-Lengnau, Switzerland.[52] The unsettling effects of the Revolution and the Terror on Jewish communal life also disrupted rabbinic succession in the two decades following the Revolution, leaving some communities without any rabbinic leadership at all. In Haguenau, for example, the rabbinate remained vacant until 1806; Metz was without a chief rabbi during the same period. The cumulative impact on the rabbinate was profound: from the first decades of the nineteenth century, until approximately 1840, virtually all of the rabbinic positions throughout France were occupied by men who had received their training in German yeshivot.[53]

With the creation of the consistorial system in 1808, considerable attention was focused upon the rabbinate. Efforts to exercise rigorous control over the rabbinate were motivated both by ideological and practical concerns. Communal leaders believed, as did government officials, that unless the rabbinate were recast into a modern force, French Jewry would not be able to meet the demanding challenges of citizenship. From the beginning of the 1800s, the state assumed an unprecendented role as an active partner in the supervision of Jewish communal life, a role that grew increasingly more involved over the course of the century. A virtual arm of the state, the Central Consistory in Paris cooperated closely with the appropriate government ministries to establish basic rabbinic qualifications, to modernize rabbinic training, to create a rabbinic hierarchy, and to revamp the process of rabbinic selection and dismissal. The first *règlement* approved by the Assembly of Jewish Notables and enacted in 1806 (article 20) established that in order to be elected to a rabbinic position, one had to be either a native or naturalized Frenchman (or Italian), had to have a certificate from three rabbis (French or Italian) attesting to rabbinic capacity; from 1820 the ability to speak French (or Italian) was required; and preference would be given to those who knew Greek or Latin in addition to Hebrew.[54] The *ordonnance* of

1823 stated that communal rabbis were to be elected by a local commission named by the consistory and presided over by the *commissaire surveillant*; the selections would then be submitted to the Central Consistory for confirmation.[55] The 1839 project for consistorial reorganization focused attention on the subjects of surveillance and censure of rabbis, suspension procedures, the term of office, election procedures, eligibility for various levels of rabbinic posts, and vacancy. Traditionalists were alarmed by the two central themes of the proposed legislation, i.e. lay domination of the rabbinate and the creation of a rabbinic hierarchy. The former would remain a bitterly contested issue throughout the century; the latter was of immediate concern because its implications were clear and concrete. A hierarchical structure within the rabbinate would permit the Consistory to achieve its goal of surveillance and censure at every level. The Central Consistory grand rabbi was to be chosen by a competition judged by a nine-member commission; the consistories would have the right to ask the Central Consistory to dismiss the rabbis and assistant rabbis.[56]

Despite strenuous efforts challenging the right of the Central Consistory grand rabbi to censure departmental rabbis, or of departmental rabbis to censure communal rabbis, rabbinic hierarchy was retained in the 1844 *ordonnance*, and would no longer be debated after this. Instead, new efforts to revise the 1844 *ordonnance* in accordance with the spirit of the 1848 revolution rekindled the earlier debate concerning centralization and the lay domination of the rabbinate, adding to these the issues of universal suffrage and direct elections. In Paris, both in the departmental and central consistories, the lay leadership was firmly in favor of limiting suffrage to a small, elite group to whom decisions on the major issues of communal policy would be entrusted, while in the southern and northeastern provinces the preference was to adopt universal suffrage, albeit according to some consistories, in stages. Nevertheless, the 1853 decree ruled that the elections of communal rabbis and grand rabbis would remain under consistory control. Departmental grand rabbis were to be elected by the local consistory, voting together with twenty-five *notables* chosen by universal suffrage, while the selection of communal rabbis was controlled directly by the consistories. In other words, the revolution of 1848 left the election procedures followed by French Jewish communities virtually unchanged. By 1862, departmental grand rabbis were no longer selected in their own districts, but were chosen from among three nominees submitted by each consistory to the central body. In the case of the election of the central consistory grand rabbi, the process was controlled by a body of electors consisting of central consistory members and representatives of the departmental consistories. Significantly, most members of this electoral body were residents of Paris, a fact that clearly influenced the election results. Perhaps most revealing is that rabbis never

elected their own leaders; rabbinic selection was lay-imposed and lay-dominated.[57] Efforts by the Metz consistory in 1850 to reinstitute general elections for the rabbi of the Sarreguemines district were thwarted by the Central Consistory. In 1853 the Central Consistory withdrew from the communities the right of selecting their own rabbis, and gave this authority to the departmental consistories.[58]

Toward the goal of training a generation of rabbis that would be better equipped to meet the challenges of the new era, the Central Consistory created a central rabbinical school in Metz in 1829.[59] The new *école centrale rabbinique* evinced two salient qualities of post-revolutionary France: First, its establishment under the auspices of the Consistory, in full cooperation with the government, put an end to the many local yeshivot which had reopened or were founded anew earlier in the century. In time, the yeshivot across Alsace-Lorraine eventually fell victim, as did other local academies in Europe, to the dominant forces of centralization that were imposed by the state and supported by Jewish proponents of reform. Second, in attracting an exclusively French student body, the school reflected, perhaps even strengthened, a larger development, i.e. the emergence of a Jewish identity that was distinctly French. In the first class of matriculants in 1829, ten of the eleven students were natives of Alsace-Lorraine, and the eleventh, though born abroad, was a resident of France. Thirty years later, as the school prepared to be transferred to Paris, it was reported that all 109 students who had attended the institution during the years 1829-1859 had been French citizens. Nevertheless, of the sixty-four rabbinic posts in France and Algeria in 1860, thirty-nine (sixty-one percent) were occupied by former graduates of the *école rabbinique*, while twenty-five (thirty-nine percent) had been trained elsewhere.[60] Although the *école rabbinique* was preparing the majority of French rabbis, as envisioned by the consistorial legislation of 1844,[61] there were not nearly enough graduates to fill the available positions in France. Most of the remaining thirty-nine percent doubtless received their training in private venues under individual rabbis, while perhaps a much smaller number went to study in German yeshivot before returning to France. Because the ability to speak French was required of all candidates, it is unlikely that more than a handful of these rabbis were immigrants from abroad.

The 1846 and 1853 elections for the position of Central Consistory grand rabbi reveal the extent to which both citizenship and ideology had emerged as the preeminent factors governing the selection process. Eligibility for the leading rabbinic position was limited to men who were naturalized French citizens. For this reason, the candidacy of the distinguished *Wissenschaft* scholar Solomon Judah Rappaport of Prague was rejected,[62] as was that of orientalist Salomon Munk, who had never undergone naturalization. Starting from the proposition

that the political emancipation of French Jewry demanded corresponding reforms in the public observance of the Jewish religion, lay leaders in Paris and in other major cities regarded the 1846 vacancy in the chief rabbinate as an opportunity to fill the position with a man who was sympathetic to their reformist views. After consultation with several reform rabbis in Germany, a consistorial committee drafted a circular containing nine reforms, and demanded that all candidates submit their views in writing on each subject.[63]

Reaction to the Consistory's conduct of the selection process may have been more vehement than expected. Rabbis of the Bas- and Haut-Rhin assembled to denounce the Consistory's initiative, joined by thousands of protesters in the northeastern provinces who signed petitions; the issue of rabbinic authority and independence shows how widely divided French Jewry had become.[64] The Jewish press played an important role in publicizing and debating these issues, exploring the qualities necessary for a modern French rabbi. Spokesmen for a variety of ideological positions joined in the wide-ranging debate over the role of the rabbi in modern society, frequently aroused by legislative initiatives of the Consistory, approaching rabbinic elections, or developments within the German reform movement, to make their views known. In opposition to the liberal *Archives israélites*, Simon Bloch, editor of the *Univers israélite*, joined by others such as Rabbi Samuel Dreyfus and Rabbi Salomon Klein, led in the condemnation of the popular image of the rabbi as a Jewish priest.[65] Similarly, the relative merits of universal suffrage versus a more restricted method for choosing rabbis was debated in the press.[66] Finally, the consistories themselves ventured to influence the election of rabbis by issuing a report indicating which candidate they preferred, as was the case in the Paris consistory rabbinic election in 1829 and the 1846 election of the Central Consistory grand rabbi.

Through the mid-1830s and early 1840s, the old guard of the French rabbinate still controlled the major rabbinic posts in France. Although most were natives of the region, several were born in central Europe. The older among them were trained either in pre-revolutionary Alsace-Lorraine or German yeshivot, while the younger ones went to study in Germany during the turbulent first decades of the nineteenth century. Most of the important rabbinic positions in the early part of the century were filled by men who were direct descendants of prominent rabbis, or were related to wealthy families. It was undoubtedly their access to wealth that made it possible for them to remain in France while others less fortunate were compelled to seek their livelihood elsewhere. The historical connection between rabbis and wealthy families in the *ancien régime* continued into the first decades of the nineteenth century. Many of the appointees to positions as consistorial grand rabbis were descendants of the families of parnassim. Joseph Gugenheim (c. 1735-1813), son of banker and parnas Lion

Jacob Gugenheim, and son-in-law of parnas Salomon Cahen, was appointed grand rabbi of the Metz consistory in 1812.[67] Gugenheim's successor, Samuel Nethanel Wittersheim (1766-1831), former deputy of the Jews of Alsace, was the son of parnas R. Isaac-Seligmann Wittersheim, and a grandson of Moyse Belin.[68] Wittersheim's brother-in-law, Simon Cerf Cahen (1760-1833), a son and son-in-law of parnassim, became grand rabbi of Colmar, after occupying the rabbinates of Soultz-sous-Forêts and Haguenau.[69] Blessed with unusual longevity, several grand rabbis who had begun their careers during the *ancien régime* were still in office in the 1820s and 1830s, often in the same position for thirty or forty years. The general pattern of rabbinic succession was doubtless a significant expression of social and religious conservatism in the northeastern provinces.[70]

Continuity with the cultural and religious legacy of the *ancien régime* was reinforced by the fact that rabbinic positions in numerous northeastern communities remained within the same family for extended periods, well into the nineteenth century. The rabbinate of the Lower Rhine was dominated by the Aron family for nearly two centuries, and in Mutzig the communal rabbinic post passed from father-in-law to son-in-law over a period of nearly one hundred fifty years (1716-1864). In Metz, the chief rabbinate bore the imprint of R. Aryeh Loeb Günzberg for nearly a century, passing to his disciples and their sons-in-law, until 1862. What is of particular significance in the case of Metz is that by considering for the position of grand rabbi only men whose families were already entrenched in the community, the kehillah completely reversed its policy of the pre-revolutionary era. In the aftermath of the Revolution, and following nearly two decades without a chief rabbi, community leaders had evidently concluded that direct knowledge of local affairs and traditions was an essential rabbinic quality, as was fluency in French, while the ability to identify with the recent history and future aspirations of French Jewry was an important asset.[71]

Comparing the situation at mid-century with that of the *ancien régime*, it is clear that rabbinic succession was no longer determined by family influence and commercial prowess, but by ideological compatibility and the ability to represent Jewish communal and religious affairs to the French public. By the 1840s, as a new generation of rabbis came of age, earlier trends in rabbinic succession had virtually disappeared. Graduates of the *école rabbinique* were given priority in the competition for coveted rabbinic positions throughout France. The fact that from 1831 rabbis were salaried state employees, as were their Christian counterparts, signalled a new stage in the realization of the revolutionary ideal: Jews and Judaism were recognized as a legitimate and integral part of French society and polity. This entailed a wide range of obligations toward the state and in the realm of social integration. In addition to his traditional role, the rabbi was

expected to represent Judaism to the general public, and in so doing, to improve the image of French Jewry. Lay leaders envisioned the modern rabbi as an expositor of French Jewish culture and identity.[72] In these respects, French rabbis embodied, in varying degrees, the highly distinctive identity that was shaped by the unique conditions of emancipation in France.

NOTES

1. See Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1958), and English edition (New York, 1993), trans. Bernard D. Cooperman, 105-6, 141-7, 198-9; and idem, "The Concept of Social History and its Possible Use in Jewish Historical research," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 3 (1955): 292-312.
2. The subject of rabbinic succession in France can also facilitate comparisons between Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities, and between rural and urban settings; however these topics are beyond the scope of the present study.
3. See Isidor Loeb, "Les Juifs de Strasbourg depuis 1349 jusqu'à la Révolution," *Annuaire de la société des études juives* 2 (1883): 163-7; S. Posener, "The Social Life of Jewish Communities in France in the Eighteenth Century," *Jewish Social Studies* 7 (1945): 214-7, 226-8; Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews* (New York, 1968), 238-9; and Georges Weill, "Rabbins et Parnassim dans l'Alsace du XVIII[e] siècle," in Myriam Yardeni (ed.), *Les Juifs dans l'histoire de France* (Leiden, 1980), 96-109. Also, see the valuable material from the Archives municipales de Strasbourg, A.A. 2393, 1781, published in Rina Neher-Bernheim, *Documents inédits sur l'entrée des juifs dans la société française (1750-1850)*, 2 vols. (Tel Aviv, 1977), vol. 1, 108.
4. On the history of the Metz rabbinate, see Abraham Cahen, "Le Rabbinat de Metz pendant la période française," *REJ* 7 (1883): 103-16; *REJ* 8 (1884): 255-74; *REJ* 12 (1886): 283-97; *REJ* 13 (1886): 105-14; and Moïse Ginsburger, "Les Juifs de Metz sous l'ancien régime," *REJ* 50 (1905): 112-28.
5. See the rabbinic contract of R. Nehemiah Reischer, published in Simon Schwarzfuchs, "Three Documents from the Lives of the Jewish Communities in Alsace-Lorraine" (Hebrew), *Michael* 4 (1976): 11-12.
6. Possibly the first *takkana* against appointing a rabbi who had family relations in the community was enacted in Ubin, Hungary in the mid-seventeenth century. See Ephraim Ha-Kohen, *Resp. Sha'ar Ephraim*, Y.D. no. 67; Gershon Ashkenazi, *Resp. Avodat Ha-Gershuni* no. 2; and Moses Sofer, *Resp. Hatam Sofer* no. 17, cited in Israel Schepansky, *The Takkanot of Israel*, vol. 4 (Jerusalem, 1992), 408-9. The tradition of appointing foreign rabbis was also practiced in Fürth, Altona-Hamburg-Wandsbeck, and Prussia, for example, as noted in Azriel Shoet, *The Beginnings of Haskalah in Germany* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1960), 93-4.
7. For example, the *pinkas* contains an *arrêté* of the *tovim* (dated 20 Tevet 406 [=5 January, 1646]), signed by Saul Juda ben Moshe Naphtali, *av beit din de Metz*. See ms. 3704, 11 r°, cited in Samuel Kerner, *La vie quotidienne de la communauté juive de Metz au dix-huitième siècle* (Thèse de Doctorat de 3ème Cycle, Université de Paris, 1977-79), 111-2.
8. For extremely interesting material on rabbinic succession and rabbinic duties in the first quarter-century of the Metz community, see Cahen, "Le Rabbinat de Metz," *REJ* 7 (1883):

219-20; David Kaufmann, "R. Joseph Lévi Aschkenaz, premier rabbin de Metz, après le rétablissement de la communauté," *REJ* 22 (1891): 93-4. On the involvement of rabbis in the ranks of communal leadership, see *Le "Memorbuch" de Metz (vers 1575-1724)* (Metz, 1971), trans. and ed. by Simon Schwarzfuchs, viii, and rsp. nos. 76, 57, 673, 839, 861. On the separation of duties of judge and syndic, see Metz Pinkas, fol. 8 vo, art. 12; fol. 17 v°, art. 13, cited in Kerner, *La vie*, p. 39.

9. Cahen, "Rabbinat," *REJ* 7(1883): 216-7.
10. See ibid., 220-3, and Moses Shulvass, *From East to West: The Westward Migration of Jews from Eastern Europe during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Detroit, 1971), 42. Narol was succeeded by Jonas Teoumim Fraenkel (1659-69), who also came to France to escape the Chmielnicki massacres. For details on the appointment of Eibeschütz, see his correspondence with the Metz communal leadership in Raphael Blum (ed.), "Trois lettres autographes de feu Rabbi Jonathan Eibenschutz," *Univers israélites* 9 (1853): 27-32.
11. Pinkas of Metz, 39a-b, cited in Hertzberg, *French Enlightenment and the Jews*, 169; also see Kerner, *La vie*, 174-5, and idem, "Un registre messin du XVIII^{e} siècle," *Archives juives* 7 (1970-71): 43.
12. See Samuel Kerner, "Salaries et salaires dans la communauté de Metz au XVIII^{e} siècle, d'après un ancien registre messin," *Archives juives* 8 (1971-72): 34. On *kloizen* and *batei midrash* in early modern Europe, see Elhanan Reiner, "Wealth, Social Standing, and the Study of Torah: The Status of the *Kloiz* in Eastern European Society in the Early Modern Period," *Zion* 58 (1993): 287-328.
13. The Haguenau community first selected Tevele Scheuer, dayyan in Frankfort am Main, to serve as its rabbi. Following Scheuer's refusal of the offer, R. Samuel Halberstadt, who had come to Alsace following the 1744 expulsion of the Prague Jewish community, was appointed to the position. On the offer to Scheuer, see Eliakim Carmoly, "Notice biographique," *Revue orientale* 3 (1843-44): 249.
14. With the establishment of the Upper Rhine Consistory in 1808, Katzenellenbogen (known as Lazare Hirsch) was named grand rabbi and consistory president, positions he held until his death in 1823. See E. Carmoly, "Notices biographiques," *Revue orientale* 2 (1842): 339, and Moïse Ginsburger, "Les Mémoriaux alsaciens," *REJ* 41 (1900): 125-6.
15. The bishopric of Strasbourg was unique insofar as it was not an independent rabbinic precinct, but was under the authority of the rabbi of one of the neighboring territories who added these duties to his regular responsibilities. At first, the position was assigned to the rabbi of Hanau-Lichtenberg, Issachar Baer Wiener (1722-1731), then to the rabbi of Haute-Alsace, Samuel Sanvil Weyl (1731-1753), and finally to the rabbi of the territories of the Noblesse Immédiate, Joseph Steinhardt (1753-1763), who bought the charge. During these four decades, the rabbis who served the Mutzig community where the *évêche* of Strasbourg was headquartered, apparently enjoyed authority in local affairs only.
16. The travels of Issachar Berr Carmoly (1735-1781) exemplify the pattern of movement of his Alsatian peers. A native of Ribeauvillé, he attended the local yeshiva and was subsequently sent to Metz to study under R. Jonathan Eibeschütz. After three years in Metz, having received the title *ḥaver*, he was invited by his great uncle, R. Jacob Poppers, *av beit din* of Frankfurt-am-Main, to study there and become acquainted with the German branch of the family. In Frankfort, Carmoly became a student of R. Jacob Joshua Falk, author of the *P'nei Yehoshua*, but after a year, returned to Metz, resumed his studies with Eibeschütz, and then with R. Shmuel Hilman, Eibeschütz' successor, from whom the young scholar received the title *Rav Ḥaver*. From there he went to Fürth and studied under R. David Strauss. Following

his studies abroad, he was appointed *av beit din* of Soultz through the influence of his father-in-law, Joseph Reinau, a regional parnas. See Eliakim Carmoly, "Issachar Carmoly," *Revue orientale* 2 (1842) 345-9; 3 (1843-44): 240-4.

17. Natan Oury Cahen, a Metz native who had served as a rabbi in Pforzheim, was appointed as rabbi of Karlesruhe and of the Jews of the principalities, in 1720; Joshua Heschel Lebub, a dayyan in Metz in the early eighteenth century, was subsequently named rabbi of Trèves and of Anspach. See Eliakim Carmoly, "Notice biographique," *Revue orientale* 2 (1842): 335-6.
18. This phenomenon, as it pertained to the community of Rosheim, is pointed out in Freddy Raphaël and Robert Weyl, *Regards nouveaux sur les Juifs d'Alsace* (Strasbourg, 1980), 100-1. In Avignon, Prague native Jacob Ispir (called Jacob Spire) served as rabbi from 1741-1775, and was succeeded by his son Elie Vitte 1755-1790. He subsequently served as rabbi of Nîmes in the 1770s. See Salomon Kahn, "Les Juifs à Nîmes au XVII^{e} et au XVIII^{e} siècles," *REJ* 67 (1914): 232. Moses Jacob Polaque, from Poland, served as rabbi of Cavaillin, and in Isle, the list of rabbis included Abraham Liptsis, from Poland (Mehier), in 1677 and Jesse Luria, from Germany (Bendic). The Carpentras community drew on rabbis from a wider area: Solomon Azubi, born in Sofia, served 1617-1635; Abraham Shalom, of Amsterdam, served 1650-1660; and Judah Aryeh Loeb b. Zevi of Krotoschin settled in Carpentras to assume the rabbinic post there after having first immigrated to Austria, Germany, and Holland. On the latter, see Cecil Roth, *The Rise of Provincial Jewry* (London, 1950), 93. R. Samuel Hilman, another native of Krotoschin, succeeded Eibeschütz as *av beit din* of Metz in 1751 after serving in rabbinic positions in Moravia and Germany.
19. Documentation on rabbinic migration from Poland is scattered in various sources. See Zosa Szajkowski, *Yivo Bleter* 39 (1955): 83; Posener, "The Social Life of the Jewish Communities in France," 214, 222-4; Shulvass, *From East to West*, 28, 62-3, 100, 107. Shulvass cited the publication of the 1701 Amsterdam edition of Nathan Hanover's dictionary *Safah Berurah* (Prague, 1660), which included a French translation of its vocabulary as one example of the interest in France as a possible point of destination. According to R. Jonathan Eibeschütz, superior conditions in the West account for the influx of Polish yeshiva students to Metz. See the statement in his sermon of Av 5509 [1749], published in *Ya'arot Devash*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1984-85), vol. 2, 121. His remarks, as well as those of certain city councils, suggest that the number of Polish yeshiva students and immigrants was expanding over the course of the century.
20. In Upper Alsace, for example, when the rabbinate was still based in Brisach, at least two of the appointees either served in, or hailed from, Metz. Eisik Werd (d. 1675) had previously served as rabbi in Metz; in 1681 he was followed by Aaron Worms, himself a native of Metz. However, once the seat of the rabbinate was moved to Ribeauvillé at the turn of the eighteenth century, the preference for native Alsatians grew stronger. In Rixheim, as well, substitute or vice-rabbis were in nearly all instances from Alsace, with the sole exception of Joseph Steinhardt, a native of Bavaria.
21. This was the argument advanced by (or on behalf of) Esther Philippe and Jacob Wolff Gugenheim, in Arch. dept. du Bas-Rhin C 335, "Mémoire pour Esther Philippe, veuve de Samuel Weyl, Rabbin de la hautte alsace, et Jacob Wolff Gugenheim son gendre (1753)." Cited in Neher-Bernheim, *Documents inédits*, vol. 1, 108-13.
22. In addition to its effects on rabbinic succession, the alliance between wealthy parnassim and the rabbis had considerable implications for all aspects of self-government. See Jay R. Berkovitz, "Jewish Self-Government in France: From Kehillah to Consistory" (Hebrew), in *Jewish Self-Government Through the Ages: Studies in Memory of Israel Halperin*

(forthcoming). For parallels among the parochial clergy of Angers, see John McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime* (Manchester, 1960), 134-6.

23. In A.J. Grant, "The Government of Louis XIV," ch. 1 in A.W. Ward, G.W. Prothero, and Stanley Leathes (eds.), *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. 5 (Cambridge, 1908), 27. For the most comprehensive treatment of the subject, see William Doyle, *Venality: The Sale of Offices in Eighteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1996). On precedents for the purchase of rabbinic positions, see S. Assaf, "On the History of the Rabbinate," *Be'oholei Ya'akov* (Jerusalem, 1943), 36-9.
24. See J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime*, 134-6, and Norman Ravitch, *The Sword and the Mitre: Government and Episcopate in France and England in the Age of Aristocracy* (The Hague, 1966), 3-17.
25. See S. Assaf, "On the History of the Rabbinate," 36-9. The first *takkana* against the practice was enacted by the Council of the Four Lands in Gramitz in 1587 (*Pinkas Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, p. 4, parag. 8), establishing that no rabbi could attempt to acquire a rabbinic position through a loan or a gift, either by himself or others.
26. Moïse Ginsburger, "Elie Schwab, rabbin de Haguenau (1721-1747)," *REJ* 44 (1902): 108-111.
27. For more examples, see Meyer, *La communauté juive de Metz*, 205-14.
28. On Carmoly's yeshiva education, see above, n. 15. His appointment to the Soultz position was supported by the *av beit din* of Metz, R. Samuel Hilman, who had delivered the diploma to Carmoly in 1761. Some years later he established a yeshiva in the neighboring village of Jungholtz. See E. Carmoly, "Issachar Carmoly."
29. See Moïse Ginsburger, "Samuel Lévy," *REJ* 65 (1913): 275-6; idem, "Samuel Sanvil Weil," 54-7. Also see G. Weill, "Rabbins et Parnassim," 99.
30. Support for Weil was undoubtedly related to the service which he and his brother Meyer rendered to the prince. In 1700 they provided a loan of 3000 *écus* to the prince, in return for which they received special privileges. See the document published in Ginsburger, "Samuel Lévy," *REJ* 66 (1913): 130-1, cited in G. Weill, "Rabbins et Parnassim," 98.
31. Lévy demanded that the royal authority be applied fully in the *comté* of Ribeaupierre. The Intendant refused to decide, and the matter was resubmitted to the Conseil Souverain, who confirmed the authority of the rabbi of Upper Alsace in the *comté*, while recognizing the right of the prince to name a parnas to oversee the interests of the *seigneurie* (1703). See Weill, "Rabbins et Parnassim," 99.
32. See Ginsburger, "Elie Schwab, rabbin de Haguenau (1721-1747)," *REJ* 44 (1902): 104-21; 44 (1902): 260-82; 45 (1902): 255-84.
33. Moïse Ginsburger, "Samuel Sanvil Weil: Rabbin de la Haute et Basse-Alsace (1711-1753)," *REJ* 96 (1933): 194 and 58.
34. Ibid., 195 and 59.
35. Ibid., 63-4.
36. Ibid., 194-5 and 58-9, 63-75.
37. G. Weill, "Rabbins et Parnassim," 102-3.
38. It is interesting to note that following Süssel Moyses Enosch's death, it was not his successor in Ribeauvillé, R. Naftali b. Yishai, who bore the title of rabbi of Haute-Alsace, but rather the rabbi of Uffholtz, Itzig Phalsbourg, and after him, N. Hirsch Katzenellenbogen, who became at that time president of the Haut-Rhin Consistory. See Ginsburger, "Mémoriaux," 137. This would suggest some fluidity in the assignment of official duties; much depended on the stature of the rabbinic personality, the degree of his support among the parnassim, and

economic conditions. Clearly more complex than the question of who followed whom, succession ought to be understood in relation to the shifting of regional titles and the general history of the provinces.

39. G. Weill, "Rabbins et Parnassim," 98-9.
40. See Ginsburger, "Samuel Sanvil Weil," 54-75, 179-98.
41. On the appointment of Enosch, see Moïse Ginsburger, "Une élection rabbinique au XVIII siècle," *Universe israelite* 58 (1903): 625-8, and the archival sources published by Neher-Bernheim, *Documents inédits*, vol. 1, pp. 108-18.
42. Ginsburger, "Une élection rabbinique," 626.
43. Arch. dept. du Bas-Rhin C 335, "Mémoire pour Esther Philippe" (see n. 21 above).
44. Arch., dept. du Bas-Rhin C 335, "Supplément du mémoire pour Jacob Guggenheim contre l'élection du nommé Suzel Hennès Juif de Creutznach, nommé Rabin des Juifs de Haute Alsace." Cited in Neher-Bernheim, *Documents inédits*, vol. 1, pp. 114-6.
45. See the list published in Carmoly, "Issachar Carmoly," 346-7. The lists includes Benjamin Scherwiller [also known as Benjamin Hemmendinger]; Jacob Meyer; Isaac Phalsbourg; Wolf Buhl; Jacob Wolf Gougenheim; Joseph Meir; Schemaia Picard; Isaac Netter; Salomon Rixheim; Raphael Hagenthal; David Sintzheim; and Issachar Carmoly.
46. Regrettably, no scholarly treatment of the yeshivot of Alsace-Lorraine has yet been undertaken. For rare information on the founding of one of these academies, see Raphael Blum, "Le fondateur du grand Beth Hamidrash de Bouxwiller," *Univers israélite* 35 (1879): 85-8, 112-4.
47. For details on the centralization of Alsatian communities, see Berkovitz, "Jewish Self-Government in France: From Kehillah to Consistory."
48. According to local record books, the Frankfurt yeshiva counted 120-130 students in 1780; by 1793, however, the number declined to 60. Figures for Fürth are not available, except for the year 1827, the year it closed, when there were, according to one source, 150 students. At the yeshiva of Mayence there were approximately 50 students in 1782. For a brief summary of these and other yeshivot in the region, see Mordechai Eliav, *Jewish Education in Germany in the Period of the Enlightenment and Emancipation* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1960), 149-53. Statistics for the Metz yeshiva are not extant, however, we do know that the rabbinic contract of R. Aryeh Loeb Günzberg allowed for the support of twenty-five students, and that the number of foreign students was at least sixty in 1780.
49. Katzenellenbogen returned to his native Haguenau in 1805 when he accepted the position of rabbi of that community. See E. Carmoly, in *Revue orientale* 2 (1842): 339.
50. See the letter from Cerf Berr to R. Wolf Reichshoffen, 4 Iyar 5546 [May 1786], published in J. Weil, "Contribution à l'histoire des communautés alsaciennes au 18ème siècle," *REJ* 81 (1925): 169-80. In congratulating Reichshoffen on his decision "not to abandon his people and homeland," Cerf Berr's letter evinces strong sentiments of loyalty to the French province several years before the Revolution.
51. See Joseph Steinhardt, *Zikhron Yosef* (Fürth, 1773), introduction, and the analysis in Jay R. Berkovitz, "The French Revolution and the Jews: Assessing the Cultural Impact, *AJSReview* 20 (1995): 39-40.
52. Only fragments of information on the lives of French rabbis of this period remain. For Sarassin, see *Universe israelite* 16 (1860-1): 185-6, and *Souvenir et Science* (February, 1934): 24-6. On Lunteschütz, see M. Kayserling, "Les Rabbins de Suisse," *REJ* 46 (1903): 269-75, and E. Carmoly, "Galerie israélite française," *Archives israelite* 23 (1862): 157-9. Lunteschütz himself provided some autobiographical information in his collection of responsa

entitled *Kelilat Yofi* (Roedelheim, 1813), preface and pp. 29a, 30a. Lunteschütz' predecessor was Raphael Ris, known by his place of birth and residence, Hagenthal. A disciple of Wolf Reichshoffen in Bouxwiller, he directed a yeshiva in Hagenthal until he was called to Endingen-Lengnau, succeeding Jacob Schweich in ca. 1780, when the latter was elected to the rabbinic post in Nancy. Lunteschütz, also a student of Wolf Reichshoffen, succeeded Ris in 1817. Upon his death in 1818, the community elected Raphael's son Abraham Ris, who had served for many years as rabbi of Mühringen. He died in 1834. See M. Ginsburger, "Les Mémoriaux," 133; idem, in *REJ* 47 (1903): 128-31; and M. Kayserling, "Les Rabbins de Suisse," *REJ* 46 (1903): 269-75.

53. Grand Rabbis Arnauld Aron, Marchand Ennery, Lion-Mayer Lambert, Emmanuel Deutz were all trained in Germany. The lone exception appears to have been Aaron Worms (1754-1836) who was the only major rabbinic figure in the pre-1840 era who received his entire training within France.

54. The importance of complying with governmental procedures concerning rabbinic appointments is evident from the correspondence between the Central Consistory and various government ministries such as the Ministry of Justice and Religions, found in *Archives nationales* F^{19} 11052. See, for example, the consistory's letter of 21 November 1841. The 1806 *règlement* has been reprinted in Phyllis Cohen Albert, *Modernization of French Jewry: Community and Consistory in the Nineteenth Century* (Hanover, Mass., 1977), 345-7. The emphasis on the ability to speak French as a minimal qualification rendered several rabbis of the older generation unqualified. The career of R. Aaron Worms is a case in point. Widely recognized as the leading halakhic authority in Metz in the era following the Revolution, he played a major role in the Napoleonic Sanhedrin and in the establishment of modern Jewish schooling. Accordingly, Worms should have been the natural choice for the highest rabbinic post there. However, he was passed over for most of his life, until the age of seventy-seven, because of his inability to speak French. See Aaron Worms, *Bin Nun* (Metz, 1827), 186a. On the latter, see Jay R. Berkovitz, "Authority and Innovation at the Threshold of Modernity: The *Me'orei* Or of R. Aaron Worms," *Isadore Twersky Memorial Volume* (forthcoming). Rabbinic prerequisites in France were far less rigorous than in numerous principalities in Germany. Cf. Michael K. Silber, "The Historical Experience of German Jewry and its Impact on Haskalah and Reform in Hungary," in Jacob Katz (ed.), *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1987), 131. Interestingly, rabbis who had been members of the Napoleonic Sanhedrin received no official preference when vying for a position. In one instance, however, a Paris dayyan (Marcus Prague), who had come to Paris at the time of the Revolution, and who had sat on the Sanhedrin, argued that this service entitled him to be considered for the vacant position of Paris consistorial grand rabbi in 1829. See his letter to the Collège des notables israélites de la circonscription de Paris, 17 November, in the Paris Consistory archives, series B, B 15.

55. Article 7, *Ordonnance* of 1823, in Albert, *Modernization of French Jewry*, 350-2.

56. 1839 project, articles 44-58, in ibid., 364-6.

57. Ibid., 75-6, 82-95, 273-5.

58. The only exception to this was that the body of delegates that supplemented the Central Consistory members in electing the rabbi of the Central Consistory was enlarged from 14 in 1846 to 16 in 1853, and the provincial representation was enlarged as well. See ibid., 276. The *Archives israélites*, for its part, strongly supported unversal suffrage, as is indicated by its criticism of the Lyon rabbinic selection in 1850. See *Archives israélites* 12 (1851): 6.

59. On rabbinic training, see Jules Bauer, *L'Ecole rabbinique de France* (Paris, 1930); Albert, *Modernization*, 245-55; and Berkovitz, *Shaping of Jewish Identity*, 192-202.
60. For a listing of the first class at the *école centrale rabbinique*, see Jules Bauer, "Ecole centrale rabbinique," *REJ* 84 (1927): 53. For details on the geographical distribution of rabbinical students during the first thirty years of the institution, see Salomon Ulmann, *Lettre pastorale*, 23 October 1860.
61. According to art. 58 of the 1839 draft proposal (corresponding to art. 49 of the 1844 *ordonnance*), vacant rabbinic positions were to be filled, preferably, by graduates of the *école rabbinique*, provided they were in possession of the *bachelier ès lettres*. Interestingly, in a letter to the president and members of the Central Consistory, nine Haut-Rhin rabbis objected to the preference for *école rabbinique* graduates. The signatories, most of whom were not trained at the *école rabbinique* themselves, claimed that there was no advantage to studying at the Metz school, other than the fact that it was supported by public funds, and that the consistory's insistence on the primacy of the school was short-sighted and unfair. Their recommended modification, which went unheeded, was that no institution ought to be privileged. Signed in Mulhouse on 8 September 1840, the letter appeared in *Archives israélites* 1 (1840): 579-81.
62. Archives of the Central Consistory, Paris, 1 B 4, 6 March 1842, cited in Jonathan Helfand, "The Election of the Grand Rabbi of France (1842-1846)," *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 1982), 139-44.
63. Central Consistory circular, 1846, reprinted in *Archives israélites* 7 (1846): 225-6, and in Phyllis Albert, *Modernization of French Jewry*, 385-6.
64. See Berkovitz, *Shaping of Jewish Identity*, 214-5.
65. See, for example, *Archives israélites* 5 (1844): 746-9 and *Univers israélites* 8 (1853): 289-95, 385-91. Additional examples may be found in *L'Ami des israélites* (1847), *Union israélite* (1847-48), and *Le Lien d'Israël* (1855-56).
66. Albert, *Modernization of French Jewry*, 273-4.
67. Cahen, "Le Rabbinat de Metz," *REJ* 13 (1886): 118-9.
68. Pierre-André Meyer, *Communauté juive de Metz*, 214. Wittersheim's father, Isaac-Seligmann, was a great benefactor of the Jewish community. Financially ruined by the Revolution, Samuel's commercial activities led him to live in Magdeburg and Cassel. He represented Westphalia in the Sanhedrin, was named a member of the Wesphalia consistory, and finally returned to Metz in 1819, and was named grand rabbi the following year. See Cahen, "Rabbinat," *REJ* 13 (1886): 121-4.
69. Meyer, *Communauté juive de Metz*, 214. Cahen was the son of Cerf Cahen and the son-in-law of Seligmann Wittersheim.
70. See Berkovitz, *Shaping of Jewish Identity*, 94-6. For an expression of disenchantment with the staunch traditionalism of the older generation of rabbis, see the letter of Auguste Ratisbonne, president of the Strasbourg consistory, to the Central Consistory, complaining about R. Loeb Sarassin of Ingwiller and requesting the appointment of a second, younger rabbi. Leo Baeck Institute Archives, New York, Alsace-Lorraine Collection, Box 3, fols. 896-7.
71. For the history of rabbinic appointments in Metz after the Revolution, see Abraham Cahen, "Le Rabbinat de Metz," *REJ* 13 (1886): 105-14. On the Mutzig rabbinate, see M. Ginsburger, "Mutzig," *Science et Souvenir* 4 (September 1933), and the interesting material collected by Louis Greenberg, "Bergson and Durkheim as Sons and Assimilators: The Early Years," *French Historical Studies* 9 (1976): 624-9. On Metz's unsuccessful efforts to persuade Asher

Wallerstein, son of R. Aryeh Loeb Günzberg, to return to France to assume the position of Metz grand rabbi, see Max Warshawski, "Asser Lion Grand Rabbi de France malgré lui: une élection rabbinique sous Napoléon I[er]," *Archives juives* 24 (1988): 10-4, 19-22. Coincidentally, the Central Consistory also attempted to hire Wallerstein as its chief rabbi, but he accepted the position of rabbi of Karlsruhe instead, succeeding his father-in-law as *dayyan ha-medina* in Ettingen. This last detail of his succeeding his father-in-law is noted in Daniel Cohen, "Towards the Image of Dayyanei Ha-Medinah in Ashkenaz in the 17th and 18th Centuries," in I. Bartal, E. Mendelsohn, and Ch. Turniansky (eds.), *Studies in Jewish Culture in Honour of Chone Shmeruk* (Jerusalem, 1993), p. 188.

72. See Berkovitz, "The French Revolution and the Jews," 72-3.

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