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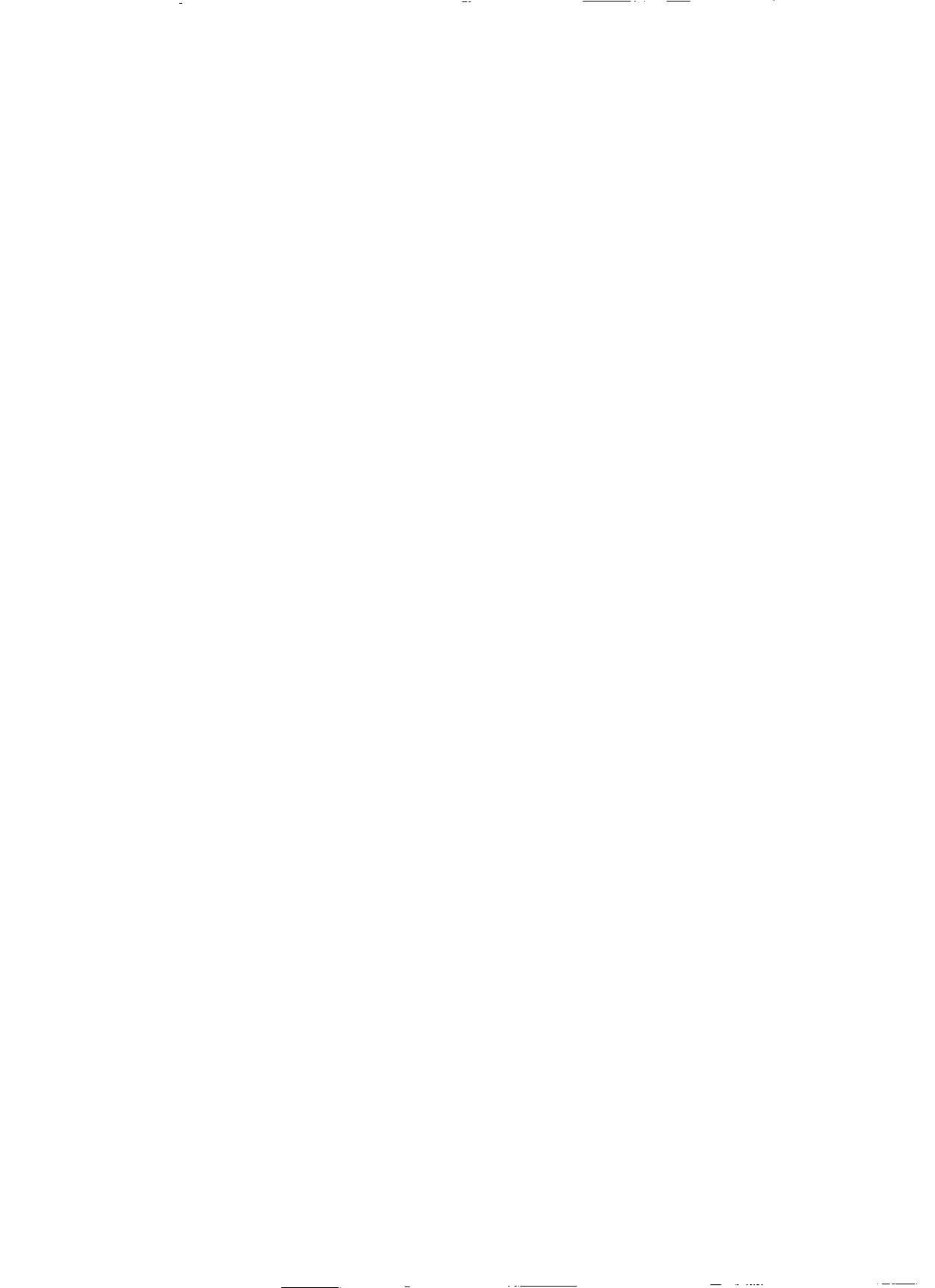
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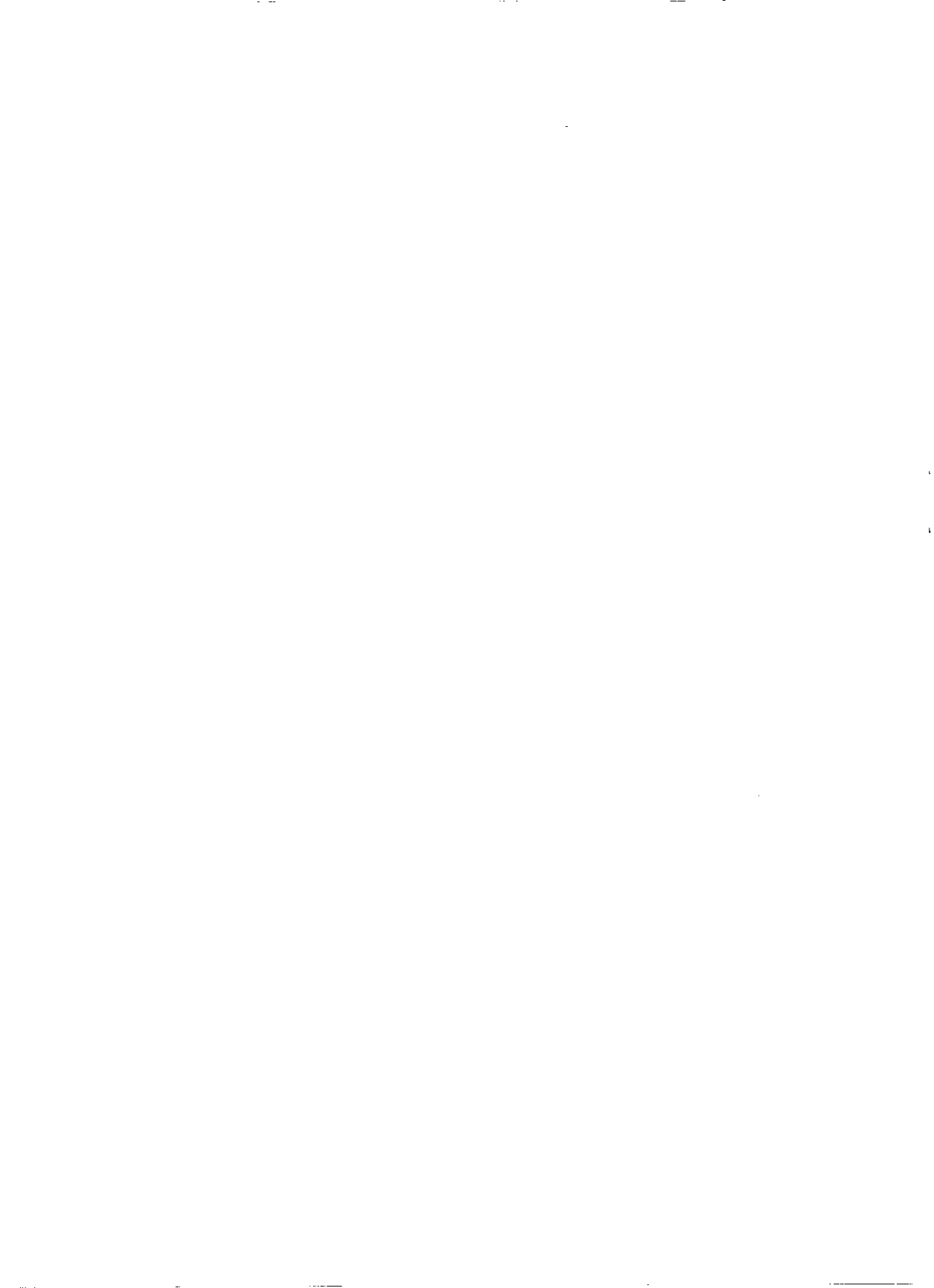
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CENTURY OF ADJUSTMENT: A HISTORY OF THE
AKRON JEWISH COMMUNITY, 1865-1975

A dissertation submitted to the
Kent State University Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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December, 1978

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To my father and mother. They too made the journey.

PREFACE

In his classic work, The Uprooted (1951), Oscar Handlin stopped looking at the impact of immigration on American society and focused instead on the immigration experience as it affected the participants themselves. In the past two decades, students of Jewish immigration have probed more deeply into this adjustment process, studying Jews in their local communities across the country. As one Jewish scholar remarked, ". . . before the definitive history of the Jews of the United States . . . is to be written . . . the lacunae of local, communal, and regional histories must be written--the empty gaps must be filled in."¹ Efforts in this direction have been attempted with varying degrees of scholarship and by variously qualified researchers--from local merchants to historians--and range from brief narrative accounts to extensive team-supported research. A major undertaking in this field of communal study has recently emerged in the Regional History Series of the American Jewish History Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Under the distinguished editorial direction of Salo Baron, Moshe Davis, and Allan Nevins, six diverse and significant Jewish communities were selected for study, among them Cleveland, Ohio.

The Cleveland study, in process until this manuscript was virtually complete, joins such other recent historical work on Ohio Jewry as a dissertation on the *Jews of Toledo* and an oral history project in Columbus.² This study, then, is an attempt to fill in some of the remaining gaps in the emerging story of Jewish life in Ohio. The

Jewish community of Akron was selected for special attention for several reasons. Its manageable size (no estimate ever exceeded 8,000 members) permitted fairly wide coverage over a long time period, providing an overview of a total community experience. Akron also appeared to offer a distinctively different environment from most of the urban communities where Jewish immigrants settled. Instead of an arena where many diverse immigrant groups juggled for access to America's ladder of social mobility, Akron presented an environment predominantly midwestern, white, Protestant. The city's unusual historical mix as a Western Reserve community, one-industry town, magnet for Appalachian resettlement, and center of Klan and Evangelical Christian activities further contributed to the special character of Akron's social environment. Finally, for the local Jewish community, Akron's geographical proximity to Cleveland provided opportunities for ready access to a major center of American Jewish communal life which were unavailable to many other small and middle-sized Jewish communities.

As the title suggests, the underlying concern of this particular Jewish community study revolves around the question of immigrant adjustment, namely, what important life choices were made over a century to permit a satisfactory adjustment to life in Akron. Significant choices obviously had to be made in many areas of life and had to be reassessed under new conditions and in different times. As the data accumulated, it seemed most amenable to an overriding topical organization (note chapter headings relating to religious, institutional, social, and interactional decisions). In turn, the topically defined chapters were chronologically subdivided based on a four-part periodization scheme

reflecting major identifiable shifts in both national and local historical circumstances (1865-1885; 1885-1929; 1929-1945; 1945-1975). Given these topical and chronological parameters, three basic adjustment scenarios seemed possible and open to investigation: total assimilation, complete self-containment, or some admixture of these two positions. It is a hypothesis of this study that the overall adjustment of Akron Jewry was characterized by the last mentioned option--"a little bit of each."

While this history is primarily a local study, the matter of relationships--to the American historical experience, to Jewish national and international events, to theories of immigration--is central to its intent. The question thus becomes the extent to which major external events and national adjustment patterns can be observed in Akron. Was Akron a special case, isolated and demonstrably unique, or did it reflect the apparent norm of the American immigrant and/or the American Jewish experience? Chapter I summarizes the external data and concepts to which the Akron Jewish experience can be related. Its detail and organization are such as to permit either background introductory reading or "flashback" points of reference for subsequent chapters dealing with directly parallel content on the local level. This framework also forms the basis for the main thesis of this study (elaborated in Chapter I), namely, that throughout its history the major forces of American and Jewish history did reach Akron and furthermore that, despite some exceptions, the local Jewish community consistently responded to these pressures with adjustment patterns typical of the American Jewish community as a whole (which in turn conformed to known theories of immi-

gration adjustment).

The more immediate external environment of the Akron Jewish community, of course, is the city of Akron itself and the first part of Chapter II describes that important context. By way of comparison, a demographic profile of the local Jewish community is included as well. Chapters III, IV, and V have an essentially parochial orientation, focusing on local Jews in a local Jewish context as they initiate and implement the structure and content of their religious, organizational, and social life. Chapter VI represents a shift in emphasis to a more interactional frame of reference as it probes Jewish-gentile contacts in the economic, civic, political, social, and religious arenas and raises the issue of the extent of local anti-semitism. The final chapter attempts to summarize and integrate the above material, proposing generalizations and speculations about Akron-Jewish adjustment which transcend specific topical and chronological headings, and suggesting possible implications of this study for American-Jewish immigration history.

I would like to end this beginning with an acknowledgment of those who got me this far. So many individuals from the Akron Jewish community, both in their official and private capacities, provided fascinating data and personal recollections. In this regard special thanks go to the staffs of the Akron Jewish Federation and the Akron Jewish Center. While all the individuals involved can not be named here, special thanks go to Gloria Reich, Nathan Pinsky, and Leslie Flaksman. The taped oral histories, written records, and hours of

personal time which they made available were invaluable. Expert assistance also came from Rabbis Morton Applebaum, Abraham Feffer, and Abraham Leibtag. I retain especially fond memories of my meetings with the Akron Jewish Center's Senior Citizen's group and my conversations with many individual members of the community.

Meanwhile, back on campus there was help of another kind. Probably *unknown* to them, Drs. August Meier and Lawrence Kaplan provided creative tension as I juggled their "messages" in my mind: "make it better" vs. "get it finished." Special thanks go to Dr. Henry Leonard who was involved in supervising the total project. The task of deciphering *my illegible handwriting* was creatively handled by Wilma Crawford.

There are also some special personal thank-yous. To Heidi and Lisa who had to share their mother with this undertaking and whose very presence helped keep things in perspective. And above all to Marv-- who listened, read, counseled, loved--and endured.

FOOTNOTES

¹Isidore S. Meyer, Introduction to From a Minyan to a Community: A History of the Jews of Syracuse, by B. G. Rudolph (Syracuse, N.Y., 1970), p. xxi.

²Lloyd P. Gartner, History of the Jews of Cleveland (Western Reserve Historical Society and Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978); Elaine S. Anderson, "The Jews of Toledo, 1845-1895" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toledo, 1974); reference to Columbus Jewish History Project in Mark L. Raphael, "The Utilization of Public Local and Federal Sources for Reconstructing American Jewish Local History: The Jews of Columbus, Ohio," American Jewish Historical Quarterly 65 (September 1975):10.

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL CONTEXTS AND THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The year of Appomattox was also the year that large-scale migration to America was renewed, the western canal town of Akron, Ohio, officially became a city, and a small group of Jewish immigrants signed the Constitution establishing the Akron Hebrew Association. Only a few years earlier, as German Jewish settlers were already peddling their way westward, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, newly settled in Ohio, compiled the first *American Jewish Reform* prayer book. These diverse [although then contemporary] events are suggestive of the first thing that needs to be said about the Akron Jewish community, namely, that it is part of several larger histories.

The narrative account of who settled here and how they adjusted over one hundred years occurred within the dual contexts of American and Jewish history. These two outer worlds, the American and the Jewish, at various times operating in harmony or in conflict, influenced the initial terms of community settlement, shaped its subsequent growth, and molded its economic, religious, and social development. Though personal and communal choices undoubtedly seemed locally determined to those experiencing them, in reality the Jewish community in Akron was seldom out of range of the major currents of American and Jewish events.

The second point to keep in mind about Akron Jewry is that as an immigrant community it is a case study in the sociology of cultural

integration. Thus, theories of acculturation and assimilation are essential to an understanding of why adjustment here took the specific form it did. Studies of immigrant integration patterns have spanned the academic disciplines and range from detailed inquiries of single sub-communities to comprehensive schema explaining the total American integration process. The data and theoretical conclusions of these works provide models for assessing the Akron Jewish experience. The following summary provides an overview of the historical contexts and theoretical concepts which underlie this study's narrative and interpretive efforts:

American Immigration

The small group of men who established the Akron Hebrew Association in 1865 did so without knowing they were participants in the greatest folk migration in human history. They would be equally surprised to find themselves regarded as the very essence of American history. And yet the dramatic role they were unaware of was indeed theirs. The dimensions of the European exodus in modern times are without parallel. Some thirty-five million people from every part of the continent came to the United States in less than a century and a half after the Napoleonic wars.¹ Motivated by a combination of "push" and "pull" factors on both sides of the Atlantic, the magnitude and diversity of this movement resulted in establishing America as the classic country of immigration. Historians have come to view American history as the story of how this influx of immigrants from many lands formed a new nation, or, as Oscar Handlin expressed it, "Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants

were American history."²

Equating the immigration experience with American history guarantees a highly complex narrative involving data from the Old World as well as the New.³ No single cause can adequately explain why millions left their homes although economic displacement was the most common precipitating factor. While millions of immigrants obviously did not share identical social positions, the peasant experience nurtured the largest number. No single formula describes their leave taking but overwhelmingly the experience was undertaken by individuals or family units acting alone, voluntarily, and without official subsidy. These general characteristics of the Great Migration--economically determined, socially rooted in the peasant class, and individually self-executed--not only establish the typical immigration experience but serve as reference points for assessing deviant migration patterns.

Histories of the nineteenth and early twentieth century mass migrations to this country frequently differentiate between the "old" and the "new" migration. The former mainly originated in northwest Europe while the latter originated in southern and eastern Europe. While there are misleading aspects of so dividing an essentially common social process, the periods which emerge do provide convenient frameworks for summarizing and comparing successive waves of immigration.

Some fifteen million immigrants entered the country between 1815 and the 1880s. True to the characteristic immigration patterns outlined above, these millions were primarily the products of socio-economic forces which included the doubling of Europe's population, the Industrial Revolution, and the advent of scientific farming. In addition

to these "push" factors, specific political and religious pressures prompted outward migration of such groups as the "48'ers" and the German Jews. The German pre-Civil War migration, of special interest to this study, reached its peak in the years between 1846-1855 with an overwhelming majority of these immigrants coming from such southern and western Germanic states as Baden and Bavaria. While some wealthy farmers, artisans, tradesmen, and professionals were included in this number, the small Christian farmer remained the typical German immigrant.

The patterns of settlement and adjustment of this first wave of mass migration were heavily influenced by economic conditions in America. The pre-Civil War years were a time of rapid national growth and development and the westward movement, entering its last great phase, provided new economic opportunities. Early Western "towns" in such states as Ohio (Akron is a case in point) were newly emerging as "cities." Land was available for those who could farm and peddlers' packs for those familiar with small trade. By 1860, the states which had attracted the largest number of foreigners were New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Focusing specifically on the Germans again, it is noteworthy that the majority located in the upper Mississippi and Ohio valleys. The heaviest concentration of foreigners even then was in the cities (e.g., almost one half of Cincinnati was foreign-born).

Decisions about location and work were the most pressing initial immigrant concerns but other major adjustments had to be made to a strange social and cultural environment. While interest in Old World issues remained, New World pressures tended to overshadow the old narrow parochial loyalties to particular towns and regions, giving rise

to larger ethnic identifications (i.e., Irish-American or German-American). Institutional reflections of these newly created identities emerged in the expanding immigrant press, the mutual aid societies, and the immigrant churches. While political involvement varied among the immigrant groups, as a whole they tended to be a conservative force in politics and leaned toward the party machines. That the terms of interaction between the society-at-large and the immigrant communities were at times difficult is underscored by the nativist sentiments in the Know-Nothing Movement of the 1850s. However, nativism was virtually suspended in the post-war years and it was not until the 1880s that even cursory efforts at immigration restriction were attempted.⁴

The fifteen million additional immigrants who entered the country between 1890 and 1914 marked the gradual but firm displacement of the "old" immigration by the "new." The changing ports of origin were related to the socio-economic forces which had slowly moved east and south across Europe. By the 1830s the Hapsburg Empire had experienced these forces and consequently lost many Poles, Jews, and Ruthenians. Similar economic conditions nurtured widespread departures from Italy's southern regions. The Russian story is more atypical in the importance of political and religious factors in stimulating the migration of such groups as the Russian Jews and the Mennonites.

Meanwhile, post-Civil War America saw the gradual close of the frontier and an even more rapidly expanding industrialization which meant that opportunities for labor existed in the manufacturing sector of the American economy. The newest immigrants filled this need and, characteristically, tended to concentrate along ethnic lines in specific

employment areas (e.g., Jews in the clothing industry). The intensely urban quality of this wave of settlement is evident in figures showing that five-sixths of the Russian immigrants (mainly Jewish) and three-quarters of the Italians and Hungarians lived in cities at a time when less than half of the native population was urban. In addition to being primarily urban, the new immigrants were geographically concentrated as well, most of them continuing to locate east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio River.

Immigration adjustment, then, in many ways was synonymous with adjustment to urban industrial life which typically meant the slum housing, sweat shops, and oppressive factories described by Jacob Riis in his classic How the Other Half Lives.⁵ The rise of the labor movement in response to such conditions enlisted immigrant support. While northwestern Europeans produced a disproportionately large share of union leadership and membership, such organizations as the International Ladies Garment Workers Union demonstrated that a union composed of Jews, Italians, and Poles could also be effective. Although the trade unions offered opportunities for cross-cultural socialization, most immigrants' social lives revolved around more parochial ethnic affiliations. Like their predecessors, the new immigrants established their own churches, schools, newspapers, and mutual aid societies. Continuing ethnic ties with the "old country" were reflected in public meetings of Russian Jews after the Kishinev massacres and the conflicting ethnic loyalties expressed in the national debate preceding United States entry into World War I. While the overwhelming majority of the immigrants were politically unattracted to such radical movements as socialism,

anarchism, and communism, these groups did draw considerable leadership and membership from the foreign-born.⁶ In contrast, the Granger Movement, Populism, and Progressivism failed to divert immigrant support from its more typical allegiance to the municipal bosses.

The 1880s saw a shift in the interaction patterns of immigrants and the greater society. Nativism erupted, nurtured by the socio-economic dislocation accompanying industrialization, the racial-supremacy ideology of the early twentieth century, and the hostilities and disillusionment generated by World War I.⁷ Covering a wide range of targets, nativism during the 1890s mobilized anti-Roman Catholic sentiment in the Mid-West, socio-economically based anti-semitism in the East, ideologically motivated anti-semitism in the South and West. The "Americanization" campaign of the World War I period incorporated the efforts of many anti-immigrant forces and not long thereafter the Ku Klux Klan achieved national prominence with strongholds throughout the South, Ohio, and Indiana and a membership estimated at five million by 1925. While the above programs were aimed at the foreign-born already here, the course of nativism is also evident in the increasingly restrictive immigration legislation aimed at those who might still wish to come. From the mid-1880s on, both the list of those to be excluded and the immigration head tax were periodically increased. A literacy test achieved legislative sanction in 1917, and a quota system based on nationality was introduced shortly thereafter. In 1929 when the National Origins Act became effective, the Great Migration was virtually ended.

The period from 1929 to 1945 confronted those who had been able to settle here with the extraordinary pressures of a society engulfed first by depression and then by war. The net impact of these upheavals for many immigrant groups was a weakening of ethnic and Old World ties. Lack of funds during hard times curtailed ethnic organizational operations at the very time that New Deal agencies offered alternative sources of help. Furthermore, new labor forces like the CIO brought together diverse and previously quarrelsome cultural groups, sharpening feelings of class distinctions over ethnic ones. For the most part the international situation did not unleash aggressive identification with particular fatherlands or, despite several notable exceptions, reproduce the widespread ethnic animosities which plagued the World War I period.

The immigration legislation of the twenties precluded any massive new immigration. The limited opportunities remaining, however, were desperately seized in the 1930s by some 250,000 refugees fleeing Hitler's Germany. In sharp contrast to earlier migrations, this was a highly organized and regulated movement consisting primarily of well-trained Jewish, middle-class, urban immigrants. Depression era measures restricting alien entry into the professions at first adversely affected the economic adjustment of these newest immigrants but World War II brought expanded opportunities in many areas, including the sciences and industry.

There were points of conflict between ethnic groups and the greater society in this time of internal and external crisis. For example, anti-semitism was more noticeable than previously.⁸ Between

the wars, second generation East European Jews pushing for entry into urban middle class life confronted social and economic barriers. This was the era of medical school quotas and "Christian only" want ads. The consequences of nativism-run-rampant, however, were most deplorably demonstrated by the Japanese-American experience of internment in World War II.

The immigration issue confronted American society again as a consequence of World War II's massive human displacement problems. The Displaced Persons Act, McCarran-Walter Act, Refugee Relief Act, etc. permitted varying levels of immigrant entry but essentially preserved the principle of restrictive immigration. These new immigrants, along with the more numerous offspring of earlier immigrants, faced a highly complex technological society in the post-war period. With large-scale middle class relocations from the inner cities to the suburbs, difficult new social situations were created both for the old neighborhoods and the new sprawling developments. While the younger generation and Black Americans were riding the rapids of social change and readjustment, the ethnic minorities experienced a calmer period of regrouping. Immigrant institutions continued to function but with increasing evidence of the impact of Americanization. The most visible friction between any sub-community and the greater community during these post-war years involved Black Americans. Many immigrant groups previously or even currently affected by restrictive measures, themselves became agents of restriction.⁹ The nativism which had been more specifically directed against immigrant groups in earlier periods was now less evident. This was also the case with anti-semitism which declined in all

its forms.¹⁰

This brief summary of nineteenth and twentieth century American immigration history identifies four historical periods (1815-1885, 1885-1929, 1929-1945, 1945-1975) that touched local communities everywhere with a complex profusion of people, events, and movements. It is also suggestive of those questions which are central to American immigration history: immigrant profiles (demographic characteristics and reasons for migration) and changing adjustment patterns (in economics, religion, institutional development, social choices, political orientation, and interaction with the greater community). Yet in itself the American context falls short of providing a complete frame of reference for the particular community in this study. Also essential is an overview of the Jewish context which consistently exerted its influence on Akron's Jews.

Jewish Immigration

The small group of men who established the Akron Hebrew Association in 1865 were part of what has since been identified as the "Age of the Rise and Dominance of German Jews and the Challenge to that Leadership."¹¹ In contrast to the Sephardic Jews who culturally if not numerically dominated American Jewry in the colonial-early Republic period and who traced their national origins back to the Iberian peninsula, these Ashkenazic Jews came either from western lands such as England and Southern Germany or from more eastern territories dominated by German influences. To a mere five thousand Jews in the United States in 1820, the next half century introduced between 200,000 and

400,000 new Jewish immigrants.¹² Using the more frequently accepted lower estimate, by 1880 this figure compares to a total U.S. population of fifty million or somewhat less than one-half of one percent.¹³

This German-Jewish wave of immigration had points of similarity and difference from the larger German immigration of which it was part. In the case of Bavarians, for example, economic hardship and military conscription were universally regarded as oppressive. For Jews, however, there was the added distress of special discriminatory taxes, occupational prohibitions, and marriage restrictions.¹⁴ While consequences of the 1830s trade slump undoubtedly permeated the whole of German society, it had special impact on the Jews who tended to be small traders, petty retailers, and artisans and who were scattered among the various towns in contrast to the German-Christian peasants who were settled on the land. Furthermore, when a peasant family sold its homestead it secured sufficient resources to transport the whole family to America. Jews had no comparable source of such liquid assets and so a typical feature of German-Jewish immigration was the "pulling after" of relatives.¹⁵ This involved a carefully worked out order of departure for family members, and resulted in extended family resettlement periods. That Jewish family ties were resumed can be illustrated by noting that almost 20 percent of the wholesale clothing firms in Cincinnati around 1860 were jointly owned by brothers, most of whom had German-Jewish names.¹⁶

Although German-Jewish immigration was especially noted for its "solo" and "pulling after" characteristics, variations which involved mass migrations of whole families and groups of families from single

locations were not unknown. Just such a planned Jewish migration left Unsleben, Bavaria, in 1839 to join a fellow landsmann in Ohio and subsequently established the Cleveland Jewish community (this would be the nearest neighboring Jewish community of substantial size and resources for the Akron Jewish community).¹⁷ There were also variations in the social standings of the immigrants. The distinction between the typical Jewish tradesman and his Christian peasant fellow-immigrant has already been mentioned. Both groups, however, were relatively poor and had limited educational backgrounds. The 1840s and 1850s introduced more affluent, professional, and intellectual Jews who, like their non-Jewish German counterparts, were fleeing an inhospitable political climate.¹⁸

For the most part, however, the new Jewish immigrants were small-scale tradesmen who lacked the substantial merchant connections which had characterized the earlier Sephardic-Jewish migration. A more natural role for them, one which an expanding America made possible, was that of the peddler. Commonly landing at such major commercial distribution points as New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, they could readily procure the necessary supplies.¹⁹ Peddling in hinterland towns or from farm to farm they soon accumulated sufficient surpluses to transform their packs into retail stores. Indeed, during this era, "there was a Jewish storekeeper in one decade or another, in almost every town and hamlet between the Alleghenies and the Rockies."²⁰ While the geographic spread of the early Jewish peddlers was wide and not heavily concentrated in the large seaboard cities, some favored settlement communities did emerge--for example, Cincinnati, which became

known as the "Jerusalem of the West."²¹ (Cincinnati in turn became a crucial focal point for the early Akron Jewish community.) In any event, it was small groups of German-Jewish peddlers who established most of the country's inland Jewish communities.

The ladder of economic adjustment, then, frequently stretched from backpack to horse and wagon, to small shop, to large store, to department store. The converse of this commercial orientation proved to be the virtual absence of Jews in labor, manufacturing, or agriculture.²² An 1890 demographic survey of the by then well settled German-Jewish population identified a fraction of 1 percent as laborers. Interestingly, only 1 percent were still connected with the same line of work so common to their initial economic adjustment--peddling.²³ The overall ascent of the German Jews into the upper reaches of the American middle class was rapid and spectacular. This upward socio-economic thrust, the most dramatic examples of which were classically described by Stephen Birmingham in his book Our Crowd, was not particularly distinguished by contributions to the arts, sciences, politics, or the professions, but rather was confined to the world of trade.²⁴

As the economic adjustment of German Jews developed independently of earlier Sephardic Jewish patterns, so too did their religious lives. Instead of fusion with the existing Sephardic tradition, the large influx transplanted their traditional Ashkenazic rituals. Meanwhile, a challenge to Orthodoxy itself, regardless of ritualistic distinctions, was gaining prominence in Germany. The appeal of this Reform Jewish movement to the German-Jewish immigrants here soon became widespread,

especially under the religious and intellectual tutelage of the "148'ers."²⁵ Once Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, the leading figure in American Reform Judaism, became established in Cincinnati, Ohio became the focal point of the Reform movement (with direct consequences for the Akron Jewish community). The controversial issues between American Orthodox and Reform Jews tended to center on religious procedures and forms of worship rather than theological questions (e.g., the language of the service, the role of the sermon, the wearing of religious garb, sexually mixed seating, etc.). The "creed" which accompanied these changes in religious practice stressed Mosaic law as an ethical code and discarded Jewish nationalistic identifications. By the post-Civil War period, German-Jewish society had accepted Reform Judaism, thereby forming the force that would dominate American Jewish religious life well into the twentieth century.

From this prominent position, Reform Judaism strongly supported ecumenicalism, and by the turn of the century annual meetings between Reform rabbis and Unitarian and Congregational leaders in liberal Congresses of Religion were a reality.²⁶ Meanwhile, cultural adaptations were strongly in evidence in Reform congregations. Thus, 8 percent of all Jewish congregations (at a time when the total number was substantially inflated by newly arriving Orthodox immigrants) indicated they had completely eliminated Hebrew from the service while another 22 percent reported use of both Hebrew and English.²⁷

German Reform Jewry not only set the tone of American Jewish religious life, it dominated its social and institutional life as well. Initially, German-Jewish social adjustment was complicated by the fact

that it was simultaneously part of and yet separate from the larger German migration. American society at first tended to regard the Jewish immigrants as primarily Germans, and there is evidence that the immigrants shared this self-image. Thus, they often joined German cultural and mutual benefit societies.²⁸ As soon as they reached sufficient numerical strength, however, they also established special Jewish institutions (e.g., the Jewish Hospital in Cincinnati, 1850, and the Cleveland Jewish Orphanage, 1868). In contrast to the European Kehillah or synagogue-centered model of communal control which had been favored by the Sephardic Jews in social and welfare activities, the German Jews separated such functions from the synagogue. As was the case with the new religious worship format, this diffusion of communal control was similar to the Protestant American pattern of decentralization. In any event, by 1860, German Jews had created the actual or prototypes of the major Jewish institutions which thereafter characterized Jewish life in America.²⁹

On the personal level, decisions regarding residential location, marriage and inter-marriage, and the extent of "passing" in the outer social world were important aspects of German-Jewish social adjustment. In the small towns where so many of them settled, German Jews rarely established ghetto neighborhoods and if they did, they separated as soon as their living standards permitted.³⁰ Inter-marriage rates, which had reached some 29 percent during the Sephardic era, were sharply reversed by the first generation of German Jews who reduced this figure to 5 percent for men and even less for women. By the second generation, however, this figure was up to 9 percent.³¹ While the actual percentage

of German Jews ceasing to openly affiliate with the Jewish community cannot be determined, it has been estimated as substantial.³²

The adjustment of German Jews to the outer community is an especially complex story because American society was ambivalent on the subject of the Jew. Positive economic and religious images permitted rising Jewish capitalists to enter exclusive neighborhoods and Jewish religious leaders to exchange pulpits with Christian clergy. Jews were active in such fraternal groups as the Masons, Knights of Pythias, and the Odd Fellows, and until the 1880s Jewish links with the German community remained intact.³³ Co-existing negative stereotypes, however, led to Populist accusations, urban-ethnic Jew-baiting, and blueblood exclusion from select resorts and clubs.³⁴ Whether it be regarded as one aspect of an emergent nativism in American life or a perpetuation of an international malaise, anti-semitism did create difficulties for German Jews in the Gilded Age.

The age of German-Jewish hegemony identified by historian Jacob Marcus, also included reference to a "Challenge to that Leadership." That challenge came from the East European Jews. While the presence of this group extends well back into the nineteenth century (the first Russian Orthodox synagogue in this country was established in 1852), its rise in influence was directly related to the floodtide of East European Jews who entered this country in the final decades of the century. In Jewish world history, this migration involved the greatest population shift since the Exodus.³⁵ In the nine years before World War I alone, one and one-quarter million Jews, or one-seventh of all those in Europe, left their homes and almost universally came to the United

States.³⁶ These figures were consequential for American history too. Jews comprised the second largest group of the pre-World War I mass migration. Between 1881 and 1920 immigration figures to this country totaled almost twenty-four million. Of this number, available estimates suggest that some two million or close to 9 percent can be credited to Jewish immigration.³⁷ In one peak year alone, 1906, over 150,000 Jewish immigrants arrived. Such an influx was sufficient to raise the proportional Jewish population in the United States from a fraction of 1 percent in 1877 to over 1 percent in 1897, 2 percent in 1907, and to over 3 percent by 1917.³⁸

It was the American-Jewish community, however, that experienced the greatest impact from the influx of two and one-half million Jews between 1870 and 1924. Of the Jews who had come to America since 1654, 90 to 95 percent arrived after 1880--the greatest such increase to an existing Jewish population that any country had ever known.³⁹ Within the single decade of 1880-1890, America's Jewish population almost doubled. Over the century of migration, the jump in population from three thousand in 1812 to three million in 1914 represented a thousand-fold increase.

The Old World "push" factors that unleashed this vast Jewish migration were similar--and different--from forces propelling the "new" immigration as a whole. Industrialization and changes on the land produced economic pressures in Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, and Rumania. As the Christian peasants were squeezed, the Jewish middleman's role was threatened; with the increase in manufacturing, his role as an independent artisan was jeopardized. Added to these economic woes

was the anti-semitic religious-cultural persecution which pervaded and periodically erupted in Eastern Europe during these years. The assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 instigated anti-Jewish riots in Russia and led to strictly enforced Jewish confinement in the geographic area bordering Germany, Austria, and Rumania, known as the Pale of Settlement. The May laws enacted the following year restricted Jewish worship, banned Jews from the professions, industry, and agriculture, kept them from public office, and denied them educational opportunities. At its most virulent, anti-semitism took the form of pogroms, such as those which occurred in 1881, 1891, 1899, 1903, and 1905.

These "push" factors were sufficiently strong to insure large Jewish majorities among the emigrants from Eastern Europe, especially in the years before 1890.⁴⁰ "Push," however, was not synonymous with "shove" and there is reason to believe that especially before 1917 an element of self-selection of immigrants was involved. Thus, the most pious and the well-established were probably under-represented in comparison to the nominally orthodox, poorer, and free-thinking elements of East European Jewry.⁴¹ Additional distinctive aspects of this particular wave of Jewish immigration were its single focus (limited to the United States), its permanence (no reemigration was planned or desired), and its extensive family (contrasted to individual) orientation.

The widespread geographic distribution which had characterized the earlier German-Jewish settlement was less feasible now given the large number of immigrants involved, the close of the frontier, and the

level of American industrialization. In 1900, 57 percent of American Jewry was located in the northeast section of the country as compared with 28 percent of the total population.⁴² This trend merely intensified in the following decades so that by 1927, 68 percent of American Jewry was located here (total population percentages remained stable). The economic opportunities in the cities and the comforts inherent in Yiddish-speaking enclaves guaranteed that Jewish settlement would be urban as well as geographically concentrated. This is evident in comparative figures for 1916 which indicated that only 9 percent of Jews lived outside principle cities of 25,000 and over, as contrasted with 44 percent of Episcopalians and Roman Catholics, and 64 percent for all denominations.⁴³ Within the cities, Jews congregated in areas of primary settlement, such as New York's lower east side. An oft-repeated housing pattern involved rapid movement from these initial slum dwellings to apartments or two-family homes, followed soon thereafter by moves to ever more expensive apartments or single family dwellings.

The bottom rung of the economic ladder for the new Jewish immigrant was less likely to be the peddling of a half century earlier. The contemporary version was the pushcart owner who hawked his wares on city streets to other newcomers still uncomfortable with mainstream American merchandising. Given good times, the pushcart could lead to petty retailing and more extensive commercial enterprises. Retailing was probably the most satisfactory economic adjustment for this first generation (grocers, dealers in dry goods, clothing, jewelry, junk, etc.) and was especially characteristic of midwestern settlements.⁴⁴ In the largest centers of new Jewish settlement, however, it was the

garment worker who was the real equivalent of the German-Jewish peddler. Figures vary but it has been estimated that as many as 60 percent of the Russian Jews were employed in this industry in 1900.⁴⁵ Thus, for the first time an extensive American-Jewish urban proletariat emerged. Of short duration, this proletarian phase (which was not typical for the 35 percent of America's Jews outside the largest cities) consisted of immigrants who were neither the descendants of generations of laborers nor the likely parents of future workers. The majority left this class as soon as the family accumulated sufficient capital and moved into the world of shopkeepers and businessmen. Jews were also employed in such areas as the printing trades, amusements, house painting, and sales. They were not actively engaged in agriculture, mining, or heavy manufacturing.⁴⁶

Just as the religious adjustment of the German Jews did not produce *fusion* with Sephardic tradition, so the East European Orthodox Jews did not blend into the Reform mold. Separate statistics on these diverse groups were collected for the first and only time in the 1890 census.⁴⁷ The Orthodox accounted for 59 percent of all recorded congregations; the Reform for 41 percent. Total reported memberships, however, put the Reform movement ahead with 55 percent. In any event, the value of Reform buildings was two and a half times greater than that of the Orthodox. For example, in Ohio that year, there were thirteen Reform congregation buildings and four halls while the Orthodox had six buildings and eleven halls. Periodic religious census reports confirm the new immigrants' role in the expansion of national Jewish congregational life: 189 congregations in 1870; 533 in 1890; 1,769 in 1906, and

3,118 in 1926.⁴⁸ The organizing principle of these new congregations typically centered on specific Old World regional loyalties.

While the initial degree of piety and religious sophistication of the newcomers is debatable, they were sufficiently familiar with the Orthodox mode to view the function of a rabbi as teacher, scholar, and judge rather than as the counterpart of a minister.⁴⁹ They also knew the Kehillah model of centralized synagogue communal control. The pull of Americanization was soon evident, however. For example, by the 1890s such terms as "petition, meetink [sic], President, members, appointed committee," entered the Yiddish minutes of a congregation not long removed from a far less democratic experience in Eastern Europe.⁵⁰ Authoritarian leadership of the congregation was replaced by a president and popularly elected board; the idea of separation of church and state was adopted; the rabbi's role changed; public schools were supported while religious instruction--newly open to girls--was confined to after-school hours. (In 1917, with a Jewish population of over three million, there were only five Jewish day schools. After-school programs in Talmud Torahs and Sunday schools provided distinctive modes of religious training for Orthodox and Reform children respectively.)⁵¹

For many immigrants, religious adjustment meant the decline of the synagogue as the center of Jewish group life and the secularization of religion. There was an ambiguity to this adjustment, however, which enabled Jewish workers to read an anti-religious Yiddish paper, join a Socialist union, vote the Socialist ticket, and simultaneously attend the synagogue and observe Jewish law.⁵²

The social adjustment of the East European Jews replicated their religious adjustment in its essential separateness from German-Jewish society. The barriers between the two groups were real: Yiddish-speaking rather than German; Orthodox instead of Reform; related to Judaism as a communal folk identity rather than a religious affiliation; sympathetic to Zionism rather than uncommitted; poor and visibly foreign rather than comfortable and Americanized; including substantial numbers of political radicals and non-believers instead of adherents to the political and religious establishment.

Social distance existed not only between East European Jews and German Jews but among the new Jewish immigrants themselves. Thus, Hungarian Jews were noted for their slow rate of integration into any larger Jewish community.⁵³ Jews from Galicia, Rumania, and the Russian Pale of Settlement perpetuated their ethnic differences in residential clusters within the larger Jewish settlement areas. These diverse origins originally produced a conglomeration of ethnic organizations. Furthermore, Yiddish-speaking ranks were split between the Orthodox and freethinker, between Zionist and Jewish nationalist.

Despite these internal divisions an East European Jewish community emerged which can be dealt with as an entity and which was recognizably different in kind from the German-Jewish community. The new immigrants frequently drifted from the existing German-Jewish welfare and educational services and developed their own fraternal groups and cultural projects.⁵⁴ An influential role was assumed by the various workmen's groups which were similar to city-of-origin and fraternal lodges but which also provided occupational aid and counseling. The

most important of these was the essentially Socialist Arbeiter Ring (Workmen's Circle), established in 1905, which published its own Yiddish literature, offered a variety of social welfare and cultural programs, and established a Yiddish school system.⁵⁵ A similar group called Farband (Jewish National Workers Alliance) differed from Workmen's Circle primarily in its Zionist-centered ideology.

Some institutions like the free loan societies and shelter houses for transients were successfully transplanted from the immigrants' European experience.⁵⁶ Others which first became popular here were the local settlement houses, synagogue centers, and, especially during the 1920s, the Jewish Centers. National organizations like the American Jewish Congress gained East European support and paralleled German-Jewish efforts in the American Jewish Committee.

This proliferation of organizations and institutions solidified group loyalties and undoubtedly played a role in the preservation of in-group marriage practices. Observed even more rigorously than by the German Jews before them, the commitment to Jewish marriage produced an inter-marriage rate of only slightly over 1 percent in New York City between 1908 and 1912, the lowest such figure for any white group in the city.⁵⁷ On the national level the inter-marriage rate was estimated at 2 percent between 1900-1920 and 3 percent between 1921-1930.⁵⁸

Marcus Hansen's theoretical model of the politically conservative immigrant poorly fits the immigrant Jew who voted for Theodore Roosevelt, applauded Samuel Gompers, and read the Socialist Yiddish Forward. Indeed, in 1912 the Socialist ticket for Congressman in New York City drew more Jewish support than the Republican party.⁵⁹ Over

the first three decades of the twentieth century, however, such support of leftist parties was a minority Jewish voting pattern. The majority divided their vote between Democrats and Republicans, favoring the latter in every presidential election from 1900 to 1928 (with the possible exception of 1900 and 1916) because of anti-Irish sentiments, personal support of Teddy Roosevelt, and political advice from the established Jewish community.⁶⁰ Denied political expression in Europe, East European Jews responded to their altered political situation by embracing the vote as an article of faith.⁶¹ But while they exercised the privilege of the ballot and indeed did so more unorthodoxly than other immigrant groups, they never became as involved in the political arena as they did, for example, in the labor movement.

For the new immigrants, adjustment to the outer community in the first instance meant interaction with German-Jewish society. As suggested above, it was a relationship full of difficulties on both sides. For established, middle-class Americanized German-Jews, the poor, pious, or radical newcomers seemed a threat to their own recently achieved social status. Such complaints were openly voiced at conventions of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and B'nai B'rith in the 1890s as it quickly became apparent that the general public actually made little distinction between kinds of Jews.⁶² Furthermore, intimate relationships between old and new immigrants were not easily established given their very real economic, religious, social, and cultural differences. On the other hand, Jewish ethics and loyalties stressed responsibility and charity, and self-interest suggested that the quicker the new immigrants adjusted the better for all American

Jewry. Channeling these values into action, local Jewish Federations (introduced in the 1890s) and Jewish Welfare Funds (by the 1920s) met immediate needs and gradually became an institutional meeting ground for reconciliation and jointly planned social action.

From the East European perspective, Orthodox Jews viewed Reform Jews as scarcely different from gentiles; radicals regarded them as hypocritical bourgeoisie and both Orthodox and radicals found them lacking a communal view of folk Judaism, and deficient in fraternal and egalitarian sentiments. This period, then, especially before World War I, was marked throughout the United States by intra-Jewish divisions in the areas of work, play, study, prayer, and loyalties.

Vis-a-vis the greater American society, Jews, as noted above, already constituted a prominent ethnic target by the 1880s and 1890s. Soon after the turn of the century, children of the new immigrants began to enter into competition for white collar and professional jobs. They met with direct discrimination.⁶³ Ads specifically excluded Jews and access to the professions was arbitrarily or informally limited. Overt anti-semitism was evident in the notorious Frank case in 1915. The early 1920s were marked by intensified anti-semitism as expressed in Ford's Dearborn Independent. While the Klan, which reached its peak in 1923, focused more directly on other groups, it included Jews in its shopping list of undesirables. Ultimately of the greatest significance to American Jewry was the immigration restriction legislation of the 1920s which directly applied to East European Jewry. Organized Jewish efforts to counteract such threats were attempted by agencies such as the American Jewish Committee (1906), the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

(1913), and the American Jewish Congress (1917).

The period Jacob Marcus labeled the "Rise of the East European Jew and his Bid for Hegemony" was for all practical purposes closed by the late 1920s. In years marked by Depression and War, American Jewry gradually emerged as a unified and Americanized second and third generation immigrant community.⁶⁴ The population of this community was estimated at 4,100,000 in 1926 and 4,600,000 a decade later. At this point Jews had reached their highest numerical proportion to the total population, namely 3.7 percent.⁶⁵ Their geographical distribution continued to be heavily urban (96 percent) and significantly centered in the Northeast. A significant change in demographic profile, however, was achieved by 1940 when, for the first time, the majority of American Jews was born in the United States.

There was one exception to the rule of suspended Jewish immigration. As noted in the previous section, a quarter of a million German Jews were among the few to escape the Holocaust, the most traumatic and destructive episode in Jewish world history. Pushed to emigrate by persecution, they typically arrived as entire families in contrast to nineteenth century German-Jewish immigrants, with whom, incidentally, they rarely integrated.⁶⁶ They did repeat the earlier German group's settlement pattern, however, in their fairly widespread geographic dispersal (which was assisted by many voluntary agencies). In their efforts to relate to the dominant Jewish group some of these immigrants even learned Yiddish, and their younger generation frequently married East European Jews.⁶⁷ Still, much as the earlier immigrants before

them had done, these Jews often established their own synagogues and selected intimate social contacts from among their own group.

The main thrust of the Jewish adjustment story of these years, however, belongs to second and third generation East Europeans. Economically, this adjustment was undeniably one of rapid upward mobility. For the majority of Jews this meant increasingly more profitable self-employment in the distribution of goods and services with a substantial reduction in the proportion of manual workers.⁶⁸ Simultaneously, the move into the professional classes increased. (Figures available for one large city during the 1930s indicate that twenty-seven of every thousand employed Jews were in the legal or medical professions compared to four of every thousand non-Jews.)⁶⁹ Certain industries, such as banking, finance, utilities, and transportation, still remained virtually closed to Jews.⁷⁰ Considered in larger occupation categories, however, Jewish economic distribution by the 1940s was similar to that of high status Protestant denominations.⁷¹

Religious adjustment in these years included an increase both in the number and percentages of congregations which had their own buildings.⁷² Growth in numbers was accompanied by changing affiliations and altered religious practices. By 1930, East European Jews formed half of the Reform membership. This "new blood" enabled the Reform movement to maintain its quantitative strength. It also produced qualitative changes as the new members exerted their influence to restore a more traditional tone to the service and to promote Zionism.⁷³ While Reform moved to a more traditional position, a new movement emerged which was more liberal than conventional Orthodoxy. This move-

ment, Conservative Judaism, became the main mode of religious adjustment for East European Jews. Established relatively early in the twentieth century with the support of Reform Jews, the movement came under the exclusive control and direction of East Europeans by the 1940s and then moved into its most dynamic growth period.

While the increasing numbers of congregations and the birth of a new religious movement would seem to suggest a period of extensive piety, such was not the case. Although the religious adjustment of the second generation did not mean wholesale rejection of religious identification, it did include elimination of many traditional religious practices and a widespread spirit of "irreligion" that persisted until World War II.⁷⁴ Reliance on the secular was also evident in the Jewish Community Councils which emerged in this period. Attempting to give a single voice to local Jewish communities, in effect they tried to reconstruct an equivalent of the East European Kehillah without its central religious component.

The social adjustment of American Jews in this period was characterized by the blurring of internal ethnic distinctions and a heavy emphasis on becoming "American." Internal fusion was promoted by economic, social, and cultural leveling and intra-marriage. Gradually, English replaced assorted East European Yiddish dialects and children of such intra-marriages failed to acquire the necessary geographic awareness or loyalties to maintain Old World subcultural distinctions.⁷⁵ German-East European tensions were also eased with the improving economic and social status of the newer immigrants.

The desire to become a "real American" in contrast to a "green-horn" led the second generation away from traditional ghetto values and toward a middle class American lifestyle.⁷⁶ This impulse, however, did not eliminate Jewish residential clustering which, especially in the major centers of Jewish settlement, remained the typical adjustment pattern regardless of economic class or immigrant generation. Areas of first settlement were vacated and between 1920 and 1940 second settlement neighborhoods contained the greatest number of American Jews. Jewish families during this period were smaller and less likely to break apart or contain alcoholic members than those of the gentile community.⁷⁷ Inter-marriage was now estimated as higher than in the preceding period, ranging from 5 to 9 percent with higher levels prevailing in areas of low Jewish concentration.⁷⁸ The overwhelming number of marriages, however, remained confined to the in-group. Similarly, friendship patterns for the second generation were still almost exclusively based on shared Jewish backgrounds.⁷⁹

Jewish communal and social welfare institutions were probably less affected by the impulse toward Americanization than by the harsh realities of the Depression. Institutions recently financed by mortgages were in precarious positions. Jewish agencies could no longer meet the needs of dependent Jewish families. By 1934, well over 70 percent of such families were on public relief, reversing the longstanding Jewish social rule of total in-group responsibility.⁸⁰

The typically liberal orientation of the Jewish vote continued in full force during this period. Thus, the Jewish vote strongly supported New Deal policies and shifted to the Democratic party. As

the approaching Holocaust sent out preliminary shock waves in the thirties followed by the acute disasters of the war itself, strong Jewish commitment to internationalism and interventionism intensified, giving additional impetus to this political shift. National surveys showed that more than 90 percent of the Jewish vote was in the Democratic column in 1940 and 1944.⁸¹ Such support was unique as it represented the only group whose political position and party vote did not correlate with income, occupational prestige, or educational level.⁸²

Relationships between the greater American community and the Jewish community were far from trouble-free during this era. Anti-semitism became the "classic prejudice" in the 1930s and early 1940s.⁸³ This was reflected in the Shylock stereotyping admitted to by virtually half of the respondents in a 1938 survey who described Jewish businessmen as less honest than others. As late as 1944, 24 percent of respondents in one poll regarded Jews as "a menace to America."⁸⁴ Translated into behavior patterns, such attitudes resulted in restrictive hiring patterns and formal and informal quota systems in higher level jobs and in the professions. The Depression undoubtedly contributed to the acute employment exclusion practices directed against Jews. Exclusion extended into the housing field as well with voluntary covenants effectively restricting whole areas of many cities.

Demagogues with anti-semitic messages exacerbated existing prejudices throughout the thirties. Gerald L. K. Smith, Gerald Winrod, and Father Coughlin were the most notorious of these spokesmen. The German-American Bund popularized Nazi hatreds and between 1933 and 1939 scores of organizations attracted those who shared anti-semitic views.⁸⁵

Even public figures such as Congressmen Thorkleson and Rankin could be found blaming Jewish influences for American preoccupation with the War.⁸⁶ Another measure of the prevailing level of Jewish interaction in the society is suggested by the finding in one midwestern community that 55 percent of the local organizations had no Jewish members.⁸⁷ Established Jewish organizations such as B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League and newer movements such as the Jewish Community Councils attempted to deal with this period's anti-semitism. Meanwhile, although primary levels of social interaction were limited, Jewish participation in civic activities such as local community chests and war chests was strongly evident during these years.

In the years following World War II, American Jewry emerged as the world's foremost center of Jewish life. It now constituted the largest numerical concentration of Jews with about half of the total world population (in contrast to 1 percent in 1850, 10 percent in 1900, and 28 percent in 1933).⁸⁸ Relative to the United States, however, although Judaism was recognized as one of the three major religions in the United States, less than 3 percent of the total population were so identified by 1970 and this figure itself was vulnerable to further decline due to a low birthrate and intermarriage. The first comprehensive national sample study of Jewish population thus estimated 5,370,000 Jews lived in Jewish households in 1970.⁸⁹ The 3 percent Jewish population level was of course variable depending upon the size and location of particular communities. Jews comprised less than 1 percent of the total population in most cities of under 50,000 inhabitants. They typically made up between 2 and 5 percent of medium-sized cities with

populations of 100,000 to 500,000.⁹⁰ Most Jews continued to live in large urban centers (96 percent were located in urban areas compared to 64 percent for the total population). Indeed, the thirteen largest communities accounted for 75 percent of the total Jewish population.⁹¹

The regional distribution of American Jews underwent some changes during this period. Although almost two-thirds still resided in the East by the early sixties and seventies, this represented a decline from the previous period.⁹² The proportion of Jews in the central area also declined as the Jewish population in the West gradually expanded. The extent of personal relocation involved in this geographical mobility is indicated by the fact that in 1970-71, almost 10 percent of Jewish adults lived in a state other than the one they claimed just five years earlier. Meanwhile, Jews were not only crossing state lines, they were also moving to the outlying parts of their respective cities and to suburban areas.⁹³

New Jewish immigration to the United States after the war was a virtual trickle as most of the Jewish D.P.'s went to Israel. Only some 80,000 were admitted to this country under the Displaced Persons Act.⁹⁴ These camp survivors were primarily East Europeans and included Yiddishists, Bundists, and such visibly Orthodox sectarians as the Hassidic Jews. There was also a small influx of Jews from Israel. That American Jewry no longer benefited from massive immigration infusion is evident in the mere 39,000 Jews who made up the total number of Jewish immigrants in one sample four-year period in the sixties.⁹⁵

For the Jewish community as a whole the economic picture continued to be favorable. Surveys between 1948 and 1953 show the propor-

tion of Jews in non-manual positions ranging from 75 to 96 percent of all Jews employed (the figures were even higher in small communities).⁹⁶ In most cities, the post-war period produced proportionally two times as many Jews in the professions as the population at large. Considered vertically in terms of generational change, Jews had increased their proportion of professionals by close to 400 percent in a single generation.⁹⁷ This shift also reflected changing educational patterns. By 1971, 73 percent of Jewish males age 25-29 were college graduates.⁹⁸ Despite the increasing number of Jews in the occupational and technical fields, the most typical economic adjustment pattern for third generation Jews still involved managerial or proprietary positions in commercial enterprise. In many cities such economic roles were proportionally three or four times as great as could be found in the population at large.⁹⁹

While Jews thus participated in a wide variety of economic fields, their role continued to be limited in major locally owned industries, in many local law firms, and in local centers of banking and finance. Jews were also still rarely found at the executive level in the utilities, transportation, or communication industries.¹⁰⁰ The low rate of Jews in blue-collar jobs limited their role in local union circles as well.¹⁰¹

The major consequence of heavy Jewish involvement in the two occupational groupings of proprietor-manager and professional-semiprofessional was a predominantly middle to upper middle class community. Thus, by 1970, when the medium income of all families in the United States was \$10,480, the median income of all Jewish households was

\$12,630.¹⁰² Clearly, the third generation improved upon the economic situation of their fathers and in the main found being Jewish no longer an economic handicap.

The story of post-war Jewish religious adjustment is more complex. On the one hand, there was a clear decline in some traditionally important ritual observances. Thus, one community study showed that while 53 percent of the first-generation immigrants observed certain important dietary rules, only 25 percent of the second generation did so, and this figure was further reduced to 16 percent for the third generation.¹⁰³ On the other hand, some aspects of religiosity remained constant or were even strengthened. For example, both the local Providence study and the National Population study show levels above 74 percent in the observance of Passover and Chanukah with little differentiation based on age or immigrant generation. Indeed, the years between 1945 and 1956 have been identified as a period of Jewish Revival.¹⁰⁴ One source claimed that by the late 1950s some two-thirds of the Jewish population were congregationally affiliated, thereby reversing the situation which had found the majority of American Jews outside the synagogue.¹⁰⁵

Expansion of Jewish institutional building facilities matched the upsurge in congregational memberships. Between 1937 and 1956 over one hundred new Reform synagogues were erected while Conservative synagogues doubled in number.¹⁰⁶ In contrast to many of the earlier facilities, these new structures were planned with more elaborate facilities for social, educational, and recreational functions. Whatever may have spurred its growth, the religious revival reached its

plateau by the late 1950's and by the early 1960s only the Orthodox day schools remained in a stage of major growth and development. The National Jewish Population study of the early seventies substantially lowered the average congregational membership estimate to about 50 percent. Interestingly, the smaller Jewish communities recorded the highest level--as much as 87 percent--of synagogue affiliations. Intermediate cities numbering ten to twenty-five thousand Jews had somewhat lower affiliation figures while New York City had the lowest affiliation rate.¹⁰⁷

The most striking demographic change influencing the social adjustment of post-war American Jewry was the reduction in the percentage of the foreign-born. Although as a group Jews were still relatively "new" Americans, the comfort and familiarity of third and even fourth-generation immigrants with American culture was fairly comprehensive. For all practical purposes, then, this period completed the transition from a foreign-born ethnic immigrant sub-society to a native and increasingly homogeneous American-Jewish community. Despite this cultural comfort with things American and active participation in the geographical and social mobility of American life, the desire for Jewish community and traditional values remained. Thus, there is evidence that long distance moves included a search for Jewish residential areas in the new location.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, while the move to suburbia meant increased inter-group mixing, certain urban and suburban areas continued to reflect considerably higher than random Jewish concentration.

Traditional Jewish social values stressing marriage and family life remained important. The 1957 census data confirmed that Jews were more likely to marry and to keep their marriages intact than the population at large.¹⁰⁹ Despite social pressures and communal match-making efforts, however, intermarriage increased significantly and for the first time became a widespread topic of discussion in the Jewish community. The data on intermarriage vary depending on the size, location, age, and social cohesiveness of individual communities. Thus, figures range from a 7 percent national intermarriage rate to the 49 percent reported in a local Indiana study.¹¹⁰

The established Jewish family continued to shrink in size and increasingly assumed the form of the nuclear family. Thus, comparative fertility studies of the 1950s and 1960s showed that Jews had the smallest families of any ethnic group. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents in one middle-sized Jewish community study lived in nuclear families, an increase of 12 percent between first and third-generation immigrants. As the nuclear family increasingly became the typical family adjustment pattern, additional provisions were necessary for the aged. This is reflected in the 215 percent increase in spending for aged care agencies between 1945 and 1956.¹¹¹ In comparing the age structures of the Jewish and general populations it becomes clear that the Jewish population is older. Thus, in 1957 the median Jewish age was 36.7 years compared to 30.6 years for the non-Jewish population.¹¹² In the 1970 National Study the largest proportion of household heads (42 percent) fell in the age span between forty and fifty-nine years. Twenty-two percent of Jewish households were headed by individuals

sixty-five and over.¹¹³

One of the most characteristic social adjustment patterns of the American-Jewish community and one which survived generational change was intra-group primary association. Jews continued to seek out other Jews as friends and this was so independent of location, income level, religious involvement, or immigrant generation.¹¹⁴ As Lenski showed, ties binding Jews to each other in a social sense were considerably stronger than similar ties for Protestants or Catholics.¹¹⁵ Similarly, Jews continued to prefer Jewish sponsorship of programs for the aged, family service, etc.¹¹⁶ Jewish organizational affiliation was another social adjustment pattern which remained intact. By 1970 there were over two hundred listings of national Jewish organizations including groups functioning since 1873 and those initiated in 1970.¹¹⁷ Estimates of Jewish membership in such groups ranged from 35 percent belonging to at least one communal organization (excluding synagogue clubs and community centers) to conclusions that the average Jew belonged to three Jewish organizations.¹¹⁸ Finally, special mention must be made of the continuing widespread support for probably the over-arching institution in Jewish life throughout this period--Jewish philanthropy. Thus, in 1948 over 1,300,000 contributed to federation and welfare funds, giving \$209,000,000 exclusive of building and capital fund drives.¹¹⁹ Eventually, even this record of giving would be surpassed. Much of this money was destined for Israel as the adjustment of the Jewish community increasingly involved intimate connections with the new Jewish state. This involvement was expressed not only through financial contributions and investments but via active political support,

tourism, and emigration.

The problem of Jewish refugees in post-war Europe and the state of Israel insured a continuing Jewish political commitment to internationalism. Jewish support for the United Nations, Point Four aid, liberal immigration policies, and World government plans exceeded such support in the gentile community.¹²⁰ Jews also remained in the liberal fold in domestic politics. They were stronger supporters of FEPC than non-Jews, more hostile to McCarthy, and actively promoted civil rights causes in the fifties and sixties.¹²¹ Despite such strong political stands the Jewish presence in public life remained limited compared to other ethnic groups such as the Irish. In 1948, of communities with populations of 50,000 to 100,000, only 15 percent had as many as two Jews in elected office and two-thirds had none. The larger the community and the higher the proportion of Jews, the more likely it was that they would be found in political office. Jewish participation was most evident in appointed political positions, commonly in the form of appointments of lawyers to such positions as assistant district attorney, Civil Service commissioner, or housing commissioner.¹²²

The Jewish community's relations with the greater American community improved greatly during the post-war period. Overt anti-semitism in all its forms declined. For example, the derogatory 1930s stereotyping of Jewish businessmen described above was reduced by some 40 percent by 1962.¹²³ Jewish participation in general civic causes and community service activities was common in a majority of communities regardless of size. It has been estimated that half of America's Jews belonged to at least one non-Jewish organization, most typically business

and professional groups.¹²⁴

Participation and leadership roles in non-Jewish activities were not synonymous, however, with inclusion in gentile cliques or elite social gatherings. Indeed, there is evidence that this level of social acceptance did not occur. Thus, communities which scored high on Jewish participation in community affairs scored low on indices of social acceptability of Jews.¹²⁵ The larger the city and the larger the proportion of Jews, the more likely Jews were to be excluded from socially elite organizations. Organizations most likely to be exclusive were Junior Leagues, leading city clubs, and country clubs.¹²⁶ Some Jews were more likely to have mixed social contacts than others, namely, young adult, native born, Reform Jewish males. The remaining social insulation of much of the Jewish community resulted in "ambassadors" to the greater community. Such Jews, who regularly served on social agency boards or assumed leadership in mixed organizations, frequently saw their role as being representative of the total Jewish group. It was not only seen as in the individual Jew's self interest to gain the respect of Christian neighbors but rather as necessary for generally improved relations between Jew and gentile.¹²⁷

Theories of Immigrant Adjustment

Much as the larger historical context provides a framework for a narrative history of Akron Jewry, theories of immigrant integration offer potential models for interpreting the community's adjustment patterns. Three sharply contrasting views have achieved sufficiently long-term and widespread adherence to qualify as the classic theoretical

positions on American acculturation.¹²⁸ Gaining a measure of support as early as colonial times, the theory of anglo-conformity assumes the existence of a dominant core culture, essentially WASP in character, into which other cultural identities are (and ought to be) absorbed. The implications of such a view are inherent in the slogan, "If they don't like it here, they can go back where they came from."¹²⁹

A more popular theory subscribed to the idea of a "melting pot." This theme was identified in Crèvecoeur's classic eighteenth-century reference to a new American race, reiterated in the nineteenth century by such figures as Emerson and Frederick Jackson Turner and dramatized in the early twentieth century by Israel Zangwell's play of the same name. Proponents of this view envisaged America as a gigantic crucible wherein all cultural groups are melted down and blended into a new identity. Rejecting the image of a boiling pot emitting a new brew, the theory of cultural pluralism proposed instead the metaphors of a patchwork quilt or an orchestra of ethnic groupings. Definitively formulated by philosopher Horace Kallen in 1915, this concept projects a federated commonwealth of multiple nationalities who will retain their native speech and aesthetic and intellectual forms for use in their respective enclaves.

Despite their differences, these theories all focus on American society as a whole and how various groups do (or should) fit into it. In The Uprooted Oscar Handlin redirected this preoccupation with society's role in the absorption process to a concern with the impact of adjustment on the individual immigrant. As the title of the book implies, he viewed the process as a tale of alienation, loneliness, and

confusion of roles, with few social forms and values surviving the trans-atlantic crossing. The estrangement of the second generation as they stepped onto the ladder of social mobility was yet another wrenching blow in the saga of the immigrant. Focusing on the same concerns but reaching different conclusions, Rudolph Vecoli reported a high degree of immigrant success in transplanting European values and institutions to urban strongholds and observed the impressive durability of kinship ties.¹³⁰ He substituted "sheltered" for "alienated" as the more descriptive term of the adjustment process and stressed the indestructibility of cultural heritage rather than its susceptibility to a hostile environment.

While Handlin and Vecoli emphasized a different aspect of the adjustment process, others more directly challenged and revised the classical theories of adjustment. Based on findings that religious barriers did not succumb to cultural blending, one such revision converted the concept of a single American melting pot into the triple melting pot theory.¹³¹ The best known exponent of this theory was the religious philosopher Will Herberg. He contended that religion had replaced ethnicity as the major source of identity and social grouping in mass society.¹³² Such religious plurality was seen as part of the "American way" which defined social normality in terms of association with one of the three legitimately acknowledged faiths: Protestant, Catholic, Jew.

Writing almost a decade after Herberg, Glazer and Moynihan could only project as possible future developments what Herberg claimed already existed. They concluded that as of the early 1960s, neither the

melting pot nor the triple melting pot had happened, at least in New York City.¹³³ Instead, they found ethnic groupings as the major determinants of character, status, and values. While distinctive cultural expressions such as Old World languages were essentially lost by the second and third generation, the various ethnic groups were continually being recreated in response to the special impact of newly emerging national and international events (e.g., Israel and the American-Jewish community).¹³⁴ A major criticism of this view holds that the groupings Glazer and Moynihan identified are a phenomenon of class rather than ethnic experience.¹³⁵ From this perspective, ethnic distinctions are really manifestations of relative class position and the overriding characteristic of the immigrant experience is economic deprivation.

There is still another theory--the *primary model* for this study--which attempts to synthesize some of the seemingly irreconcilable elements in the above views. Milton Gordon has taken the respective claims of religion, ethnicity, and class as the basic determiner of social identity and combined them into a new construct which he calls the "ethclass." This is defined as "the subsociety created by the intersection of the vertical stratifications of ethnicity with the horizontal stratifications of social class Thus a person might be upper-middle class white Protestant, or lower-middle class white Irish Catholic. . . ." ¹³⁶ For Gordon the ethclass exists as the basic functioning unit of social activity and social differentiation, providing an identity which is widely understood by the total community.

Gordon also rejects the notion that such theories as the melting pot and cultural pluralism are mutually exclusive. Assimilation both

did and did not occur, depending on the form being discussed. Gordon distinguishes between two types: behavioral assimilation and structural assimilation. The former refers to the absorption of cultural behavioral patterns of the host society and is most typically evident in language and dress and inclusion in general civic activities such as work and political participation. Interactions on this level commonly lead to so-called secondary relationships which are relatively impersonal. Gordon assigns the term "acculturation" to this stage of assimilation. He concludes that for all groups beyond the first generation of immigrants, behavioral assimilation or acculturation has been "massive and decisive."¹³⁷ On the other hand, structural assimilation has been minimal. This refers to the large-scale entrance of immigrants and their descendants into the cliques, institutions, and clubs of the host society of the primary group level (characterized by warm personal friendships and family ties, joint worship, and intimate recreational activities). The only place where structural assimilation is observable, and here Gordon agrees with Herberg, is in mergers within religious groups such as that among the Sephardic, German, and East European Jews. For the most part, however, Gordon believes it is structural pluralism which is the dominant pattern of assimilation in America.

All the theories of assimilation presented so far offer generalizations about the totality of the American integration experience. They provide possible "norms" to apply to any and all immigrant groups, either on the national or local level (i.e., to what extent was the Akron Jewish community as an American immigrant group an example of the triple melting pot, cultural pluralism, structural pluralism, etc.).

Support for such general theories of integration has frequently been drawn from the Jewish experience. Thus, Zangwill's hero is a Russian-Jewish immigrant who undergoes the melting experience to the ultimate point of approaching marriage with the beautiful gentile heroine. For Kallen, Jews were the outstanding example of cultural pluralism. Their high rate of naturalization combined with widespread group consciousness proved the co-existence of strong American loyalties with extensive self-preservation of spirit and culture.¹³⁸ Others who found the Jewish experience supportive of their respective integration theories include Herberg, Glazer and Moynihan, and Gordon. In the last case, for example, the behavioral-structural paradigm is found descriptive of American-Jewish integration. Acculturation "drastically modified American Jewish life" in the direction of American middle class standards of dress, manner and speech, and mainline Christian religious practices regarding the role of the clergy, service decorum, etc.¹³⁹ At the same time, however, structural pluralism prevailed, witness the thriving cradle-to-grave Jewish communal life, the high degree of acknowledged ethnic self-identification, and the retention of intrinsic cultural traits manifested in psychological attitudes and value systems.

Jewish adjustment has also been studied outside the context of American integration. More parochial analysis has permitted greater attention to the *psychological dimensions and developmental stages* which characterized the American-Jewish experience. In this connection the work of Charles Liebman is especially relevant to this study. Liebman identifies perpetual tension associated with conflicting core values as the key feature of Jewish adjustment. On the one hand, there was

the desire for integration and acceptance into the larger society accompanied by an attraction to non-Jewish values and attitudes; on the other, the equally strong need for Jewish group survival as a distinct community. Furthermore, both of these needs were probably more pronounced for Jews than for any other group in American society. As most American Jews, however, could not admit to these fundamental contradictions, Jewish behavior is best understood as the unconscious effort to reduce the tension resulting by such techniques as manipulating definitions of self.¹⁴⁰ For example, East European Jews confronted with the problem of preserving a folk-with-religion tradition while simultaneously securing general social acceptance redefined Judaism as primarily a religion. This permitted ethnic and communal practices to continue under a religious rubric. (It was clearly more socially acceptable for religious groups than ethnic groups to establish supplementary schools; while opposition to intermarriage on ethnic grounds was bigotry, on religious grounds it confirmed devotional loyalties.) The end result, Liebman contends, was that such unconscious subterfuges produced strides toward integration at the inevitable price of group survival.¹⁴¹

Seeking more precise developmental stages in the Jewish integration process, Kramer and Leventman concluded that "each generation faces a new set of social tensions and every generation revolts against its parents' way of being Jews."¹⁴² The tensions of the first generation derived from the need to survive; those of the second were associated with the push toward success, while those of the third generation grappled with status needs. The resolutions to these varied tensions

produced different ways of being Jewish not only religiously but economically and socially. Thus, the distance separating first and second generation Jews measured the span between ghetto values and acculturated gilded ghettos; between second and third generation it reflected the additional distance to the general status communities of the suburbs where the good life was shaped less by income than by interests.¹⁴³

While the generalizations drawn from the above mentioned works on American and Jewish immigration provide models for analyzing the totality of the Akron Jewish experience, and placing it in a meaningful theoretical context, it is the insights regarding particular life adjustment areas included in these and other studies that have provided the working conceptual references for individual topics examined in subsequent chapters. The following section summarizes some of the observations and hypotheses about religious development, social adjustment, political expression, and inter-group relations which have been particularly helpful and influential in dealing with local data in these areas.

Observations of Jewish religious adjustment have focused on changing religious practices, generational trends, and relative significance. Glazer and Gordon provide similar lists of adaptive measures affecting the worship service (e.g., reading rather than chanting prayers, limiting congregational participation, discarding the traditional head covering).¹⁴⁴ They explain these actions as related to desired social acceptance by the economically comfortable (Glazer) or behavioral assimilation (Gordon). Liebman suggests that the religious

practices which lasted were those which interfered least with American acculturation and those most closely associated with cultural life styles rather than purely religious observances (e.g., kashrut outlasted the mikvah).¹⁴⁵ Lieberman and Leventman's generational study describes the religious adjustment of first generation East European immigrants as traditionally Orthodox with a grafting on of the secular ethic of self-improvement. By comparison, the religious atmosphere of the second generation lacked religious fervor. However, while many rituals were abandoned, child-oriented observances survived. The third generation basically accepted this religious resolution, if anything, moving closer to assimilation.¹⁴⁶ As for the relative importance of piety and formal religious orientation in Jewish life, Lieberman denies them centrality. He identifies the state of Israel as the major content of religious expression and stresses the social essence of Judaism by citing the self-evidently ludicrousness of the philosophy implied in the statement, "Marry a non-Jewish person if you must but remember to observe the Sabbath."¹⁴⁷

Such a statement underscores the importance of examining American-Jewish social adjustment patterns. Observations in this field inevitably begin with the Jewish family. Traditionally, Jewish marriage was viewed not as a compromise between the sacred and profane, but rather as a "mitzvah"--a good deed, literally, a commandment. This obligation was binding without exception, including saints and scholars, and Sklare contends that this value was maintained by native-born American Jews. Thus, although Jews married later than their gentile peers, they did so in relatively greater numbers. (Contradictions

between perpetuating Jewish traditions and subscribing to romantic love American style were resolved by delegating matchmaking roles to Jewish institutions or even special resort centers.) As indicated above, while the principle of marriage was sustained, the practice of having large families disappeared. By the second generation, American Jews had become the "most ardent and efficient contraceptors in the American population."¹⁴⁸

While the Jewish family in many ways epitomized WASP middle class patterns, it retained certain distinctive features. One theory suggests that instead of viewing the family as a launching pad, the Jewish family held to the notion of the family as an extension ladder.¹⁴⁹ An injury to the child was an injury to the parents and the undesirable behavior of the former reflected on the latter. The very status of the parents in the community could be jeopardized by their failure as parents and this situation remained unaffected by the passage of time. The children always remained "the children." Because they were the abiding source of "nachas" or joy, and because they could give or withhold this crucial ingredient of life, children were, depending on one's perspective, spoiled or given every advantage. Such interdependent generational bonds also reached out to include extended families. Thus, statistical confirmation exists suggesting that Jewish kinship groups remained within closer geographical proximity and interacted more frequently than either Roman Catholics or Protestants.¹⁵⁰

The tie that binds can do so for help or harm. The harmful aspects of Jewish family bonds have been repeatedly described in contemporary literature and psychological case histories. The family's

strengths were reflected in the comparatively low rate of radical social disorders and high rate of marital stability.¹⁵¹ To the extent that the Jewish family is a unique unit perpetuating specific behaviors, intermarriage was of great potential consequence. If structural assimilation is highly valued, then intermarriage is an opportunity; if group survival is more important, then it is a threat. American Jews have viewed intermarriage as a threat rather than an opportunity.¹⁵² The data regarding intermarriage since 1960, however, suggest that it is increasing, that the rate increases as the size of the Jewish community decreases, and that it is most likely to occur among those lacking strong childhood Jewish identification.¹⁵³

Personal friendship patterns are second in importance only to the family in the study of Jewish social adjustment. Liebman goes so far as to theorize that Jewish in-group association is increasingly the single most distinguishing characteristic of American Jews.¹⁵⁴ In terms of Gordon's framework, such persisting friendship patterns support the notion of structural pluralism. As for the internal alignments reflected in these individual friendships and communal social organizations, Gordon's theory further presumes evidence of "ethclass" stratification. Making just this point, Kramer and Leventman have identified Jewish "lodgniks" and "clubniks" with distinctive status levels and social practices (clubniks being the more likely to join the Jewish country club, interact with gentiles, and serve as president of the Federation board).¹⁵⁵ Internal social stratification, however, never obstructed universal participation in the community's most inclusive activity, fund raising. This activity has been compared to the

Indian ceremony of potlatch in its emphasis on "giving" as a status symbol.¹⁵⁶ By assuring the highest status to the biggest contributors and simultaneously promoting positive identification of all community members, the welfare drive assured the support of its various eth-class groupings in a larger "peoplehood" venture.

As noted above, Jewish adjustment produced a voting pattern which violated Hansen's rule of the politically conservative first generation immigrant. Similarly, later generations failed to duplicate the voting patterns of their economically successful gentile peers. This political deviance has been attributed to the unique blend of Jewish traditional values and group experiences in America.¹⁵⁷ Thus, traditional emphases on learning and dialogue, charitable obligations met through community planning, and the importance of the good life in the here and now, coincided with liberal political ideology. So did American-Jewish experience, given episodes of personal insecurity which in turn generalized to empathy with other minority groups. An internationalist perspective was predictable based on a two thousand year tradition of dependence on international contacts and contemporary experiences such as the Holocaust and Israel.

Combining religious, social, and political elements, anti-semitism is a unique area of Jewish study. Widely conflicting theories have emerged to explain that phenomenon in American life. Ben Halpern has described it in the context of an international movement existing through the ages as a universal response to a particular people.¹⁵⁸ Thus, American declines in anti-semitism become trends in social fashion rather than basic changes in ideology. For Halpern, decisive ideologi-

cal differences have instigated and perpetuated American problems between Jews and Christians and any implied notion that Orthodoxy and Protestant Fundamentalism are equally authentic bases of American values (the triple melting pot theory) is absurd.

In contrast, John Higham sees American anti-semitism as distinct from the continental variety and essentially an episode in American social history.¹⁵⁹ Although acknowledging occasional ideological overtones in certain regions (typically disassociated from actual Jewish acquaintances), Higham identifies the basic conflict in terms of hostility to foreigners in general. Thus, anti-semitism is precisely in the same category as anti-Catholic nativism. From this perspective, the negative experiences of German Jews relate to their strong efforts to enter the preserves of the Protestant elite at a time when status and social control were critical issues in a rapidly industrializing society.¹⁶⁰ East European Jews experienced similar difficulties because of the real problems of integrating such large numbers of first and second generation Jewish immigrants given the existing internal socio-economic conditions. Furthermore, inter-ethnic hostilities can be explained in the context of competing social groups who put their feet on the American ladder at different times, inevitably creating economic and status rivalries, especially in the urban centers.¹⁶¹ Higham also contends that newcomers did play a role in determining the stereotypes they evoked. In the case of the Jews, examples of assertive manners and aggressive personalities inevitably accompanied meteoric socio-economic mobility, fostering anti-semitic economic stereotypes. On the other hand, the compatibility of Jewish and old-line American values

regarding thrift, enterprise, rational calculation, and positive Old Testament images created a situation in which many Americans were both pro- and anti-Jewish at the same time.¹⁶² As an ever more homogeneous society emerged, discrimination receded, proving the Jewish experience an integral part of the shared American social experience.

A final concept helpful to the understanding of inter-group relations stresses the notion of interdependence of fate. This implies that the actions of a single group member can influence the fortunes of the total group. Thomas O'Dea suggests that this widely held conviction brought strong pressures to bear on any inner-group deviant behaviors which might be perceived as reinforcing undesirable stereotypes held by the outer community.¹⁶³ It also imposed a special role on the "ambassadors" to that community.

While many of the above observations and theories are potentially useful in interpreting Akron Jewish data, three theories seem especially provocative and appropriate conceptual models to apply to the total Akron Jewish experience. Foremost among these is Gordon's theory of structural pluralism. Also helpful is the developmental generational response model used by Kramer and Leventman. Finally, Liebman's provocative analysis of conflicting values and tension reduction offers clues to persistently ambiguous data.

A hypothesis was proposed above to the effect that Akron Jewry showed the direct impact of the major events of American and Jewish history throughout its first century and, furthermore, that it responded consistently with the major adjustment patterns identified in the

American-Jewish community as a whole. This statement can now be amended to note that the adjustment pattern which emerged was on the whole consistent with the form of integration known as structural pluralism, that specific behavioral changes distinguished first, second, and third generation immigrants, and that American-Jewish adjustment reflected an inner preoccupation with tension reduction of conflicting values.

FOOTNOTES

¹Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People (New York: Grosset's Universal Library, 1957), pp. 35-36.

²Ibid., p. 3.

³Unless otherwise indicated, the major source for the following facts, figures, and insights regarding American immigration is Maldwyn Jones, American Immigration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

⁴John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925 (New York: Atheneum, 1963), p. 7.

⁵Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York (1st ed., 1890, American Century Series; reprint ed., New York: Hill and Wang, 1957).

⁶The case for a conservative immigrant electorate was developed by Marcus Lee Hansen, The Immigrant in American History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), pp. 77-96.

⁷Higham, "Crisis in the Eighties," Strangers in the Land, pp. 35-67.

⁸John Higham, "American Anti-Semitism Historically Reconsidered," Jews in the Mind of America, ed. Charles H. Stember (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1946), p. 246.

⁹The grounds for hostile interaction between ethnics and blacks are reviewed by Michael Novak, The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics (New York: Macmillan Co., 1973), pp. 293-303.

¹⁰Stember, Jews in the Mind of America, p. 208.

¹¹Jacob Marcus, "The Periodization of American Jewish History," Studies in American Jewish History (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1969), p. 8.

¹²Oscar Handlin notes the impossibility of obtaining accurate Jewish statistics for this period in Adventure in Freedom: Three Hundred Years of Jewish Life in America (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1954), p. 49.

¹³Sidney Goldstein, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile," American Jewish Year Book 72 (1971):10.

¹⁴By 1839 some 10,000 Jews had left Bavaria. While this was a small part of the total German migration, the percentage of Jewish immigration was double their proportion in the general German population. This suggests that discrimination was probably a key motivating factor. "Extract from German-Jewish Journal of September 3, 1939," Joseph Blau and Salo Baron, eds. The Jews of the United States, 1790-1840: A Documentary History, 3 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 1:804. Also see Morris Schappes, The Jews in the United States (New York: Citadel Press, 1958), p. 66.

¹⁵Rudolph Glanz, "The German-Jewish Mass Emigration: 1820-1880," American Jewish Archives 22 (April 1970):51.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁷Jack Herman, "Cleveland Jewry, 1840-1890: A Case Study," Proceedings of the Conference on the Writing of Regional History (Cleveland: American Jewish Theological Seminary, 1956), p. 69.

¹⁸Nathan Glazer, American Judaism, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 32.

¹⁹Selig Adler and Thomas Connolly, From Ararat to Suburbia: The History of the Jewish Community of Buffalo (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1960), p. 29.

²⁰Marcus, Studies in American Jewish History, p. 9.

²¹Marshall Sklare, America's Jews (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 7.

²²Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 55.

²³Glazer, American Judaism, p. 44.

²⁴Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 57.

²⁵Glazer, American Judaism, pp. 32-37.

²⁶Ibid., p. 53.

²⁷Uriah Engleman, "Jewish Statistics in the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies (1850-1936)," Jewish Social Studies 9 (1947):142.

²⁸Perhaps the best example of this would be the heavily German town of Milwaukee. Jews played prominent roles in the city's German press, theatre, and German language instruction in the schools. Louis J. Swichkow and Lloyd P. Gartner, The History of the Jews of Milwaukee (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1963), p. 64.

²⁹Marcus, Studies in American Jewish History, p. 9.

- ³⁰ Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 59.
- ³¹ Sklare, America's Jews, p. 184.
- ³² Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 75.
- ³³ Ibid., p. 66; Glazer, American Judaism, p. 45.
- ³⁴ John Higham, "Anti-Semitism in the Gilded Age: A Reinterpretation," Mississippi Valley Historical Review 43 (March 1957):559-578.
- ³⁵ Adler and Connolly, From Ararat to Suburbia, p. 160.
- ³⁶ Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 82.
- ³⁷ Mark Wischnitzer, Visas to Freedom: The History of HIAS (Cleveland: World Publication Co., 1956), p. 33.
- ³⁸ Sklare, America's Jews, pp. 8, 37.
- ³⁹ Bernard Weinryb, "Jewish Immigration and Accommodation to America," The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group, ed. Marshall Sklare (New York: The Free Press, 1958), p. 4.
- ⁴⁰ Whereas Jews had been a minority among German emigrants, the extent of Jewish plurality in the "new" immigration is evident, for example, in Galicia. Jews, who were only 12 percent of the population, comprised 60 percent of the immigrants from 1881-1890. Even after 1900 when the Russian outflow became more mixed, including Poles and Lithuanians, etc., Jews remained the single largest emigrant group, comprising some 43.8 percent of the total. Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 84; Jones, American Immigration, p. 202.
- ⁴¹ Sklare, America's Jews, pp. 16-17.
- ⁴² Engleman, "Jewish Statistics in the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies," p. 150.
- ⁴³ Sidney Goldstein, "American Jewry: A Demographic Analysis," The Future of the Jewish Community in America, ed. David Sidorsky (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), p. 89.
- ⁴⁴ Judith Kramer and Seymour Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto: Conflict Resolution of Three Generations of American Jews (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 8.
- ⁴⁵ Nathan Glazer, "Social Characteristics of American Jews, 1654-1965," American Jewish Year Book 56 (1955):11-12.
- ⁴⁶ Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 95.

⁴⁷Engleman, "Jewish Statistics in the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies," p. 136.

⁴⁸Ibid., passim, pp. 131-162.

⁴⁹Warnings of American secularization probably kept away the most learned and observant, especially before World War I. Charles Liebman, "Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life," American Jewish Year Book 66 (1965):27-28.

⁵⁰Adler and Connolly, From Ararat to Suburbia, p. 164.

⁵¹Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 153.

⁵²Glazer, American Judaism, p. 67.

⁵³Yeshayahu Jelinek, "Self Identification of First Generation Hungarian Jewish Immigrants," American Jewish Historical Quarterly 61 (March 1972):222.

⁵⁴Harry L. Lurie, A Heritage Affirmed: The Jewish Federation Movement in America (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), p. 17.

⁵⁵Salo W. Baron, Steeled by Adversity: Essays and Addresses on American Jewish Life (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), p. 352.

⁵⁶Lurie, A Heritage Affirmed, p. 327.

⁵⁷Sklare, America's Jews, p. 184.

⁵⁸Fred Massarik, "A Report on Inter-marriage," National Jewish Population Study Reports (New York: Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 1972), p. 10.

⁵⁹Moses Rischin, The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 274.

⁶⁰Lawrence H. Fuchs, "American Jews and the Presidential Vote," American Ethnic Politics (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 52-53.

⁶¹Sklare suggests no other group excepting the Irish placed as much faith in the ballot. Sklare, America's Jews, p. 19.

⁶²Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 144.

⁶³Ibid., p. 199.

⁶⁴Adler and Connolly, From Ararat to Suburbia, p. 306.

- 65 Sklare, America's Jews, p. 37.
- 66 Ibid., p. 23.
- 67 Weinryb, "Jewish Immigration and Accommodation to America,"
p. 5.
- 68 Glazer, American Judaism, p. 83.
- 69 Ibid., p. 82.
- 70 Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, p. 44.
- 71 Milton M. Gordon, Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 183-184.
- 72 Engleman, "Jewish Statistics in the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies," pp. 160-70.
- 73 Glazer, American Judaism, p. 102.
- 74 Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, p. 45.
- 75 Sklare, America's Jews, p. 15.
- 76 Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, p. 10.
- 77 Sklare, America's Jews, p. 8.
- 78 Massarik, "A Report on Inter-marriage," p. 10.
- 79 Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, p. 120.
- 80 Lurie, A Heritage Affirmed, p. 113.
- 81 Fuchs, "American Jews and the Presidential Vote," p. 53.
- 82 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
- 83 Thomas F. O'Dea, "The Changing Image of the Jew and the Contemporary Religious Situation: An Exploration of Ambiguities," Jews in the Mind of America, ed. Charles Stember, p. 241.
- 84 Ibid., p. 128.
- 85 Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 205.
- 86 Ibid., p. 209.
- 87 Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, p. 52.

⁸⁸ Abraham Karp, "American Jewry, 1954-1971," The Jews in America: A History, ed. Rufus Lears (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1972), p. 365.

⁸⁹ Fred Massarik and Alvin Chenkin, "The Jewish Population of the United States in 1970: A New Estimate," National Jewish Population Studies Reports (New York: Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 1974), p. 1.

⁹⁰ John P. Dean, "Jewish Participation in the Life of Middle Sized American Communities," The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group, ed. Marshall Sklare (New York: Free Press, 1958), p. 305.

⁹¹ Ben B. Seligman, "Some Aspects of Jewish Demography," *Ibid.*, p. 46; Goldstein, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile," p. 38.

⁹² Massarik and Chenkin, "The Jewish Population of the United States in 1970," p. 2; Goldstein, "American Jewry: A Demographic Analysis," p. 91.

⁹³ Goldstein, "American Jewry: A Demographic Profile," pp. 39-44.

⁹⁴ Standard Jewish Encyclopedia (1966), s.v. "Displaced Persons."

⁹⁵ Jack J. Diamond, "Jewish Immigration to the United States," American Jewish Year Book 70 (1969):289-94.

⁹⁶ Nathan Glazer, "The American Jew and the Attainment of Middle Class Rank: Some Trends and Explanations," The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group, p. 138.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Sklare, America's Jews, p. 53; Alvin Chenkin, "Demographic Highlights," National Jewish Population Study Reports (New York: Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 1974), p. 8.

⁹⁹ Sklare, *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁰⁰ Dean, "Jewish Participation in Middle Sized American Communities," p. 306.

¹⁰¹ Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, p. 187.

¹⁰² Chenkin, "Demographic Highlights," p. 10; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1975, 96th ed. (Washington, D.C., 1975), p. 391.

¹⁰³ Sklare, America's Jews, p. 114; Fred Massarik, "Highlights: Jewish Identity," National Jewish Population Study Reports (New York: Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 1974), p. 11.

- ¹⁰⁴Glazer, American Judaism, p. 108.
- ¹⁰⁵C. B. Sherman, "Demographic and Social Aspects," The American Jew: A Reappraisal, ed. Oscar J. Janowsky (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964), p. 44.
- ¹⁰⁶Glazer, American Judaism, p. 108.
- ¹⁰⁷Liebman, "American Jewry: Identity and Affiliation," The Future of the Jewish Community of America, p. 143; Massarik, "Highlights: Jewish Identity," pp. 2, 3.
- ¹⁰⁸Goldstein, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile," p. 49.
- ¹⁰⁹For demographic data on marriage, intermarriage, fertility rates, family structure, age, etc., during this period, see *Ibid.*, pp. 18-26.
- ¹¹⁰Massarik, "Report on Intermarriage," p. 1.
- ¹¹¹Lurie, A Heritage Affirmed, p. 199.
- ¹¹²Goldstein, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile," p. 58.
- ¹¹³Chenkin, "Demographic Highlights," p. 4.
- ¹¹⁴Liebman, "American Jewry: Identity and Affiliation," pp. 139-42.
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CHAPTER II

COMMUNITY PROFILES

It was the city of Akron which defined the particular version of the American context experienced by the Jews who settled there. The community's history was rooted in the westward expansion of the early nineteenth century and transformed by the industrialization and urbanization of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Further significant changes resulted from the challenges of national Depression, World War II, and the post-war era. Within each of these periods the precise flavor of the community's environment was determined by four major factors: local history, economic developments, ethnic and religious composition, and the social loyalties and interactions of its members.

Early Akron (1825-1885)

Akron came into being because of its advantageous location along the proposed route of the Ohio canal. Initially part of Connecticut's Western Reserve [and just this side of the 1785-1805 western boundary between the U. S. and the Indians], the village plat was duly recorded in the Ravenna courthouse in 1825.¹ The first canal boat run from Akron to Cleveland occurred two years later. Actually the village was nurtured not by the canal itself but by the sixteen canal locks in the area which required half a day's layover. Capitalizing on the sources of water power in the area, a rival village called Cascade--later known as

North Akron--was founded and became the nucleus of a mill and factory town. In 1835 talk of a second canal produced a growth spurt in the area and the following year the two villages surmounted their hostilities and became a single town. By the early 1840s Akron had its second canal and also the county seat of a new county, Summit. Although the late 1840s and '50s saw repeated devastation by fire, the town, newly emerging as a railroad center, rebuilt and flourished. An 1864 census indicated Akron had 5,066 residents, enough for city status which was granted the following year. Another major territorial expansion occurred in 1872 when the town of Middlebury was annexed giving Akron what became its sixth ward.

Identified as "one of the most prosperous cities (of its class) in the west," Akron's economy was based on canal traffic, flour mills, and railroads.² The post-Civil War economy included manufacture of agricultural implements and machinery (mowers and reapers were the city's major products), cereals, iron, clay, brick and stoneware, foundry and machine shops, and the beginnings of its rubber works with the establishment of the Goodrich-Tew Company in 1870, followed by the incorporation of B. F. Goodrich in 1880. In 1882 the local paper credited the city with 385 new buildings and 101 "manufactories" which employed 4,416 people.³ Industrial development and the commercial growth which accompanied it explain the city's population figures which tripled between 1860 and 1870 and almost tripled again by 1890, resulting in a total population of 27,600.⁴

Early influential families typically reflected the area's Western Reserve heritage. General Simon Perkins, the name most directly associ-

ated with the founding of Akron, was descended from New England colonists who arrived with Roger Williams. Perkins and many other early worthies such as Dr. Eliakim Crosby, Capt. Joseph Hart, Miner Spicer, Paul Williams, and Samuel Lane had all lived in Connecticut before coming West. However, Akron's first mayor, the Quaker Seth Iredell, came from Pennsylvania as did the first Seiberling.

It is estimated that 1,500 laborers built the stretch of canal from Akron to Cleveland. Many were German and Irish immigrants who had helped dig the Erie canal and some of them settled here permanently. Thus, the Irish quickly established their own sub-community on a bluff overlooking the little Cuyahoga River near Akron's north end (Furnace Street), known until the turn of the century as "Little Dublin."⁵ More Irish came to the city after the famines of the forties in Ireland. An important Akronite, Michael O'Neil, came to Akron in 1876, entered the dry goods business, and joined with another Irishman to establish Akron's best known store. Meanwhile, the German laborers who helped carve out the canal found their numbers increased by the mid-century wave of German immigration to this country. The oldest club in Akron, the Liedertafel, a German singing group, was founded in 1855 and a German paper, the Germania, was published by 1868. Old German names were associated with some of the city's biggest enterprises, such as Schumacher, the cereal kind, and Seiberling, the mower and reaper entrepreneur. The influx of Irish, Germans, and early arrivals from other lands accounted for 26 percent of Akron's population being identified as foreign in the census of 1870. Despite the increasing numbers of foreigners arriving in Akron, their relative percentage declined. Thus,

79 percent of the community was native in 1880 and 1890 (compared to 74 percent in 1870).⁶

The religious life of early Akron was abundant, diverse, and related to the community's ethnic composition. The first churches in the area were Presbyterian and Congregational. (More unusual Protestant sects like the Millerites had a tabernacle by the 1840s.) Interestingly, many of the early churches were erected on the "neutral" territory called the Gore which separated rival Akron and North Akron. Itinerant priests met the needs of Irish Catholics until the town's first permanent parish was founded in 1837. The Germans established their own Lutheran and Reformed Protestant churches as well as their own Catholic parish. By 1869 the City Directory listed a total of eleven Christian denominations including Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal, "German Catholic," "Irish Catholic," Disciples of Christ, German Reformed, English Reformed, Evangelical, and Lutheran (German).⁷ Twenty-five years later the local paper identified Akron as a "city of churches" having more churches with a larger total membership than any town of its size.⁸ The churches not only provided centers of worship but sponsored social groups and distributed relief to their own needy. They also mobilized support on particular community issues. Thus, during the 1880s Akron's churches and the Akron Ministerial Association actively encouraged and gained support for Sunday closing measures.⁹

It is difficult to establish the precise extent of amity and the strength of sub-group loyalties within the community during this period. There is testimony to the bitter rivalry between the original

two villages in the area. Individual church histories of the Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, and Catholic churches are replete with stories of secession and separation.¹⁰ The early Irish immigrants were welcomed with less than open arms and the Germans and New England settlers had a contentious history.¹¹ Social friction was probably perpetuated by German brewery and saloon owners, not to mention drinkers, in a community which regularly featured a "temperance" column in the paper and unanimously legislated a temperance ordinance in 1874. There is evidence that ethnic connections to native lands were maintained. Examples of such ties include a public demonstration by local Irishmen in 1866 protesting the wrongs perpetrated in their mother country, a \$500 donation to Akron's German immigrants from their former king in Bavaria (used to construct the German Catholic church), and the 1870 celebration of Prussian victories by the local German community.¹²

The Boom Years (1885-1929)

While Akron's development during most of the nineteenth century displayed steady increases in population and economic enterprises, the period from the late 1880s to 1929 saw a dramatic shift to a boom town community centering around a single industry. The rubber works started by Benjamin Goodrich, Frank Seiberling (Goodyear), and Harvey Firestone were all established by 1900, and were operating relatively modestly to meet demands for such products as bicycle tires. Ten years later the demands of the automobile industry propelled the rubber industry into a new era. Rubber company employment zoomed from 22,000 in 1913 to 70,000 in 1920 at which time there were twenty-four rubber

companies operating in the area.¹³ At the height of the boom period, Akron became known as the city of "standing room only" as the rubber factories worked day and night and rooms were shared on a shift basis. In the decade of the teens, Akron's total population passed the 100,000 mark, almost tripling from 60,000 in 1910 to 208,000 in 1920.¹⁴

Meanwhile, commercial growth accompanied the industrial expansion. Theaters, restaurants, and stores thrived (by 1920 Akron had over 600 retail groceries, 300 meat markets, 50 dry-goods stores, etc.).¹⁵ Downtown business boomed as it left its old homeground on Howard Street and expanded south along Main Street. In 1912, O'Neil, who had led the move from Howard, sold out to the May Company Department Stores. Sixteen years later the new O'Neil's opened its six-story, three-million dollar department store on South Main. Polsky's, the city's second major department store, opened directly across the street in 1929.

The city's boom years coincided with the era of the New Immigration. The impact of this movement was evident locally in the increasing numbers of sub-communities formed by such East European immigrants as Hungarians, Poles, Slovaks, and Slovenes. The Hungarians, identified in the 1910 census as the largest single foreign-born group, tended to settle in Akron's Miami-South Street section. One estimate placed their number at some 8,000 in 1914.¹⁶ They established immigrant institutions like the Hungarian-American club and their own newspaper (1918). Immigrant clubs were also established by the Croatians, Slovenians, and Slovaks (the greatest concentration of Slovenes and Slovaks was in the suburban area of Barberton). The Poles developed a National

Alliance of their own and after an initial settlement period in the "Little Dublin" area, many of them moved to Akron's North Hill.

A similar residential movement pattern characterized the Italians who became the largest single foreign group in Akron by the end of the twenties. They had begun coming in significant numbers in the teens and first lived in the Valley area earlier occupied by the Irish.¹⁷ When the north viaduct was completed and North Hill opened up as a new residential section in 1922, Italian families moved in and established a predominantly Italian neighborhood. Italian stores, restaurants, private clubs and societies, and a funeral home served the area.

There were other if smaller sub-communities which emerged in this period. During the World War I era, Howard Street was also known as "Greek Street" with its coffee houses and gambling establishments.¹⁸ The Greeks started their own church, their own immigrant association, and set up a Greek afternoon school. The Black community experienced its first major growth spurt during this period. While a few Blacks have been identified as being in Akron at the time of its founding, they numbered only some five hundred at the turn of the century. The expectation of jobs attracted sufficient numbers from the South to bring that total to over 5,500 in 1920.¹⁹ The residential area vacated by the early Italians and Polish immigrants became in turn a center of Black community life.

While the influx of new immigrants was in the process of revising the character of the 1890 census (only fifty-seven Italians, thirty-four Hungarians, and four Poles were listed, in contrast to 643 Irish and 3,033 from the German-speaking countries), the Irish and Germans continued

to strengthen their respective ethnic associations. Thus, the Ancient Order of Hibernians was active from the 1890s through World War I and the Sons of Herman, an affiliate of a national German-American fraternal organization, was initiated in the early 1900s.²⁰ When the Irish left Akron's "Little Dublin," they tended to reassemble in the newer Miami Street area, west of the railroad tracks, an area which became known as "Hell's Half Acre" in recognition of its aggressive atmosphere. Meanwhile, the Germans established their own neighborhoods after the turn of the century, in the Wolf Ledges area and Goosetown (the latter, near Grant and South Streets, was named in honor of the fowl which German-speaking residents frequently kept in their yards).

Census figures substantiate the above impression that immigrants were not randomly distributed throughout the community. In 1890, for example, 34 percent of those identified as foreigners lived in one of Akron's six wards. The 13,241 foreign-born whites in 1910 were not equally distributed among Akron's wards either, some wards having twice as many foreigners as others. Thus, one ward contained over one-third of the German born, two wards accounted for 39 percent of the native Irish, and 81 percent of the Italians lived in just two wards.²¹

The development of distinctive residential neighborhoods had a class as well as an ethnic component. The rich who had lived along East Market (Buchtel, Fir Hill, Union, Forge, and College Streets) began moving to West Hill, nearer to the opulence of the Seiberling mansion, an area which witnessed its first major development shortly after the turn of the century. At the other end of the economic scale, the rubber boom years produced the phenomenon of company housing developments, e.g.,

Firestone Park to the south and Goodyear Heights to the east.

Although the rubber industry attracted workers from everywhere, including the European immigrants, it attracted Appalachians most of all.²² An often repeated Vaudeville line labeled Akron "the capital of West Virginia." The West Virginians and other Appalachians from Kentucky and Tennessee formed about one-third of Akron's population of 210,000 in 1920, a three fold increase in a single decade. By 1930, some 40,000 West Virginia natives and an equal number from Kentucky and Virginia had settled in Akron. Consisting largely of unskilled and semiskilled workers from the rubber shops, the West Virginians and other Southern migrants exhibited many of the adjustment characteristics of the foreign ethnic groups. They established their own societies like the West Virginia Society, Tennessee Club, and Southern Club. They settled in specific Akron neighborhoods: Kenmore, Goodyear Heights, and Ellet. This native-born influx more than counterbalanced the considerable immigrant influx during the boom years. Census figures confirm the native cast of Akron in this period: 1900--51 percent were native-born whites with native parents; 1910--55 percent were similarly identified; 1920--60 percent; 1930--64 percent. When those of native birth having foreign or mixed parentage are added to these figures, a total of 83 percent of Akron's 1930 population of 255,000 can be identified as native-born white.²³

The image of Akron as a "city of churches" characterized Akron at the end of this period even more than previously. The forty churches and missions representing some fifteen denominations reported in 1894 had increased by 1920 to 138 churches of thirty-two different denomina-

tions. While revival meetings were evident before the turn of the century, the tents of the evangelists were especially prominent during the twenties. This was a time of marked increase in the number of local conservative fundamentalist churches. Baptist churches increased from five to twenty-five between 1910 and 1920 and the number of Methodist churches doubled to twenty-four in the same period. Moreover, the development of substantial new ethnic communities was accompanied by the establishment of new immigrant churches. The Slovaks formed St. John's Lutheran Church in 1908 and the Greek church was started in 1917. By 1925 Protestant national churches included Rumanian, Hungarian, Swedish and Macedonian Baptist; German and Hungarian Reformed; Swedish and Slovak Evangelical Lutheran; Hungarian Lutheran, etc. Roman Catholic national parishes in the area (Akron and Barberton) eventually served Slovenian, Slovakian, Croatian, Hungarian, Polish, Italian, and Lithuanian worshippers. There were also six Eastern Rite churches for such groups as the Ruthenians, Greek Catholics, Ukrainians, etc.²⁴

There were some very serious racial and class strains on the social harmony of the community in the boom period. Foremost among these was a racial incident which precipitated a riot in 1900 and involved a mob of between two and three hundred demanding access to a black fugitive. Another major incident, this time involving intense industrial dispute, occurred when Socialists and members of the IWW came to Akron to join the strike effort of some 15,000 rubber production workers in 1912-13.²⁵ The strike was characterized by marches, rioting, and a declared state of martial law. Still a third source of friction

was the Ku Klux Klan. Claiming 350 applications a day at its peak in 1923, the Akron Klan could boast such prominent members as a mayor, Common Pleas court judge, congressional candidate, city councilman, school board president, sheriff, and so many national guardsmen that the local artillery battery became known as the Grand Dragon's Guard.²⁶ Akron was actually one of the hooded capitals in the nation. In a listing of Klan membership between 1915-1944 in eighty-five large American cities, Akron ranked eighth along with Los Angeles, outdistancing such other Klan strongholds in Ohio as Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, and Youngstown (Cleveland had minimal Klan activities). While the Klan's anti-Catholic and anti-Black biases were national ideological trademarks, in Akron they also called for a boycott of Greek businesses.²⁷ Irish reports of job discrimination in the local public schools during this period correlate with the known primary focus of the Akron Klan on that institution.²⁸ Such inter-group hostilities did not preclude intra-group divisiveness. The Germans of the Wolf Ledges area viewed themselves as "real Germans" in contrast to the Platt Deutsch or lowlands Goosetown inhabitants. The Greek church had to be closed at one point for a cooling-off period between those members favoring and opposing Greek monarchy; and it was risky calling Slovaks, Hungarians or labeling Serbs as Croats.²⁹

Akron in Depression and War

National and international events had direct repercussions in Akron during the 1929-1945 period. The Depression put thousands out of work and soup lines, bread lines, and apple vendors were part of the local

scene. Crude rubber prices dropped from \$1.20 per pound in 1925 to 3¢ per pound in 1932 and tire production that year was 40 percent below the 1929 level.³⁰ (Probably the only positive economic development of the thirties was the development of the local trucking industry.) The economic hard times were reflected in the census figures. For the first time in its history Akron's population declined, losing some 10,000 inhabitants between 1930 and 1940. The World War II years reversed this trend and Akron increased from 245,000 to 275,000 over the next decade, making it the thirty-ninth largest city in the nation.³¹ The rubber industry was instrumental in this renewed growth spurt as it became a major supplier of rubber products for the war effort. Thus, synthetic rubber production began at Firestone in 1942. Meanwhile, Goodyear and Goodrich moved into the aircraft field making Akron an aircraft center. The resulting labor shortage caused factories to turn South once again to recruit additional workers.

In addition to the increasing Appalachian population, there was considerable growth in the city's Black population. The percentage of Blacks in the greater community doubled between 1930 and 1950. Meanwhile, the foreign-born white population declined. Italians continued to be the largest single foreign group in the census figures for 1930, 1940, and 1950. Despite the decline in immigration, the various ethnic communities generally maintained their ethnic neighborhoods and institutions (e.g., North Hill as the center of Italian life, and some eighteen German and seventeen Hungarian societies in the City Directory for 1931). While these groups experienced increasing socio-economic mobility they did not penetrate the upper ranks of the major industry in town.

A background study of the thirteen top rubber leaders in 1941 identified all of them as old immigrant stock, mostly Anglo-Saxon, and all but one raised as Protestants.³² (The exception was a member of the O'Neil family who founded and continued to lead General Tire.) Even the rubber chemists almost universally came from "American" stock.³³

Akron remained a city of churches. By 1941 there were some 240 local church buildings, over 200 of them identified as Protestant. Probably due to the strong West Virginia influence, evangelism established strong roots. The Reverend Dallas Billington, pastor of the Akron Baptist Temple, started preaching at the Furnace Street Mission in 1928 and began transmitting his ministry on radio in 1932. Another veteran radio evangelist was the Reverend Bill Denton. Ethnic parishes also characterized the thirties. Despite the Depression, sufficient money was raised by Italian parishioners to erect St. Anthony's ethnic church on North Hill. (Plans for the church were developed in borrowed meeting space in St. Hedwigs, the Polish parish church.)

The streets played host to the disaffected during these turbulent times. A thousand members of the Unemployed Council of Akron and Kenmore marched on City Hall on January 20, 1931, demanding that a dole be paid to all jobless persons. The thirties were characterized by labor strikes as the rubber companies refused to bargain. Major strikes occurred in 1936 and 1937; in 1938 violence between police and workers erupted resulting in one hundred people receiving hospital treatment. The first Big Four union contract was signed with Goodrich in 1938. Three years later, Goodyear signed its first Akron contract with the URW. Labor problems were related to friction with specific social

groups such as the West Virginians. One observer noted that the rubber companies specifically blacklisted anyone from this group identified as a troublemaker.³⁴

Post-World War II Akron

While the post-war years include some examples of economic growth, overall the period never resumed the "boom town" dimensions of its earlier history. By 1970, instead of thirty-ninth in size (1950), it ranked fifty-seventh among American cities. The rubber work force similarly steadily shrank in size during these years as some 22,000 blue collar workers lost their jobs.³⁵ However, the major rubber companies kept their headquarters in Akron and service and management positions increased along with substantial efforts in urban renewal.

The census data of 1970 outlines the following demographic profile of the community as it approached its sesquicentennial year.³⁶ The mean family income was just over \$6,000; the median income around \$10,000. About 6.5 percent were identified as living below the poverty level. Of Akron's 70,464 families, 19 percent earned over \$15,000, 3 percent earned between \$2,000 and \$3,000, and an additional 4 percent earned between \$3,000 and \$4,000. White collar employment was characteristic of a large percentage of those employed (13 percent professional, 6 percent managerial, 7 percent sales, 18 percent clerical). Truck drivers and laborers comprised another 9 percent of the labor force, 13 percent were identified as craftsmen and foremen, and 19 percent were listed as "operatives" (manufactured durable goods).

Age statistics indicate a median age of 28.5 years with 60 percent of the population between the ages of 18 and 64 and 12 percent

over 65. Of those over fourteen, 65 percent of the males and 58 percent of the females were married. About one-fourth of Akron families had children under six. The median school years completed for those twenty-five and over was twelve years; 9 percent had completed four years or more of college.

Akron's racial and ethnic composition underwent considerable change during the post-war period. Continuing the pattern described in an earlier period, Akron received some 26,000 new Appalachian migrants (mostly from West Virginia) between 1940 and 1970. While the mass Appalachian migration had stopped by the end of this period, one estimate identified 40 percent of Akron's population as native Appalachians or their descendants. Thus, by the 1970s as many as 110,000 had made Akron their home. The largest proportional jump in population, however, was experienced by the Black community. Having nearly doubled between 1930 and 1950, it more than doubled again between 1950 and 1970, reaching a total of 17.5 percent of the total population. By way of contrast, the foreign-born white population almost halved between 1930 and 1960 and continued to decline until in 1970 it comprised only 4.4 percent of the community.³⁷

While a gradual erosion of ethnic neighborhoods and some migrant institutions characterized the post-war period, ethnic identification and affiliation by no means disappeared. For example, in 1953 the Irish actually revived the long moribund Akron Ancient Order of Hibernians. The Germans continued to participate in German Day picnics and attend German-American clubs which offered German kindergarten and school activities. The Italians provide an excellent prototype of

post-war ethnic adjustment in Akron. Representing the largest single foreign-born group in Akron (over 15 percent in 1950 and 1960), they numbered some 30,000 to 40,000 in the metropolitan area in the 1970s. The North Hill area, which had been predominantly Italian, became only about 30 percent so identified during this period. As one local Italian noted, second and third generation Italian-Americans "are scattering like pollen."³⁸ They moved to West Akron and outlying suburban communities like Cuyahoga Falls, Tallmadge, or Stow. If the neighborhood shrank in size, so did command of the Italian language by the younger generations. Despite this dispersal and loss of language, Italians maintained connections with private ethnic clubs, ethnic churches, stores, etc. It has been estimated that 90 percent of Italian-American families returned to the old neighborhood to use the traditional funeral home services.³⁹

Similar adjustment patterns characterized Akron's other immigrant groups. The small Greek community of some three thousand residents continued to support a school and a Greek association throughout this period and hosted ethnic functions for the entire community. Hungarians maintained their clubs and group festival activities. Polish families became increasingly scattered but four hundred of them retained their affiliation with the Polish parish church. The United Polish American Council brought together representatives of Polish clubs and veterans groups. The Slovaks had "togetherness" clubs, Slovenes their center, and the Croatian American Club, Inc. continued to have a phone listing in 1975. Reports about these communities acknowledged that the children were losing facility with Old World languages but stressed

their continuing interest in their ethnic history and traditions. Some neighborhoods retained their ethnic-economic character. Thus, about 80 percent of the workers in the eastern Akron section called Ellet were employed by the rubber companies and into the 1970s were heavily Southern.⁴⁰

Especially interesting aspects of the religious life of the community during this period were its national evangelical prominence and the changes within the ethnic churches. Probably as many people associated Akron with the evangelical word as they did with rubber. In major part this was due to the media ministry of Rex Humbarb with its interdenominational outreach program. Humbarb came to Akron in 1952 and began his TV services the following year. By 1972 he was preaching over 362 stations and moving toward worldwide coverage. A similar message preached by the Reverend Dallas Billington of Akron's Baptist Temple reached the nation via radio and TV. It was Billington's boast that his institution had the world's largest Sunday school.

The ethnic churches in Akron during this period exhibited some of the major characteristics of structural and behavioral assimilation which Milton Gordon viewed as typical of American immigrant adjustment. The fact that Italian names still comprised seven of every ten names of the parishioners of St. Anthony's and that the Greek church remained central to an identifiable sub-community life, supports the notion of structural pluralism. Yet within the ethnic churches behavioral assimilation did occur. This is most evident in the increasing use of English over Old World languages in the service. For example, the Slovakian St. John's Lutheran church had for the most part switched to English as

early as 1937 and only token Slovakian, like Italian Catholic and German Lutheran, services became the rule during this period.⁴¹

Probably the most serious source of internal social friction involved racial tensions. The strain finally erupted into six days of rioting in July 1968, leading the community to investigate its social problems in this area.⁴² As in other cities, there was also widespread concern about crime and safety in the streets.

Interpreting Akron's community profile is difficult. On one level its 150 years are a microcosm of national trends and events. Akron's very beginning was linked to the westward movement and the transportation revolution of the early nineteenth century. Its later socio-economic development was related to national industrialization, urbanization, depression, and war. The city's inhabitants at various times reflected national migration waves and common immigrant adjustment patterns. On another level, however, Akron was not the average American city. Due to a massive Appalachian influx, its proportional ethnic composition was substantially different from that of other industrial cities; its religious character had very distinctive evangelical qualities; its flirtation with the Klan was far from ordinary. It was this typical yet atypical American setting that served as the host for the Akron Jewish community.

The Akron Jewish Profile: Background and Settlement (1865-1885)

A comprehensive portrait of the Akron Jewish community encompasses the life circumstances and choices of many individuals in their religious, institutional, social, and community life. Before such a task can be undertaken, however, basic historical and demographic details are

needed regarding the immigrant backgrounds of community members and their socio-economic status. At issue here are such questions as which Jews came here (and why here), from where, when, and in what numbers and what choices were made about making a living. The answers to these questions reflect the interaction of historical Jewish events and local conditions in the course of four historical periods: initial settlement (1865-1885); era of Eastern European influx and institutional expansion (1885-1929); time of national and international crises (1929-1945); and the post-World War II era (1945-1975).

Jewish life in Ohio was already fairly well established when the first Jews arrived in Akron. The first known professing Jew in the state, Joseph Jonas of England, had arrived in Cincinnati in 1817.⁴³ Eventually he and subsequent Jewish arrivals, mainly English, Dutch, and French, organized the first Jewish community beyond the Alleghenies which was the only such group within five hundred miles. Cincinnati's first synagogue, Bene Israel, was organized in 1824. The decade of the thirties was marked by the arrival of many German Jews to Ohio. The second Jewish congregation in Ohio was the Israelitische Society in Cleveland, established in 1839 by members of an organized group migration from Unsleben, Bavaria.⁴⁴ By 1850 there were four congregations in Cincinnati and two in Cleveland, with Jews reported living in such communities as Columbus and Dayton.⁴⁵ Four years later Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise became the rabbi of B'nai Jeshurun, the second congregation established in Cincinnati, and pushed that city to the forefront as a national center of American Jewish life. The Jewish population in Ohio by 1880 was some 6,500 and by the turn of the century eighteen

Ohio cities and towns had one or more Jewish institutions.⁴⁶

While it is difficult to pinpoint the exact arrival date of Akron's first Jew, an early Akron history refers to Jewish merchants operating in the area by 1845.⁴⁷ These first arrivals and the others who joined them in sufficient numbers to establish the Akron Hebrew Association by 1865 were part of the German-speaking immigration to the United States. For example, Isaac Levi came from Alsheim in southern Germany; David and Eva Leopold were also from the southern part of the country (Federsheim and Mannheim); Jacob Koch came from Baerstadt, Bavaria.⁴⁸ The earliest members of the Association bore such German-Jewish names as Hahn, Hopfman, Gugenheim, Gross, Marienthal, Katzenberg, etc.⁴⁹ New families of similar background continued to arrive during the settlement period as is evident in such names as Loeb, Hollander, Hirsch, Neuwahl, Weinberg, etc. Akron seems to have resembled Cleveland in attracting a relatively large proportion of Austro-Hungarian Jews. Charter Akron Hebrew Association members Moses Fuerst and Joseph Whitelaw were from Austria and Hungary respectively. The Association's second teacher, Nathan Hollstein, came from Hungary. Similar backgrounds characterized the Ferbsteins, Hermans, Krauses, Krohngolds, Sichernans, Freemans, Greenbergers, Wisers, and Franks, all prominent Akron Jewish families who joined the community before the turn of the century.⁵⁰

The presence of a relative chain, that strong "pull" factor generally associated with German-Jewish immigration, was evident in the Akron Jewish community from the very beginning. Jacob Koch came to Akron in 1854 at the age of fourteen to clerk in his uncle Cauffman

Koch's store, Koch, Levi and Co., which had been established in 1848. (Interestingly and indicative of the Jewish community's "Cleveland connection," the uncle was economically and residentially based in Cleveland.)⁵¹ He stayed and advanced in the company, assuming his uncle's role in the partnership by 1864. Sometimes a landsmann served as a surrogate relative. Thus, Louis Loeb, at seventeen years of age, made his way to the same Koch, Levi and Co. store because Isaac Levi had been a friend of his father in Alsheim. He too stayed with the store, ultimately becoming its president. Charter member Joseph Whitelaw was soon joined by his cousin, sixteen-year-old Jacob P. Whitelaw, who in turn brought over his brother. David Leopold arrived in nearby Suffield because he had relatives there. Herman Ferbstein left Hungary in 1871 when he was fifteen to join his brother David who had preceded him. He returned to Hungary to marry, brought his wife back to Akron, and eventually sent for her two brothers as well.⁵² Gradually the community grew from the fifteen or twenty names first associated with the Akron Hebrew Association to some 175 Jewish residents in 1881.⁵³ This figure represented about 1 percent of Akron's population at the time.

The classic portrayal of the mid-nineteenth century German Jewish immigrant as peddler-trader-merchant holds true for Akron's early Jewish settlers. David Leopold and Herman Ferbstein are cases in point. Leopold carried a pack on his back selling from farm to farm until he could afford a horse and wagon. Eventually he moved into the cattle-buying business, which in turn led to the opening of a slaughterhouse and the curing and delivering of meat to various shops. He

finally opened a retail meat market on Main Street. Ferbstein was quickly directed by his brother (who was himself selling goods from a pack on his back) to a Cleveland company which outfitted him with a peddler's pack, taught him to count in American money, and gave him cue cards with such phrases as, "May I purchase a night's lodging? May I purchase a meal? May I show you my wares?" After a year he became a partner in his brother's newly established tobacco store in Akron and before the turn of the century assumed full control of the business. One of the brothers-in-law he brought to Akron in turn became his business partner.⁵⁴

That the close association of "Hebrew" and "merchant" was recognized fairly early in the community at large is reflected in Samuel Lane's local history which uses the terms in tandem in describing the background of the Akron Jewish community.⁵⁵ The association was valid. The earliest Hebrew Association members--Koch, Levi, Hopfman, Katzenberg, Moss, Joseph, Seisel, Hahn, Ettinger, Whitelaw, Cohen, Frank, Marienthal, Leopold, Desenberg--were all small businessmen, most of whom were associated with the clothing trade.⁵⁶ The first Akron City Directory (1859) listed two Jewish clothing firms, Koch, Levi and Co. and Hopfman and Moss. By 1871, five of the six listed clothing stores were owned by Jews, as were two of the four companies identified as selling "fancy goods." By the 1880s the number of new Jewish clothing stores had grown to include the New York Clothing Co., Greenwood Bros., Kraus and Holdstein, Morris Price Clothing, Herman and Hollander, New Globe Clothing House, Oak Hill Clothing House, Star Clothing House, and Young American Clothing House. Other merchants in

clothing or related specialties such as woolen mills and the wood trade included I. J. Frank, M. J. Weinberg, Joseph Whitelaw, Benny Desenberg, Ed Hirsch, Moses Joseph, and Herman Hahn.⁵⁷

Not all of the early Jewish immigrants wound up in the clothing trade.⁵⁸ The Leopolds (there were three apparently unrelated families by that name) were all in the meat business. Ferbstein, Holdstein, Goldberg, Gross, Tuholske, Ettinger, and Elsoffer were involved in cigar manufacturing or cigar and tobacco stores. Jews such as Morris Greenberger, the Lustig Bros., and J. P. Whitelaw were associated with various levels (distillery, wholesale, retail, saloon, etc.) of the wine and liquor business. A very different service was provided by Henry Gugenheim who ran the ice cream parlor on South Howard Street.

Given Akron's early economic profile, it is interesting to note those economic areas where Jews were not represented. For example, the 1871-72 City Directory does not indicate any known or likely Jewish names affiliated with such early industrial enterprises as Akron Iron Co. or Taplin Rice and Co. (machinery). Similarly, Jews apparently were not involved in the three major agricultural-
implement manufacturing companies or the flour mills. Jews were not evident among listings of local bakers, barbers, blacksmiths, coopers, carpenters, or builders. They were not then involved in hotels, hardware, or insurance. While Ferbstein's other brother-in-law, Armen Sicherman, became the community's first--and for a long time only--Jewish physician, he did not begin practicing here until the beginning of the period of influx. Thus, in 1871 none of the nineteen listed local physicians was Jewish. Jews were also not evident in listings

of local lawyers, dentists, or druggists. The earliest settlers of the Akron Jewish community thus emerge as a fairly homogeneous group. Although divided among Germans, Austrians, and Hungarians, they were all German-speaking Jewish immigrants who for the most part shared roles as small businessmen. As such their adjustment patterns duplicated the experiences of their compatriots in innumerable similar communities stretched across the continent.

Period of Influx (1885-1929)

As remote as Russia must have been to this little German-speaking Jewish community, events there quickly led to the transformation of what had so recently been established here. It will be recalled that the big immigrant push from East Europe began around 1875 and that thereafter the national Jewish immigration statistics became increasingly more dramatic: 1882--13,000; 1891--51,000; 1904-1914--over 100,000 annually; 1921--119,000.⁵⁹ While the vast majority of these immigrants settled in Eastern cities, especially New York, the numbers were large enough that the spill-over was clearly evident in a community such as Akron.

The first Russian Jew arrived in the community around 1878.⁶⁰ Four years later the American Israelite referred to a Russian-Jewish immigrant family of ten who had recently resettled in Akron.⁶¹ The greater Akron community was also aware of the new arrivals. In a two-column article in 1891, the local newspaper reported the arrival of four Jewish families and two single Jewish immigrants from Moscow, Kiev, and St. Petersburg. The story also mentioned the newcomers'

tales of plundered villages, sacked homes, and dishonored wives and children. (Other immigrants typically added the Czar and the Russian army to their list of "push" factors.) These immigrants were identified as "artisans" and most of them were reported as already having found suitable jobs locally. The role of a local Hebrew Alliance in meeting the needs of the new arrivals was duly noted.⁶²

In Lane's history of Akron (1892), 125 out of a total of 300 Jews were identified as being of "other" nationalities than German ("being known as Orthodox Jews").⁶³ "Other" in this case was not limited to Russian. (Much as the label German Jew had come to include those from Austria-Hungary, the term Russian Jew was sometimes used to describe the total East European migration.) In reality many diverse Jewish ethnic groups arrived in Akron. There were sufficient Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Hungarians to support ethnic congregations essentially identified with each of these distinct groups. As detailed further in subsequent chapters, the social, cultural, and religious distinctions of these various groups during this influx period were significant and keenly felt.

The reliability of local Jewish population statistics is notoriously poor. Whatever figures are available, however, for the Akron Jewish community substantiate personal recollections that the early years of the twentieth century marked the big surge in Jewish population growth. From some 175 Jews in Akron in 1881 and 300 in 1892, the figures reached 1,000 in 1905; 1,200 by 1912; 2,000-2,500 by 1917; and anywhere between 6,000 and 7,500 in 1927.⁶⁴ Thus, in these years (1885-1929) the Akron Jewish community repeatedly doubled and tripled

in size. The total impact of this expansion was a thirty-five to forty-fold increase of the Jewish community in less than half a century.

It is difficult to compute ratios of the Jewish community to the general community in this period because of differing estimates of the Jewish population for any given year. Furthermore, Akron's Jewish head count frequently included residents in the greater Akron area. Because these out-of-town Jews were such an insignificant numerical part of the county it would be misleading to compare the total area's Jewish population to either metropolitan Akron or to Summit County. It is probably more acceptable to compare the total greater Akron area's Jewish population to census figures for Akron proper. Even if the most exaggerated area-wide Jewish estimates are placed against the lowest city-limits-only figures, at no time, either in this period or subsequently, did the Jewish population exceed 5 percent of the city's population.

The direct impact of the Jewish influx stands out most clearly in the period immediately before Akron experienced its own rubber population boom. Between 1895 and 1910 the Jewish population increased at a faster rate than the general population, expanding from 1 percent to 4 percent of the total community.⁶⁵ By 1917--in the midst of the rubber boom--the 2,500 Jewish figure represents an absolute increase but a relative decline to just under 2 percent of Akron's 130,000 inhabitants. This figure can also be compared to a 4 percent ratio in

Youngstown (whose population was just under Akron's) and to Cleveland which had a ratio variously estimated at this time from just under 10 percent to 13.33 percent. That year the proportion of Jews in Akron was smaller than the percentage of Jews in Ohio (3.19 percent). Ten years later (1927), however, the available figures suggest another change with Akron Jewry up to some 3.4 percent of the city while the overall ratio of Jews in the state was down to 2.59 percent. Vis-a-vis national Jewish distribution patterns, Akron, by the close of the period of influx, was one of seventy-two Jewish communities in the 2,000 to 8,000 class.⁶⁶

Much as was the case during the settlement period, the East Europeans who came to Akron were part of a "relative chain."⁶⁷ For example, the insistence of an Akron cousin during periodic buying trips to Pittsburgh finally convinced one Russian immigrant to resettle in Akron in 1912. He in turn promptly sent for the family, including six children, he had left behind five years earlier when he emigrated after a pogrom. Sometimes it was a brother who came first and then sent for parents and other siblings. One family brought over seventeen relatives, all from the same "stetl"; another sent a representative back to Russia after World War I to round up and "ransom" the remaining relatives and bring them back to Akron. The massive influence of kinship is evident in the twenty-odd Kodish telephone listings. Very heavily interrelated, a large proportion of them derive from a single town in Russia. The "landsmann" contact on occasion could be most unexpected and casual and still produce settlement. One peddler on a

train layover in Akron was walking along the streets and quite accidentally ran into a distant relative. The result of that chance encounter was the peddler's relocation in Akron.

While for some the relative chain was strong enough to pull new arrivals fairly directly from the Old World to Akron, for many others the journey involved an intermediate adjustment stage in other cities. In a sociological study of the Akron Jewish community, Leonard Bloom noted that "often before reaching [Akron] they would pause in New York or one of the other ghetto areas of the East."⁶⁸ The road to Akron sometimes involved several stopovers, for example, from Bialystock to New York to Pittsburgh to Akron or, in one especially circuitous route, from Russia to Cincinnati to Norfolk to Akron. Hungarian-Jewish arrivals of this period often spent time in more heavily concentrated Hungarian areas like McKeesport and Sharon, Pennsylvania, or Lorain, Ohio.⁶⁹

Regardless of whether these new Akron Jewish immigrants arrived here directly or after some delay, the problem of making a living in their new home was an immediate and pressing concern. Much as their predecessors had done, the new arrivals traveled the peddler-storeowner economic trail. For Abraham Polsky, probably the most familiar Jewish name in Akron, the peddling stage preceded his arrival to the city.⁷⁰ A transition figure between the old immigration and the new, Polsky came from Poland before the mass wave of East Europeans. After peddling in the hinterlands of upstate New York, he worked his way West to Youngstown and eventually set up a small store in Orwell, Ohio. In 1885 he made the move to Akron which was just then beginning to move

into rubber production. With his brother-in-law he opened a dry goods store on Howard Street, Akron's main shopping thoroughfare. The store expanded rapidly and by 1929, under the leadership of the Polsky sons, Harry and Bert, emerged as one of the two leading department stores on Main Street. Polsky's major competitor, O'Neils's (owned by the May Co. of New York since 1912), was managed by two other members of the Akron Jewish community, Jerome Dauby and his son-in-law Lincoln Gries. Jewish merchants also ran two well known cheaper priced downtown department stores, Akron Dry Goods (J. H. Vineberg) and Federman Brothers, established in 1902 and 1904 respectively. Stores established earlier, like Koch's, continued to thrive.

Unlike Polsky, large numbers of the new arrivals put in their peddling apprenticeships locally. They peddled not between farms as the early Jewish settlers had done, but on the streets of Akron, especially around Wooster Avenue.⁷¹ Most typically they were low status junk peddlers, selling rags, bones, bottles, and scrap iron. They also peddled dry goods and hawked fruit and produce. The minutes of the Jewish Social Service Federation record numerous requests for money to purchase or replace a horse so that these peddlers could ply their wares.⁷² The rejection of one such plea on grounds that there were already too many peddlers and they were unable to make an adequate living suggests the dimensions and difficulties of this particular economic adjustment pattern. Gradually many of the new arrivals moved into the ranks of small store owners, many living over or behind their shops.⁷³ Jews dominated the produce trade and ran virtually all downtown pawnshop shops. They were frequently connected with furniture, jewelry,

shoes, liquor, and scrap metal. It has been estimated that a majority of the small businesses stretched along the main commercial street (luggage, clothing, hats, etc.) were owned by Jewish merchants.⁷⁴ More unusual were Jewish stores which dealt in feed and supplies, tents and awnings, and harnesses.

While their counterparts in New York City typically entered the ranks of the proletariat for at least a brief period and played an active role in the labor union movement, such was not the case for Akron Jews--or for other Jewish communities of Akron's size. Even the typical member of the local Workmen's Circle (although, as a subsequent chapter will show, he shared the philosophies and activities of his New York counterpart) was not a factory worker.⁷⁵ While some members did put in time in the rubber plants and participated in the early labor struggles, they tended to be the exception and their connection with the rubber works was typically short-lived. (Only one prominent labor leader ever emerged from the Akron Jewish community.)⁷⁶ Instead, the members of Workmen's Circle were more likely to work at such trades and services as painters, carpenters, plumbers, tailors, bakers, shoemakers, dry cleaners, milkmen, etc. A leading figure in the group was an insurance salesman, another sold poultry, still another owned a grocery store. Eventually most of the members of this fraternal, labor-oriented organization went into their own businesses, at the same time retaining their identification as members of the Arbeiter Ring.

There were some more unusual economic choices. For example, there was a Jewish hairdresser in town with a store on Broadway. Economic opportunities were also seized in fields related to the necessities of

Jewish life: kosher butcher shops, fish markets, delicatessans, bakeries. Old World religious training and skills as a mohel (performer of circumcisions) or shochet (ritual slaughterer) sometimes could be put to economic use in Akron as well. Recalling with irony the problems his father had making a living, one immigrant of this period wrote, "In those prosperous days the . . . Title Shochet was a blessing. He would return from the slaughter house on Sherbondy Hill with a bag full of liver, miltz, lung, kishke, tongue, and other goodies. So we ate."⁷⁷ Thus, while the economic adjustment of New York and other large city Jews varied from the Akron Jewish experience vis-a-vis industrial roles, similar economic opportunities and roles emerged in both places to meet immigrant needs for specifically Jewish services and ethnic commodities.

In comparing the economic adjustment of Akron's Jewish community to that of the city as a whole during this period, the most striking difference is the relative absence of Jews in the rubber industry. In a period when Akron was developing into a one-industry town, Jews played a very minor role on that industry's assembly lines, participated minimally in its professional ranks and virtually not at all in upper management.⁷⁸ It is possible to point out a few who spent some time with the industry and who prospered in their own rubber-related businesses. The generalization, however, that the overall economic adjustment of Akron Jewry proceeded independently of the major industry in town at the time of that industry's greatest boom is valid. Similarly, Jews were not involved in such vital parts of the city's economy as banking, utilities, and industrial manufacturing.⁷⁹ (The final chapter

of this study will reconsider these conspicuous omissions in the context of possible overt or covert anti-semitism.)

Despite their absence from such potentially lucrative economic areas, many Jewish business success stories originated in this period. For example, the Schneier family began in the fish business with a stand in the old city market. From horse and wagon and a retail store begun in 1913, they turned to the wholesale trade, dealing with restaurants, groceries, meat markets, hotels. The business grew yearly and the Schneiers entered the frozen food business early in that industry's development. A bigger store was built on Howard Street (next to the clothing store of the cousin who originally brought them to Akron), coolers were built, a fleet of trucks purchased, and salesmen hired.⁸⁰ While this success story of a family fish business transformed into a million-dollar institution was not accomplished overnight, the rate of achievement was sufficiently rapid to bolster Horatio Alger mythology--and it was not a unique instance. Hyman Ekus went from a job sorting bottles for a salvage dealer to substantial wealth in burlap bags within his lifetime; the Nobils from a shoe store to a major shoe chain and factory.⁸¹

Social mobility was not limited to business rags-to-riches stories. Such settlement period small businessmen as David Tuholsky and Herman Ferbstein saw their respective sons become a local physician and lawyer. In the case of the Ferbsteins, the lawyer-son was educated at Harvard, a daughter at Wellesley. Ferbstein's brother-in-law, Armen Sicherman, also sent his son to Harvard and he in turn became a local lawyer.⁸² Henry Fuerst, Meyer Wise, and Nicholas Greenberger

were other second-generation Akronites who became local attorneys. Greenberger became the first Jew to assume an active political role in Akron as city solicitor (1908-1912).⁸³ The new immigrants also entered the legal profession fairly rapidly (e.g., Hy Subrin, Charles Sacks, Samuel Friedman, Herman Harris). Charles Sacks is an example of a more humble entry into that field. After quitting school at the age of fourteen to help his family, he eventually enrolled in the University of Akron Law School, completed high school (in that order), and passed the Ohio bar exam six months before he received his Bachelor of Law degree.⁸⁴ The first four Jewish physicians in Akron, all of whom were associated with the established Jewish community (Sicherman, Morgenroth, Tuholske, and Havre), opened their practices in this period. By 1926, fifteen Jewish physicians served on the Health Committee of the Federation. Four years later another seven new doctors were added. There is also reference to a Professor Max Morris born in Bielozerkov who was appointed Professor of Mathematics at the University of Akron as early as 1914.⁸⁵

The diversity of cultural groups and the different immigrant generations which characterized the Akron Jewish community during the period of influx make it difficult to construct a single, unified community profile. There was the continuing presence of the pioneering elements increasingly represented by their offspring. There were also significant new additions to this established "German" community (e.g., Polsky, Dauby, Freiberg, Krohngold, Vineberg, Havre, Wachner, etc.). There was the large mass of new immigrants representing different East European territories, ideologies, and customs. Despite such diversity the Jewish immigrant experience had common elements: strongly-felt

Jewish historical associations and loyalties; Old World and New World experiences with discrimination; economic adjustment achieved primarily in the commercial-trade sector. Such factors would provide the bases for subsequent communal homogeneity. The realization of such unity, however, was not achieved between 1885 and 1929. What was achieved was the basic population mix in numbers and kind which would constitute such a community. To summarize some of the basic features of that population mix during this period: it was a time when the economic spectrum of adjustment widened to include more of the trades and menial positions on one end and to encompass the first moves into the professions on the other; it was a time when Akron Jews reflected many of the trends of the national Jewish migration pattern but deviated from the proletarian experience of the majority of East European Jews; finally, it was a time of increasing Jewish population in a city also increasing in overall population and prosperity, but with the difference that the lure of rubber played no direct role in the life of the Jewish community.

Akron Jewry in Depression and War

The third historical period in the life of the Akron Jewish community covers the Depression and World War II years. Although new Jewish migration to the United States was now minimal, and most of those fleeing the approaching Holocaust settled in major urban centers, some dispersal did occur and new German-Jewish refugees reached smaller Jewish communities, including Akron. There is evidence that those who arrived here were representative of this group as a whole in their relatively high level of education and occupational skills. Thus, ten

"refugee physicians" were identified in the county in 1942.⁸⁶ One estimate placed the number of Hitler refugees who arrived in Akron during the thirties at over a hundred.⁸⁷ The relative chain sometimes also played a role in this migration. For example, the German immigrant who became the cantor-religious educator of the conservative synagogue had relatives here. While the number of new immigrants was small, their impact was apparently substantial as "gaunt and stricken . . . their simple presence brings to mind the danger possible . . . if Germany wins."⁸⁸ In this way the Akron Jewish community learned at first hand of the Nazi terror while it attempted to ease the new arrivals' entry into the community.⁸⁹

Estimates of the local Jewish population continued to be erratic. The American Jewish Year Book reissued the 7,500 figure in 1931-32 but two years later gave a 6,500 figure attributed to local estimates. A new high was reached in the 1937 estimate of 8,400. Two years later with this figure still appearing in the American Jewish Year Book, Bloom's study cited 5,000. This is an especially striking difference in the face of evidence confirming a period of relative population stability (e.g., such stability was specifically acknowledged as conducive to organizing a Jewish Community Council at this time). Still a third contrasting figure of 6,000 is mentioned in the American Jewish Year Book of 1943.⁹⁰ As there is no evidence of massive entries or exits to or from the community during these years, these discrepancies are undoubtedly the result of inadequate census techniques. Such contradictory figures make it difficult to establish the precise Jewish ratio in the greater Akron community at this time. Bloom places it in

the 2 percent range at the end of the 1930s. (By way of a national comparison, this contrasts with a figure of 3.5 percent for Jews in the country as a whole.) Bloom also compares the 2 percent ratio to an Akron Negro population of 5 percent, a foreign-born group of 15 percent, and a native-born population of 80 percent (which he describes as heavily southern in origin and disproportionately young).⁹¹

No matter how computed, the relative size of the Jewish community was small. Its occupational visibility, however, was considerable. This was so because a disproportionate number were still involved in mercantile pursuits. Furthermore, Bloom suggests that in 1939 7 or 8 percent of the city's medical or legal practitioners were Jewish.⁹² The major law firms typically did not hire Jewish lawyers but such well-known Jewish law firms as Harris, Subrin, and Sachs emerged during this period. Prohibition meant occupational shifts had to be made for some members of the Jewish community. The Whitelaws, for example, temporarily went into hardware. Meanwhile, Jews continued to operate businesses related to their cultural needs and preferences such as delicatessens, kosher meat markets, bakeries, and, somewhat tangentially, the soda water trade. Some Jews taught in the public schools and, according to Bloom, 3 percent of the local college faculty was Jewish in 1939.⁹³ There were also Jewish manual workers, for example, in the building trades, and some who worked at odd jobs such as theater concessions, night watchmen, porters, etc.

Jews continued to remain virtually disassociated from the rubber industry. There were individual chemists, researchers, and salesmen, and one Jew even became vice president of Goodyear Zeppelin Corporation,

but their overall numbers were extremely few.⁹⁴ Rubber was not a field that needed a Jewish fund raising division. Neither did trucking (which became important in Akron during this period), banking, heavy manufacturing, or the utilities (although the special counsel in utilities for the city in 1934-35 was Jewish).

A group as heavily committed to small business and trade as the Jewish community in Akron would predictably be hard hit by the Depression. The Jewish Social Service Federation in 1929 reported an increase of over 50 percent in unemployment cases from the previous year. Soon thereafter Federation reports commented that the chain stores and syndicates had made it almost impossible for small merchants to exist and indicated that those forced to give up their businesses could not likely expect to resume them.⁹⁵ Family relief cases increased more than fourfold at this time with March 1933 marking a high tide for relief. *Comparative figures showing primary referral causes* tell the story. In 1926, only six of a total of ninety-four family relief cases were attributed to unemployment and they received benefits of \$899.46. By January 1933, the figure was 80 out of 245 and involved expenditures of \$10,367.98.⁹⁶ After that high point, such cases were transferred to the *Department of Public Charities*. Bloom claimed that at one point 10 percent of Jewish families in Akron were beneficiaries of direct relief or WPA.⁹⁷

Individual cases dramatize the impact of the Depression and the extent of involvement with communal and federal programs.⁹⁸ The family of a junk dealer and huckster was reduced to earnings of under a dollar a day. They expressed great embarrassment and fear that the neighbors

might see the Federation Thanksgiving basket which was distributed in 1930. Caseworker notes continue the story: November 1933, given CWA employment; December, in office on account of work clothing--given one pair of gloves, one cap, and a work coat; February 1934, laid off, asking for coal; March, requisition for blankets and flour order and report of \$50 loan from Anshe Sfard Free Loan Society; July 1934, working but earning too little to provide necessities, asked for introductory care for FERA, clothing badly worn; clothing and card provided.

The small businessman's story was similar. For example, one Russian immigrant here since 1911 had owned a furniture store for twenty years. Forced to give it up in 1936 he went on relief, then on WPA. A second-hand furniture job offered hope for only a few weeks before it too folded in the face of business conditions. Odd hauling jobs, junk peddling were tried--and WPA once again. In 1941 another opportunity materialized in a furniture store and the need for assistance in this case was finally over. Although the Federation identified its jobless as primarily the small businessman, junk peddler, and huckster, jobs typically associated with the newer immigrants, they were not the only ones hard hit by the Depression. Such well-known and established community leaders as the Loeb's were forced out of their management role in Koch's clothing store. Furthermore, the Depression not only affected individuals throughout the Jewish community, it also affected communal Jewish institutions. Thus, the Jewish Center, newly opened in 1929, was almost lost and the Temple, the oldest and most prosperous religious institution, found itself in dire straits.

As the country became increasingly involved in the War, so did Akron Jewry. In 1942 the Akron Center News listed 300 names on active duty. By early 1943, 450 names were reported.⁹⁹ Jewish civilian involvement was also extensive in such areas as Akron's War Chest, national bond drives, and servicemen-related projects. The Depression and War years thus mark a period of experiences with national economic and international political crises by a community taking steps toward stability in numbers and homogeneity.

Akron Jewry Since World War II

The post-war years mark still another distinctive period for the Akron Jewish community. While the total number of new immigrants was numerically insignificant, those who came reflected national and international events. Akron received its share of displaced persons. In 1949, for example, thirteen "resettlement units" were welcomed in addition to those brought over by their own relatives. The community agreed to accept thirty-four additional units the following year. By 1953, Jewish Family Service reported a caseload averaging thirteen DP cases per month. In an average month about half of them required some service, counseling, or financial aid.¹⁰⁰ The adjustment of one of these arrivals was traced in the local Jewish press, detailing her initial move into her uncle's home (evidence of family chain), her subsequent enrollment in a local business college (mobility), with a final piece on her wedding shower (social adjustment).¹⁰¹ In 1957 the Jewish Family Service Board minutes referred to five units of Hungarian Revolution refugees it was prepared to take. As Russian Jewish

families were once again freed to emigrate, three such families joined the community by the mid-1970s.

Discrepancies in local Jewish population estimates continue even into this period. The recollections of the director of the Jewish Community Center during most of this period suggest that the community was at its numerical peak in the early post-war years (c. 8,000) and that decline set in some twenty-five years later.¹⁰² However, a 1946 Center News editorial urging the community to come to grips with what it perceived to be a numerically declining community, essentially held to the 1943 figure of 6,000.¹⁰³ Whether representing decline or numerical stability, however, a figure around 6,500 was consistently reported in the American Jewish Year Book between 1948 and 1975. Further evidence of stability and even slight growth is indicated in studies of local Jewish households since 1955. Thus, 1,856 households were identified in 1955, 1,963 in 1960; 1,988 in 1966 and 1,989 in 1975.¹⁰⁴

There is reason to believe, however, that while the size of the population remained relatively constant, there was an increasing level of mobility into and out of the community. Old timers reported that in this period they "no longer knew everyone" and claimed the younger generation were pulling out in significant numbers. The 1975 demographic study of the Akron Jewish community supports this contention. Only 25 percent of household heads were born in Akron while 55 percent were born elsewhere in the United States (20 percent were foreign-born).¹⁰⁵ These 1975 figures also show the immigrant generation status of the community. Of the 20 percent of household heads claiming foreign birth, almost 18 percent had arrived in this country twenty or more

years earlier. Of the 80 percent born in the United States, over 55 percent had a foreign-born father, 47 percent a foreign-born mother.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Akron Jewry had become primarily a second and third generation community.

Jewish economic adjustment showed both continuity and modification during the post-war era. Probably the best index of occupations in which Jews were sufficiently numerous to warrant notice as a group is a list of Jewish Welfare Fund soliciation divisions (1948): furniture, groceries, jewelry, metals and waste, men's apparel, women's apparel, shoes, construction, cleaners, liquor and beverages, tires, real estate and insurance, accountants and lawyers, doctors and dentists. The continuing importance of the clothing trade is evident by the sub-specialties listed in the field. While other areas also represent continuation of long established economic choices, the increasing numbers of Jews in real estate and insurance, construction, and the professions represent qualitative and quantitative economic changes. As in earlier periods, Jews were not totally predictable in their economic choices. During the mid-forties, Akron was apparently a fairly wide-open town and some Jews took a hand in the gambling trade.¹⁰⁷ Meanwhile, specifically Jewish-related jobs continued to exist. In 1950 the local Vaad Hakashruth gave its approval to three Jewish bakeries and four Akron establishments selling kosher products.¹⁰⁸

As the post-war period progressed the most irreversible economic change was the demise of the small downtown "mom-and-pop" stores which could no longer compete with the chains and larger department stores. (Examples of stores forced out by the early fifties were

Margolis, Coes, and Levitts.) There were now, however, some twenty-five Jewish-owned companies which employed thirty or more employees. Figures from the 1975 demographic study provide an overview of the community's economic profile at the close of this period. Forty-one percent of the heads of households were divided about equally between managerial and self-employed businesses (19 and 21 percent respectively). (These figures are fairly consistent with the National Jewish Population Study as reported in the previous chapter.) Thirty percent were professionals; blue collar workers comprised 1.2 percent.¹⁰⁹ The occupational trends of the upcoming generation were similarly moving toward the professions. The single largest occupational category of working children was that of "professional."

There was some modification of Jewish economic connections with the rubber industry during this period. After the war a number of new Jewish engineers, chemists, and researchers joined the industry.¹¹⁰ Jews were also active in rubber-related research at Akron University. Top level executive management was still generally perceived as inaccessible although a Jew, Sam Salem, did become vice president of General Tire. The United Rubber Workers Union had a Jewish research director and education director in this period (Joe Glazer) as well as one high-level executive official (Ike Gold).¹¹¹ However, union leadership, rank and file membership, and rubber management never became major sources of Jewish employment. Much as in the previous period, neither did the banks (Steve Kohn's appointment as a local bank vice president marked a "first" in this area), major law firms, utilities, or the trucking industry. This confirms the experience of

Jews in other middle-sized American communities described in the previous chapter.

The occupations of Jewish community members directly affected their relative income status in the greater community. The Akron Jewish demographic survey found a median total family income of \$21,450 (higher than national median Jewish family income) with 30 percent of those families at an income level of over \$24,000.¹¹² These occupational and income statistics are at considerable variance with the 1970 census figures for the Akron community as a whole (13 percent professional, 6 percent managerial, 9 percent laborers; 3 percent of families earning over \$25,000).¹¹³

In addition to economic data, recent statistics are available which permit some comparisons between the Jewish and greater Akron community regarding age, marital status, and educational levels. According to the Jewish demographic study, 42 percent of the study's respondents were 55 years or older. (Somewhat older than national Jewish figures; considerably older than Akron's figures of 12 percent over 65.)¹¹⁴ Local Jewish family statistics, conforming to the high marriage rates of national studies, showed that 78.5 percent of the respondents (largely female) were married. This compares with 58 percent of Akron females and 65 percent of Akron males. While all but 9 percent of the Jewish sample indicated they had children, only about the same number had children five years old or younger.¹¹⁵ For Akron as a whole, 25 percent of families claimed children under six. Thus, the Jewish community is older than the community at large, more likely to be married, and with considerably fewer young children.

There were also differences in educational levels. The median education of heads of Jewish households was college with over 56 percent having attended college or graduate school (31.2 percent and 25.1 percent respectively). Of those attending college, 14 percent received doctorate degrees.¹¹⁶ For Akron, the median school years completed for those over twenty-five was twelve years. Nine percent had completed four years or more of college. Even though the Jewish figures are confined to heads of households, the relatively higher educational level of the Jewish community is clear.

The above demographic data suggest that overall the Jewish community was upwardly mobile economically, educationally, and professionally. In some individual cases the climb during this period was meteoric. Nathan Kaplin, the son of a Russian immigrant who sold junk and peddled fruit, became a probate judge. Jack Saferstein, the boy who peddled fruit after school, became president of a chain of fifty supermarkets and head of the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority. A national Horatio Alger award went to a local Jewish businessman, Harry Sugar, in 1957 for his rapid rise to the top spot in the country's largest aluminum window and siding company (Alsco).¹¹⁷ Conforming to the occupational trends of the Jewish community as outlined above, this business leader's son was duly elected a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

As the city approached its sesquicentennial observance, Akron Jewry emerged as a second and third generation community which was relatively stable in numbers if not in composition. Compared to the

Akron community at large it was older, richer, and better educated. Compared to national Jewish population averages it was somewhat older, richer, and equally well educated. Increasingly, the Akron Jewish community earned its living in the professions while maintaining strong associations with managerial and business ownership roles. In this changing generational economic adjustment, Akron Jewry was consistent with nation-wide Jewish trends. Similarly, Akron Jewish experience with participation--and non-participation--at various levels of the city's economic life duplicated American-Jewish experiences, especially in middle-sized communities.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Akron Beacon Journal, Sesquicentennial Section, 29 June 1975.
- ² Ibid., 15 June 1865.
- ³ Ibid., 13 January 1882.
- ⁴ Census figures have been drawn directly from the U.S. Census Reports, from the Statistical Abstracts of the United States, and occasionally from local newspaper reports.
- ⁵ Akron Beacon Journal, Sesq. Section, 29 June 1975; Murray Powers, "History of the Catholic Church in Summit County from Origin Through '76" (Akron, 1978), p. 14.
- ⁶ Percentage figures when not available were computed from Census numerical statistics.
- ⁷ Akron City Directory, 1868-1869, p. 18.
- ⁸ Akron Beacon Journal, 6 December 1894.
- ⁹ For examples see Akron Beacon Journal, 22 March 1885; 28 September 1888; 27 May 1889.
- ¹⁰ Akron Map and Atlas Co., Illustrated Summit County, Ohio: Representing Her Manufacturing Interests, Commercial House, etc. (Akron, 1891), p. 26.
- ¹¹ Akron Beacon Journal, 17 April 1972; 26 May 1858; 7 April 1874; Oscar Oldin, ed., A Centennial History of Akron 1825-1925 (Summit County Historical Society, 1925), p. 58.
- ¹² Akron Beacon Journal, 15 March 1866; 8 January 1870; 9 August 1870; Sesq. Section, 4 August 1975; Murray Powers, "History of the Catholic Church in Summit County," p. 21.
- ¹³ Akron Beacon Journal, Sesq. Section, 2 July 1975.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ John A. Botsum, "Stores and Merchants," A Centennial History of Akron, p. 450.
- ¹⁶ Akron Beacon Journal, 17 May 1972.

- ¹⁷ Ibid., 3 April 1972.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 24 April 1972.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., Sesq. Section, 4 July 1975.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 17 April 1972; 10 April 1972.
- ²¹ Ward figures available in U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, United States Census of 1890, vol. 1, p. 566; United States Census of 1910, vol. 3, p. 425.
- ²² Akron Beacon Journal, Sesq. Section, 2 July 1975.
- ²³ U.S. Census of 1910, vol. 3, p. 418; Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1930, p. 22; Ibid., 1940, p. 22.
- ²⁴ Akron Beacon Journal, 6 December 1894; Sesq. Section, 2 July 1975; 11 April 1976; Powers, "History of the Catholic Church in Summit County," pp. 72-90.
- ²⁵ Akron Beacon Journal, Sesq. Section, 2 July 1975; Sesq. Section, 3 July 1975; Olin, A Centennial History of Akron, pp. 109, 110, 113; also see George Atwater, "The Churches of Akron," A Centennial History of Akron, pp. 286-87.
- ²⁶ Kenneth T. Jackson, The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915-1930 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 166.
- ²⁷ Akron Beacon Journal, 27 April 1972.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 17 July 1972; Jackson, The Ku Klux Klan, p. 166.
- ²⁹ Akron Beacon Journal, 10 April 1972; 24 April 1972; 17 May 1972.
- ³⁰ Ibid., Sesq. Section, 3 July 1975.
- ³¹ Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1960, p. 18.
- ³² Alfred W. Jones, Life, Liberty, and Property: A Story of Conflict and a Measurement of Conflicting Rights (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1941), p. 170.
- ³³ Ibid., p. 188.
- ³⁴ Akron Beacon Journal, Sesq. Section, 3 July 1975; 11 April 1976.
- ³⁵ Ibid., Sesq. Section, 4 July 1975.

³⁶United States Census of 1970, Part 37, pp. 75, 79, 137, 396, 408, 468.

³⁷Akron Beacon Journal, 11 April 1976; 4 July 1976; United States Census of 1970, Part 37, Section 2, p. 901.

³⁸Akron Beacon Journal, 3 April 1972.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., 4 July 1976.

⁴¹Milton M. Gordon, "Assimilation in America: Theory and Reality," Daedalus 90 (1961): 279-283; Akron Beacon Journal, 17 May 1972; 3 April 1971; 10 April 1972; Powers, "History of the Catholic Church in Summit County," pp. 72-73.

⁴²See Akron Committee for a Community Audit, A Study of Discrimination in the City of Akron, Ohio (1952) and Akron Commission on Civil Disorder, Report, Presented to John Ballard, Mayor (1968).

⁴³James J. Heller, As Yesterday When It Is Past: A History of the Isaac M. Wise Temple (Cincinnati: Isaac M. Wise Temple, 1942), p. 20.

⁴⁴Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971 ed., s.v. "Cleveland."

⁴⁵Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, A Jewish Guide to the United States (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1954), p. 493.

⁴⁶Jewish Encyclopedia, 1905 ed., s.v. "Ohio."

⁴⁷The record is not clear on the earliest dates of Jewish settlement in Akron. The 1845 date appears in Samuel Lane's local history, Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County (Beacon Journal, 1892), pp. 210-211, and in an earlier article Lane wrote in the Akron Beacon Journal, 13 October 1888. In Lane's account, "a number of Hebrew merchants commenced doing business in Akron as early as 1845 and that class of our population increased yearly." While Koch, Levi and Co. are regularly identified as established in 1848, the owners' residence in the area at that time cannot be substantiated by the 1850 census data. A history of Temple Israel, the historical descendant of the Akron Hebrew Association, claimed that "As early as 1855 the first Jewish families of Isaac Levi and Kaufman Koch migrated to Akron. Herman W. Moss came in 1856, followed in 1864 by Michael Joseph and John Hahn" (Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, 1954). Don Newberger in an article on "Akron Jewry's Centennial" (Jewish Center Year Book, 1950) claims Jewish merchants were in Middlebury in 1850 (later annexed to Akron) and he identifies the Joseph family as the first to settle in

Akron, about 1860. The earliest available directory, Williams' Akron, Wooster Directory, 1859, does include local addresses for Herman Moss and Simeon Hopfman and Jacob Koch (Caufman Koch's residence was given as Cleveland).

⁴⁸ Scott D. Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County, Ohio, 1825-1928, 3 vols. (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1928), 2:770; taped interview with Ruth Leopold, 1972; Lane, Fifty Years and Over, p. 515.

⁴⁹ Archives Temple Israel; Temple Israel (Akron Hebrew Congregation) Constitution and by-laws; Minutes, 2 April 1825-26 September 1875 (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives), Microfilm #888.

⁵⁰ Information regarding national origins of early settlers drawn from interviews (e.g., interview with Maurice and Ethel Whitelaw, February 1978); Temple Israel history, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow; local history, Kenfield, Akron and Summit County, 2:262, 661.

⁵¹ In his study of Cleveland, Lloyd Gartner identifies a Kaufman Koch as arriving bankrupt in Cleveland in 1847, opening a clothing store on Superior Street, and becoming a millionaire by 1885 when his firm ranked as one of the largest manufacturers of clothing in the state. Apparently Koch established the Akron outlet the year after his arrival in Cleveland. Gartner, History of the Jews of Cleveland, p. 20.

⁵² Taped interviews with Lee Ferbstein, 1972, and Ruth Leopold; Ibid., interview with the Whitelaws. Also Kenfield, Akron and Summit County, 3:770.

⁵³ This estimate tabulated by Rabbi Fleischman and reported in Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, p. 3.

⁵⁴ Ferbstein and Leopold tapes; Kenfield, Akron and Summit County, 2:22.

⁵⁵ See footnote 47 above.

⁵⁶ Verified by matching names of first members of Akron Hebrew Association with listings in City Directories, 1859-1885.

⁵⁷ Samuel Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," Akron Jewish Center Year Book, 1937, pp. 42-44.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Bernard D. Weinryb, "Jewish Immigration and Accommodation to America," The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group, ed. Marshall Sklare (New York: Free Press, 1958), p. 4. Estimates of Jewish immigration can also be found in the annual editions of the Jewish Year

Book. A classic early study is Samuel Joseph's "Jewish Immigration to the United States from 1881-1910," Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law 59 (1914):417-622. Relative figures on Jewish immigration as compared to the total migration to America are charted in Mark Wischnitzer, Visas to Freedom: The History of HIAS (Cleveland: World Publication Co., 1956), pp. 33, 37, 57.

⁶⁰Encyclopaedia Judaica, s.v. "Akron," by Mona Nobil.

⁶¹American Israelite, 28 April, 1882.

⁶²Akron Beacon Journal, 21 December 1891.

⁶³Lane, Fifty Years and Over, pp. 210-211.

⁶⁴Most of the figures cited were drawn from the American Jewish Year Book. For example, see editions of 1912-13, p. 265; 1915-16, p. 346; 1917-18, p. 412. Contrasting figures include the 2,500 figure for 1917 which appeared in Oscar Olin, Akron and Environs: Historical, Biographical, Genealogical (Chicago: Lewis Publication Co., 1917), p. 187; the lower 1927 estimate of 6,000 was reported by Malvyn Wachner, "Progressive Jewish Organizations," Akron and Summit County, ed. Kenfield, 1:534.

⁶⁵Leonard Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," Jews in a Gentile World: The Problem of Anti-Semitism, eds. Isaacque Graeber and Stewart Britt (New York: Macmillan Co., 1942), pp. 182, 198.

⁶⁶American Jewish Year Book, 1918-1919, p. 48; 1919-1920, p. 608; 1928-29, pp. 102, 110; 1930-31, pp. 221, 223.

⁶⁷Examples of the relative chain are cited in 1972 taped interviews with Max Schneier and Rose Belenky; Ben Marks, personal letter to Leslie Flaksman, 14 March 1972; interviews with Jack Reich, June 1972; Phillip Dunn, October 1972; Belle Segal, July 1972.

⁶⁸Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 184.

⁶⁹Hungarian "stopovers" confirmed by 1972 tapes and interviews with Sidney Havre; Anna Friedman; Belle Segal; Belle Weiss.

⁷⁰Akron Beacon Journal, Special Section, 29 June 1957; Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County, 3:585; Karl H. Grismer, Akron and Summit County (Akron: Summit County Historical Society, 1952), p. 724.

⁷¹Ben Marks letter; confirmed in numerous tapes mentioned in earlier footnotes.

⁷²Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 1914-1915.

- ⁷³ Ben Marks letter.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid.; interviews with Jack Reich; Belle Weiss, November 1973.
- ⁷⁵ Telephone interview with Fran Baranoff, June 1975. Also see Chapter I, p. 20.
- ⁷⁶ Ike Gold, who eventually became URW International Secretary-Treasurer.
- ⁷⁷ Ben Marks letter.
- ⁷⁸ Taped interview with Charles Schwartz, 1972; Fran Baranoff conversation.
- ⁷⁹ Interview with Nathan Pinsky, Director of Jewish Family Service, April 1972.
- ⁸⁰ Max Schneier tape; Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County, 3:176.
- ⁸¹ Akron Beacon Journal, 21 March 1954.
- ⁸² Taped interviews with Lee Ferbstein and Merryl Sicherman, 1972; Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County, 2:22. Harvard was a choice for Cleveland's second generation too. Gartner, History of the Jews of Cleveland, p. 193.
- ⁸³ Ibid., pp. 262-264.
- ⁸⁴ Akron Jewish Center, Annual Meeting, 26 January 1964.
- ⁸⁵ Jewish World, 11 September 1914, p. 5.
- ⁸⁶ Letter from President of Akron Jewish Community Council to Summit County Medical Society, 13 June 1942.
- ⁸⁷ Taped interview with Mrs. Max Rogovy, 1972.
- ⁸⁸ Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 199.
- ⁸⁹ Akron Jewish News, 16 December 1938; 21 March 1940.
- ⁹⁰ The 1937 figures were derived from the Jewish Statistical Bureau in connection with the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies; the 1943 figures derived from canvassing memberships of various Jewish organizations. American Jewish Year Book, 1945, p. 646.
- ⁹¹ Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 182.
- ⁹² Ibid., p. 192.

- ⁹³ Ibid., p. 193.
- ⁹⁴ Akron Jewish News, 18 February 1938.
- ⁹⁵ Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 18 February 1932.
- ⁹⁶ Jewish Social Service Federation, Annual Reports reviewing years 1926, 1932.
- ⁹⁷ Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 194.
- ⁹⁸ Drawn from old and terminated Jewish Social Service Federation case records.
- ⁹⁹ Akron Jewish News, 9 October 1942; 5 February 1943.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 3 March 1950; Jewish Social Service Federation, Reports, 26 January 1954.
- ¹⁰¹ Akron Jewish News, 2 May 1947; 2 August 1946.
- ¹⁰² Akron Beacon Journal, 24 January 1972.
- ¹⁰³ Akron Jewish News, 23 October 1946.
- ¹⁰⁴ Leslie Flaksman, "Growth and Mobility of Jewish Population in Akron from July 1955 to July 1963," Jewish Center Year Book, 1963; National Jewish Welfare Board Community Planning Services, "Akron Jewish Population--Census Tract Data," 1966; Edwin E. Wagner, Robert Deitchman and David Kapusinski, A Demographic and Attitudinal Survey of the Jewish Population of Akron, Ohio (Akron Jewish Community Federation, 1975), p. 100.
- ¹⁰⁵ Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 100.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ben Marks letter.
- ¹⁰⁸ Akron Jewish News, 3 February 1950.
- ¹⁰⁹ Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 99. See Chapter I, p. 33.
- ¹¹⁰ Interviews with Gloria Reich and Nathan Pinsky, Summer 1972. For reference to those working in rubber also see Akron Jewish News, 1 January 1960; 2 March 1962; 5 June 1964; 2 October 1964; 1 January 1965.
- ¹¹¹ Akron Jewish News, 7 September 1962; 4 January 1963; also see footnote 76 above.

¹¹²Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 99, 126.

¹¹³See footnote 36 above.

¹¹⁴Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 20, 126; see Chapter I above, p. 36 and footnote 36 above.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 27, 102.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 23, 126. For comparison with national Jewish figures, see Chapter I above, p. 33.

¹¹⁷Akron Jewish News, 9 October 1960; 6 December 1963; Akron Beacon Journal, 20 March 1973.

CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS ADJUSTMENT

Glazer and Moynihan have suggested that the easiest way of identifying Jews is to ask them their religion. Regardless of their level of theological commitment, congregational participation, or ritual observance, those born of Jewish parents almost invariably acknowledge being Jewish.¹ While these writers based their finding on experiences with the nation's largest American-Jewish community, Bloom reached similar conclusions for Akron Jews. Although noting compromises with ritual he found that ". . . for the general Jewish population (of Akron) the B'nai B'rith motto is . . . accurate: 'Religion is the life of Israel.'"² Some local Jews also identified themselves in other ways--for example, as a nationality--but almost universally they acknowledged the validity of the Jewish-religion connection. "In the mind of the Jew (of Akron) religion is the sine qua non of Jewishness."³ In terms of overall self-identity, then, Akron Jewry seems to be in the mainstream of American-Jewish religious adjustment.

To trace the extent of such "mainstreaming" across the many facets of American-Jewish religious life requires a comparative review of local and national religious practices during four historical periods. Thus, the period of Akron Jewish settlement (1865-1885) coincides nationally with the rise of Reform Judaism; the time of influx (1885-1929) with East European ethnic orthodoxy; the Depression and World

War II era with a spirit of irreligion and the rise of Conservatism; the Post War period with Jewish revival and religious identification.

If religious identification was indeed central to Akron Jewry, then the data of religious life should relate meaningfully to the theories of integration discussed in an earlier chapter. Worship practices and congregational affiliation patterns can be scrutinized for levels of behavioral and structural assimilation (*Gordon*), for generational variations in denominational affiliations and ritual observances (*Kramer & Leventman*), and for signs of stress and strain (*Leibman*). Apart from such relationships to national religious trends and assorted theoretical positions, however, the religious life of Akron Jewry merits consideration on its own terms. As discussed below, five major concerns characterized that story over four successive historical periods: *institutional management* (*synagogue memberships, facilities, administrative problems regarding dues and pews, etc.*); *worship services* (*format and conduct, degree of orthodoxy and "Americanization"*); *special religious concerns* (*kashrut, religious schools, cemeteries*); *religious leadership* (*duties and personalities of the rabbis*); *interactions with the greater community* (*regarding religious observances, interfaith activities, etc.* Taken together, these concerns provide insight into the changing adjustment patterns in perhaps the most critical area of Jewish life in terms of self-definition and communal bonding.

Formative Years: 1865-1885

At the time of its founding in 1865 the Akron Hebrew Association was far from an isolated Jewish outpost in Ohio. Looking to the

southern end of the state (which the new congregation did fairly quickly), Cincinnati was already emerging as the national headquarters of the Reform Jewish movement. Isaac Meyer Wise, there since 1854, began publishing the Minhag America in 1857 and founded the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1873. Much closer to the north was Cleveland's substantial religious community, in existence since 1839. It became an immediate source of itinerant religious leadership (e.g., a chazan for Yom Kippur services) and ceremonial objects (the first Torah). By 1870 the extent of organized Jewish life reported for the state included seven religious organizations and edifices with a seating capacity of 4,000 and a total valuation of over \$360,000 (in comparison to national figures of 189 organizations and 152 buildings with seating for 73,000 and a total valuation of over \$5,000,000).⁵ Even locally the Akron Hebrew Association could not claim to be a pioneer religious organization. Many Akron churches were flourishing by 1865, having passed through the typical Western movement stages of itinerant preachers, local church organization, building construction, and affiliation with national churches.

It will be recalled that the Jewish religious climate by mid-century was increasingly receptive to the Reform movement, a liberalizing and "Americanizing" trend which sacrificed parts of the traditional ritual for more conformity to the model of liberal Protestantism. To review, the issues at stake were primarily religious procedures and forms of worship rather than theological questions (e.g., language of the service, role of the sermon, use of prayer shawls, playing the organ--in Gordon's terms all questions of behavioral

assimilation). Of a slightly different order was the gradual shift of philosophical emphasis to Mosaic Law as ethical law rather than ritual commandment and the correlating view of Judaism's mission as fellow-seeker with Christianity for universal social justice. By 1880 most of the nation's 250,000 Jews were identified with the Reform movement.⁶

In this religious context the Akron Hebrew Association drew up its constitution and moved to establish its religious identity. That religious concerns and objectives--of central concern throughout this period--were clearly in the minds of the founding fathers is suggested by the constitution's preamble. Thus, the theme of religious bonding was specifically mentioned as the primary motive for the community's first Jewish organization. "On the second day of April 1865 the Israelites of the City of Akron met to organize a Society for the Propagation of the ancient and revered doctrines and character and more enlarged knowledge of Hebrew Faith, among its believers in Akron and adjacent County."⁷

The language, format, and provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws were remarkably "American." For example, the document was written in English (an early sign of cultural assimilation which also occurred in other communities). There were the standard sections on officers (the typical ones of president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and trustees) and their respective duties. Quorums were defined, annual elections by ballot assured, rule by simple majority--and in some cases two-thirds majority--established, the order of business prescribed. Indeed, the only major distinguishing features of

this document from that of any other American organization would appear to be its handwriting (Germanic script letters) and its membership criteria: males over the age of thirteen (the age of bar mitzvah).⁸

As described in the previous chapter, the congregation's founding fathers were German-speaking and engaged in commercial pursuits. There is also some evidence that in terms of character they were a no-nonsense group. Provisions for fines were clearly enumerated in the by-laws. Members not appearing at three consecutive meetings without satisfactory excuse were fined one dollar. Those falling in arrears on monthly dues were to be fined a specified amount for each month they were delinquent. Germanic values of orderliness and propriety and the view (explicitly acknowledged in later periods) that the actions of "one" reflect on "all" may explain by-law provisions for fines, suspensions, and expulsions after a "fair and impartial trial" and a majority decision of the Association membership. Offenses to be handled in this way included "wantonly" creating a disturbance at an Association meeting, misrepresenting the organization's character "abroad," participating in any measure designed to harm the Association, or being involved in defacing books or property.⁹ Such measures apparently did not estrange potential members. Fifteen names were associated with the initial organization stage of the Association, and twenty signatures appear as Charter members in the minutes.¹⁰ Thirty members are identified by 1880. (A slightly lower estimate of twenty paying members appeared in a local newspaper article of 1885.) By 1888, Lane identified thirty-five paying heads of families.¹¹

The early physical locations and facilities of the new congregation were temporary and makeshift, contributing to a state of religious flux throughout this period. From a single rented room (supplemented by the use of special facilities such as the Masonic Hall for holidays), the Association moved to several rooms in the Minor J. Allen building on South Howard Street (1869); to Clark's new building across the street (1874); to the Barber building on Howard and Cherry (1880); and finally in 1885 to its first real house of worship--the former home of St. Paul's Episcopal church on High Street.¹² The most detailed description of a sanctuary outfitted by the Akron Hebrew Association during this early period appeared in the local paper in conjunction with the 1874 dedication ceremonies of the rooms in Clark's Building.¹³ The dimensions of the sanctuary were given as 20' x 65'. The Holy Ark on the east wall was 11' tall by 5' wide and constructed of wood with Greek columns. Hebrew lettering was visible on the frieze as well as inside the ark. There were twenty-eight pews providing seating room for 150. Reference to an organ provides physical evidence of the influence of the Reform movement.

Typical management concerns of this period involved material issues such as furnishings (e.g., numerous reports of the committee on chairs), congregational seating (frequent discussions regarding family pew assignments (a new trend in American synagogues), finances and dues, staff (professional and janitorial), and the important question of wider national religious affiliation. Moves to settle this last matter by joining the Union of American Hebrew Congregations were initiated in 1873 and were formally approved by the congregation in

the winter of 1875.¹⁴ This was obviously a significant move putting the Akron Hebrew Association under the Reform banner.

While the Constitution and early Association administrative decisions highlight such aspects of adjustment as the centrality of religious objectives, cultural assimilation, and religious affiliation, it is in connection with religious worship itself that the inner pushes and pulls which would characterize much of Akron's Jewish religious life first became visible. The "tugs" were typically between Orthodox and Reform positions--between European traditions and the "American" way. The first hint of exploring alternate worship forms occurred with inquiries into Wise's prayerbook in 1867 but the first motion to adopt it failed.¹⁵ Although unanimously adopted later that year the matter was apparently not finally resolved because three years later still another committee charged with revision of the "divine worship" recommended the use--not acted upon--of the Einhorn prayer book (rival to Isaac Mayer Wise, David Einhorn was known as the leader of the more extreme faction of the Reform movement and for his devotion to German culture). The prayer book issue surfaced again in 1875 when the minutes record still another appeal for the adoption of a new prayer book with both English and Hebrew texts.¹⁶

Proposed changes in the service focused not only on the selection of prayerbooks but on requests for change in the language of the service from Hebrew to English (1869), the beginnings of occasional preaching (1869), introduction and subsequent revitalization of a choir (1870 and 1875), and revision of the criteria for a minyan (the quorum necessary for a service changed from males only--over the age of thirteen--to

"persons" in 1870).¹⁷ The most controversial change, however, centered on appropriate male ceremonial garb. In January of 1870, Isaac Levi moved that "our heads be uncovered" during services. Traditional views prevailed and the motion went down to defeat. The worship revision committee assigned to consider the matter supported Levi's position but its recommendations also were overruled. Nine months later the yarmulka issue was again "earnestly debated."¹⁸ An amendment excepting the chazan (cantor) was adopted but a similar option for all "gentlemen" on this particular occasion was rejected. By 1871 the question of appropriate ritual attire was finally settled. The tallis was rejected but head coverings were optional. While at least one early member, Henry Kraus, exercised that option and refused to attend services without the traditional yarmulka, the trend toward Reform practices was unmistakable.¹⁹ Another instance of flux in religious life involved tampering with the starting time of the services. Although the traditional Sabbath dates (Friday night and Saturday) held fast, services generally moved toward a later evening and morning hour (thereby increasing deviation from the more traditional sundown, early morning worship schedule). Saturday service times are missing entirely from the City Directories between 1882 and 1886 although the Friday evening services are duly noted. Whatever the explanation for this hiatus, ten o'clock Saturday morning services were resumed under Rabbi B. Rabino in 1887. It seems likely that the time changes were introduced as attempts to encourage increased attendance and attentiveness at services--certainly concerns in these areas were repeatedly voiced in the minutes. Again, such changes coincided with national Reform trends.

There was also apparent concern about appropriate decorum because the September 14, 1873, minutes record a motion to keep more perfect order in the service and "stop children from running about."²⁰ If children were to be restrained, they certainly were not to be ignored--and religiously this was true for girls as well as boys. The confirmation day of four "daughters of Israel" in 1870 was described by several congregation members as marking the happiest day since their arrival in Akron.²¹ Here, clearly religion was a unifying force in local Jewish life. Here also was a strong commitment to youthful religious expression in the reform mold. While this particular occasion was reported in the local newspaper, the Temple history officially dates its confirmation classes from the one of 1878, which contained both girls and boys.²² The ancient rites of passage, of course, were connected not with confirmation but with the bar mitzvah ceremony. The Akron Hebrew Association did not have its first bar mitzvah service until the early 1880s. The speech given by Harry Leopold on that occasion (in English) makes for charming reading with its sentimental references to parents' love that "has made my childhood seem like an endless day of happiness . . ." and flowery promises to "try to be a source of happiness to my parents, a pleasure to my friends and an honor to myself and my religion."²³

In the religious tugs between the old and new, some of the traditional lingered. Thus, a detailed account of the dedication services of 1874 documents the still pervasive use of German and Hebrew "chanting" during the service. Rabbi Aaron Suhler's discourse was given in German as well. His message, however, was in the new or Reform idiom. Suhler claimed that Judaism walked hand in hand with reason and science

and was not confined to simple ceremonies. He equated the "Book of Law" with the love of neighbor and insisted that the new sanctuary was open to all people regardless of religious creed. The call was for pious deeds rather than written prayers. The theme of loyal Americanism was also touched on this occasion when a lay congregational leader commented on the Association's goals of promoting "faithful Israelites and good citizens worthy of this free and great country."²⁴

Religious concerns and adjustments were not limited to the worship service. Three other areas of major religious importance involved the observance of kashrut (dietary regulations), the development of a religious school and the establishment and maintenance of a cemetery. The staying power of the kosher dietary practices seems to have been strong. (This supports Liebman's theory that culturally-related observances outlasted strictly religious rituals.) One of the three major duties of the first religious leader hired by the Association in 1865 was that of shochet, or supervisor of ritual slaughtering.²⁵ It remained a function of that office and a concern of the Board for at least a decade. (In 1879, a special committee reported on its efforts to obtain bids from butchers and another special committee was duly appointed to survey the membership for the guarantees purchase orders that butcher--and congregation member--David Leopold required.)²⁶

From very early on, religious dispute surrounded the matter of kashrut and in effect made religion a divisive force in the community. Troubles between Rev. Felix Jesselsohn, in his role as shochet, and the butchers prompted a motion designed to solve the dilemma. Jesselsohn's salary was to be reduced by the amount equivalent to his shechidah

responsibilities and thereafter, although "obliged" to attend to these duties, he was freed to make whatever arrangements he saw fit with the butchers and get suitable compensation directly from them. The precise obligations and arrangements of the congregation and its paid religious leader regarding this matter were further defined in 1874 in the terms of Rabbi Suhler's appointment.²⁷ Part of the agreement was that he was obliged to act as shochet when required to do so by any member, for which service said member would pay a specific price per head (25¢ for beef, 10¢ for small cattle, and 5¢ for poultry). Three months later, commenting on this "vexed question," the minutes express some satisfaction that this matter which had so often been "the cause of trouble and dissatisfaction" had been definitively regulated so as "never to interfere again" with Association affairs or disturb the harmonious feelings of its members.²⁸ Apparently the problem did not evaporate, however, because the following year the secretary was ordered to communicate to a member that the Society had indeed complied with its duty in procuring a shochet but the process itself was a private matter to be settled between the individual member and the butcher or shochet. Perhaps the problem was so "vexing" because the members did not share a universal commitment to the practices of kashrut. For example, the sumptuous wedding meal which celebrated the union of two leading Akron Jewish families in 1874 (the Marienthals and Josephs) included roast venison (a prohibited meat) as one of the entrees.²⁹

Just as the founding fathers focused almost immediately on the needs of members in the religious area of kashrut, so too formal attention was rapidly directed to the matter of religious education for the

children. In October of 1865, the Association resolved to "take charge and wholly superintend" the Hebrew and German school which had been organized by Association members and to make the teaching of these areas a primary function of any hired religious leader.³⁰ At that meeting money was also authorized for suitable books for instruction. School facilities were provided in conjunction with the numerous quarters rented by the Association during these early years. For example, a large room specifically set aside for the school is mentioned in descriptions of the Clark building facilities. From early memories of her Sunday school class, the daughter of David Leopold recalled a single windowless room lit by gaslight and a pot bellied stove which warmed only those who sat near it in the double-desk seats.³¹

That school was intended to be a serious matter and that the Board viewed its role vis-a-vis the school seriously as well is suggested by the 1866 resolution that school examinations be held the following week, that all were invited to attend--and that the teacher was to be so informed. The motion carried unanimously and the president was authorized to purchase appropriate presents to be awarded to the scholars on examination day. (By 1875 it was recommended that one day every six months be set aside for such examinations.)³² Even more indicative of the degree of commitment to education was the time devoted to it. In 1870, school met from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. Monday through Thursday evenings and two hours on Sunday morning. During children's vacation periods, classes were conducted three hours daily. A Sabbath school was added by 1874 and the Sunday forenoon schedule went from nine to noon. The significance of these time frames goes

beyond their verification of religious instructional commitment. That the hours selected were "after school" confirms the adoption of allegiance to the American public school. This fact was specifically acknowledged in a local press article which described the religious school and noted that, "It will be seen that the children are not interrupted in their duties at the public school."³³

The rules and regulations governing the school were precisely set forth in the minutes of July 19, 1874. The school board was empowered to establish the course of study in conjunction with the teacher. Strict compliance with the rules was a condition of the teacher's employment and the rules themselves had to be read to the school at least once a quarter. As it was the teacher's prescribed duty to exercise "constant supervision" over the students' general conduct, so it was the scholars' obligations to obey all teacher directions, show diligence and respect, and "refrain entirely from the use of profane or improper language and . . . be clean and neat in person and attire." Equally strict rules required excuses for absences and provided for suspension and expulsion. These rules, however, apparently failed to totally intimidate the aspiring scholars because one former pupil remembers students eating dill pickles behind their books and responding to dares of spitting at the fire.³⁴

By the close of the settlement period there were some thirty students enrolled in the school. An article in the American Israelite reported the Sabbath school "in a flourishing condition," with courses in such areas as Jewish history, and commented that "it would do your heart good to hear the children read and recite Hebrew prayers and

translate them word for word."³⁵ (Interestingly, the teaching of Hebrew writing was declared unnecessary at one Association meeting in 1874 and the recommendation made to eliminate it from the curriculum. This would seem to be a tip in the scales toward Americanization.)³⁶

The need for consecrated burial grounds has frequently been described as a prime motivating factor triggering the initial formation of pioneer Jewish congregations. (In Toledo, for example, a burial society and the acquisition of burial grounds preceded any significant religious organization.)³⁷ It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that active discussion about providing for such facilities does not appear in the Akron Hebrew Association minutes until a year after it was established. It was not until September of 1866 that half an acre of land was actually purchased for \$225 and a deed placed on file with the Summit County Recorder.³⁹ The following year a special committee was appointed to supervise the preparation of the Cemetery. The resulting improvements were duly noted in the local press as including a "neat" fence, seeding, and tree plantings. The location of the cemetery was described as between the new Catholic cemetery and the Akron Rural Cemetery.⁴⁰

Even the cemetery was not immune to change. By 1870 the committee on cemetery improvement proposed that it be sold. A high and remote section of the Akron Rural Cemetery (later known as Glendale Cemetery) was procured instead and became the new burial ground for the early Jewish settlers.⁴¹ Amendments to the Association constitution in 1872 specified that each member had the privilege of buying one or more family lots and considerable detail was expended on the precise

implications for wives, nephews, etc. as well as permissible headstone markings.⁴² The question of maintaining the old traditions would become an issue here as well. In 1874, a complaint was registered in the minutes that the Association's lots in the Akron Rural Cemetery were not laid out in conformity to the old Hebrew traditions regarding burial facing east.⁴³

The need for professional religious leadership was acted upon fairly quickly by the Association. Such leadership was initially conceived in considerable contrast to the American ministerial role. Thus, a Mr. L. Wolf of Cleveland was invited to officiate as the cantor--not rabbi--for the congregation's first Yom Kippur. A more permanent arrangement was concluded the following month when Nathan Hirsch, "recently from Europe," was retained to fill a threefold religious leadership role: teacher, shochet, and chazan. In addition to his salary (\$500 per annum), Hirsch was boarded gratuitously by Association members on a rotating monthly basis.⁴⁴ Two years later, Nathan Hollstein, "an eager, dark-bearded Hungarian teacher," was hired in his stead to perform the same duties--for \$600.⁴⁵ As has been suggested, the duties of these gentlemen were not really analogous to those of the typical Christian minister. Probably the first important move in that direction came in 1869 when Rev. Felix Jesselsohn introduced occasional preaching. This particular function, however, was not specifically mandated in the list of duties enumerated for his successor, Mr. Suhler. (Later minutes do refer to Suhler's intention of reading a popular lecture every Friday evening to enhance the quality of the services.)⁴⁶ Instead, the obligations continued to stress the chazan-

shochet-teacher roles plus prescribed janitorial responsibilities for keeping the rooms in good order and attending the fire as needed.⁴⁷

In addition to the problems posed by the controversial shochet role and the substantial teaching assignment, the prospects for job security for the early rabbis were poor. A key indicator of the flux in religious life was the fact that changes in religious leadership occurred at a rate exceeding even the numerous changes in Association facilities and changes in the format of the service. Thus, in the first twenty years the Association had seven religious leaders: Hirsch, Hollstein, Jesselsohn, Suhler, Schreier, Burgheim, and Fleischman.

While the religious adjustment of the Akron Jewish community was primarily an internal affair, it did not go unnoticed by the greater American-Jewish community or the greater Akron community. For example, the American-Jewish newspaper, the Occident, reported the organization of the congregation and the hiring of its first teacher-chazan and the American Israelite noted the Association's move to new quarters in 1874 and described its ongoing programs in 1880.⁴⁸ Local newspaper coverage reported such religious activities as cemetery improvements (1867), the arrival of the congregation's first Torah (1868), confirmation services (1870), rabbinical changes (1883), new synagogue facilities (1874 and 1885), and religious holidays (1874).⁴⁹ The "church" section of the Akron City Directory began listing the Akron Hebrew congregation in 1873. Religious interactions with the community went beyond the awareness stage made possible by such reporting. As early as 1868, many prominent Christian citizens and local clergy were present at the services held in connection with the arrival of the new Torah.

(Interestingly, although not historically unique to Akron, the congregation's first organist-choir director was non-Jewish.)⁵⁰ The ceremonies that evening--and on other occasions such as the High Holidays--were held in a community facility, namely, the Masonic Hall. Further, it will be recalled that the Episcopal church sold its facilities to the Association in 1885. Although prior to that occasion the Jewish community had rejected calling on other denominations or the public in general for financial assistance, at the time of this important move such assistance was sought and received.⁵¹

Jewish religious practices probably affected the greater community most directly when the Jewish merchants closed their stores for the holidays (notices of such closings were published in the local paper).⁵² The extent of the impact of early Jewish religious leaders is not completely clear. Significantly, one Fourth of July celebration sponsored by the German Liedertafel featured Rabbi A. Burgheim as the main speaker. His speech contained a poetic tribute to American liberty and the part the German speaking population had played in achieving it.⁵³

By the close of the pioneering period in 1885 many of the adjustment patterns which would prove characteristics of Akron's overall religious adjustment were already in evidence. The reasons that brought the founding fathers together in the first place were intimately involved with religious identity and religious expression. Questions of religious worship, religious teaching, and religious practices continued to preoccupy them during the next twenty years. Secondly, there was considerable flux in the religious life of this period: numerous facilities, many religious leaders, changing religious formats, etc. Thirdly,

ethnic bonds as expressed in the continued use and instruction of German seem to have been an important element of religious organizational life. Finally, religious "push and pull" and the seeming paradox of religion as divider as well as unifier first emerged in this early period as evidenced in debates over the format of the service and kashrut.

Vis-a-vis the national American-Jewish experience, the Akron Hebrew Association seems squarely in the Reform camp by the end of its settlement period, thus putting it within the dominant mode of Jewish religious expression at the time. While some reform practices seem to have been present right from the beginning (*mixed seating in family pews*), others, such as the discarding of the tallis and yarmulka, the introduction of occasional preaching, the use of choir and organ, searches for English-Hebrew prayer books, and the affiliation with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform) came about gradually and not without controversy. Some traditions, however, proved long-lasting--for example, continuing observance of kashrut by individual congregants, burial practices, services on the Jewish Sabbath day, etc.

The religious changes that did--and did not--occur fall fairly comfortably into Gordon's theoretical explanations of the integration process. No known attempts were made to establish joint worship services on a regular basis with Christians (*structural assimilation*). Many moves were made to modify existing religious practices in the direction of a more "Americanized" and less "orthodox" format (*cultural assimilation*). That cultural assimilation, however, was far from complete in this period was evident in the continuing prominence (despite challenges) of the German and Hebrew languages and religious leadership

job descriptions defined in terms of teacher-chazan-shochet roles.

Years of Influx--The Rise of Orthodoxy, 1885-1929

The introduction of East European Orthodoxy to Akron coincided with its increasing importance on the national scene. Orthodox congregations multiplied rapidly accounting in significant measure for the dramatic increase in the number of religious organizations from 189 to 533 between 1870 and 1890 and a further increase to 3,118 by 1926.⁵⁴ Akron Jewry experienced a similar increase in the number of its religious organizations and in this case all the new synagogues could be listed in the Orthodox column. Much as in the settlement period, the years of influx showed significant signs of cultural assimilation, resistance to change, and inner tensions.

1885 was a year of religious transition in the community. It was the year that the Akron Hebrew Association moved into its first real synagogue on High Street. It was also the year that a second Jewish religious organization--the community's first Orthodox congregation--came into existence. Known as Anshe Emeth, the congregation was listed in the City Directory as meeting in Pflueger's Block and its rabbi was identified as David Feuerlicht. (The rabbi came from Cleveland where he was reported as "doing excellent work" for Congregation Oheb Zedek, an Orthodox congregation originally founded by newly-arrived Hungarians.)⁵⁵ This congregation was undoubtedly an early attempt to meet the special religious needs of the new Jewish immigrants who had arrived on the scene beginning in the late 1870s.

The fortunes of the first local Orthodox synagogue, Anshe Emeth, were apparently ephemeral because no further listing of this congrega-

tion or its spiritual leader appeared in any City Directory after 1885. Lane's mention three years later of some 175 Orthodox Jews in the community cited no congregation by name, merely noting the existence of a separate Orthodox organization maintained without benefit of religious leadership.⁵⁶ The next reference to an Orthodox congregation was the dedication in 1893 of synagogue facilities in the Henry block of East Market Street.⁵⁷ Although the evidence is not completely clear, it is likely that this congregation--listed in the City Directory for the next eleven years as the Orthodox Hebrew Congregation--is the same one more familiarly known as the Sons of Peace. In any event, with the move of the Sons of Peace (now clearly identifiable as the single Orthodox synagogue in the community) to their Bowery Street "shul" in 1903, the permanent continuing identity of the Orthodox community in Akron was assured. The next two decades produced a rash of new synagogues. Some, like the Children of Israel and Beyth Jacob, had City Directory listings under these names for less than half a dozen years. Others were destined for a much longer life span. By 1928 the City Directory listed six Orthodox congregations: Sons of Peace, New Hebrew Congregation, Anshe Emeth, Ahavas Zedek, Anshe Sfard, and Beyth Jacob. Of these, all except the last had already existed at least a decade.

The facilities housing these Orthodox synagogues typically evolved from small meeting rooms in homes or rented quarters to more permanent synagogue buildings. The move to the Bowery Street address alluded to above was from rented quarters in Kaiser Hall. Anshe Sfard, which initially held its services in private homes, moved to its own

synagogue building on Euclid and Raymond in 1921. Ahavas Zedek moved from a house on the corner of Bowery and Buchtel to its own synagogue building on Buchtel in 1926. Whether in temporary or permanent locations, the Orthodox synagogues were typically identified with their locations: the Bowery Street Shul (Sons of Peace); the Edgewood Avenue Shul (New Hebrew Congregation); the Balch Street Shul (Anshe Emeth).

As far as can be determined, ethnic background was the fundamental organizing principle spawning most of these congregations.⁵⁸ The Sons of Peace which at first encompassed various East European elements became most closely identified with the Russian Jews. They lost their Lithuanian members (Litvacks) to the New Hebrew Congregation which was organized in 1906. In the teen years, the Poles, feeling at home neither with the Russians or Litvacks, determined to establish their own synagogue, Anshe Sfard. The Hungarians similarly founded their own congregation, Ahavas Zedek. There is even reference to a small, fifty-member Rumanian synagogue, which apparently was short lived.⁵⁹ The extent to which these synagogues served their separate constituencies was noted by one congregant who remembered being the only Lithuanian member of the Hungarian congregation. When ethnic mixing did occur, the varying backgrounds of members were long remembered. Thus, after half a century, one of Anshe Sfard's founders was readily identified as a Rumanian.⁶⁰ An exception to the rule of ethnicity as determining congregational affiliation occurred in the case of Anshe Emeth Congregation (not to be confused with the initial Anshe Emeth mentioned in the City Directory of 1885). Organized in the pre-World War I period, the founders of this congregation were a small group of men, initially

affiliated with the Sons of Peace, who primarily wanted to modify the traditional service (e.g., mixed seating).⁶¹ In 1927, in keeping with this emphasis on modernization, the congregation's name was changed to the United Modern Orthodox Congregation.⁶²

A closer look at some of the individual Orthodox synagogues in this period provides interesting if fragmentary details of the nature of the early Orthodox experience in Akron. For the Sons of Peace it was a long and active period involving an increase in membership from some fifty members in 1902 to a congregation numbering around 200 in 1928.⁶³ Interestingly, the congregation's development did not occur in isolation from the existing Jewish religious establishment. Thus, Joseph Whitelaw, a leading figure in the Akron Hebrew Association, became the first President of the Sons of Peace and the Reform rabbi, Isidor Philo, spoke at the synagogue's dedication services. Financial aid was forthcoming as well. In 1911 when the congregation sought funds to decorate their building, the list of contributors included such Temple stalwarts as Herman Ferbstein, Abram Polsky, and Julius Whitelaw.⁶⁴ All these points of contact would seem to indicate a strong sense of shared religious identity and are supporting data for the contention that religion was a major unifying force in the community.

Such contacts, however, do not appear to have affected the style and format of the Orthodox service. Holiday evening services in 1902 began at sundown--an hour and a half before the Reform service--and reconvened the next morning at sunrise--three hours before the Reform service. Earlier hours, longer services and two day holiday celebrations remained characteristic of the Sons of Peace as well as the other

Orthodox synagogues. In these areas at least change was resisted.

Early reference to a two-hour Hebrew sermon at the Sons of Peace indicates that preaching did occur.⁶⁵ (It seems likely that the speech was given in Yiddish rather than Hebrew.) In this particular sermon, the speaker censured those Jews who neglected their religious customs and "became affiliated with other peoples."⁶⁶ Exhortations for ritual observances and against integration reveal a content emphasis at considerable odds with the Reform message. Variations in the style of the service probably marked an even sharper distinction between the two denominations. This becomes clear in comparing accounts of the synagogue dedication services held by the two groups, one in November of 1874, the other in February of 1902.⁶⁷ On the former occasion, preliminary services were followed by the entry of two little girls in white carrying a cushion bearing the keys of the new synagogue. The Scrolls were given to the President by the Chairman of the building committee. After the appropriate comments and prayers, an organ selection closed the proceedings. The Sons of Peace dedication, on the other hand, was marked by ceremonies described as, "of ancient style and decidedly peculiar." In this case, the scene was portrayed as a "veritable auction sale" with the keys to the synagogue and the Holy Scrolls being the most notable items to go on "auction." This "sale" was followed by a carriage parade to the new synagogue where it can be assumed that the key, purchased by a leading Orthodox lay leader for his wife, was put to good use.

It has already been suggested that religion was a paradoxical force for unity and disunity. This was sometimes evident in a single

Orthodox shul. For example, there was general awareness in the Jewish community that the name of the Congregation, Sons of Peace (B'nai Shalom), was a misnomer. As one old timer recalled, ". . . they fought at fair intervals."⁶⁸ These disruptions could affect the decorum of the service and on one occasion the dispute made local newspaper headlines. A front page story in the spring of 1902 ran under the heading, "A Church Riot."⁶⁹ The article reported that regular services were in progress when a riot broke out creating a situation which it seemed would tear the whole building to pieces. The fight apparently was caused by two men talking at once during the service. The ensuing dispute pitted family against family (the Mirman brothers--later to be associated with the New Hebrew Congregation--and the Rudeminskies, involving brothers and cousins). Although temporarily quieted down, the hostilities erupted again following the services. There were thirty to forty men present when the fight started and "most of them took a hand."⁷⁰ Bricks, knives, and a wide assortment of other devices soon replaced fists and chairs, and "heads were broken, windows smashed, plaster torn down and general havoc created inside."⁷¹ Moving from the building into the street, the altercation finally resulted in the arrival of the police. The inside of the building was described as in ruins with windows out and blood splashed over the floor. Five men were taken into custody. In a subsequent letter to the editor members of the congregation denied any major trouble, claiming that no significant disturbance occurred within the building. The letter, signed by eleven members, claimed that "there is entire harmony existing in the congregation" and noted that one of the disputants was not even a member of the congregation.⁷²

Whatever the merits of the case, the mayor found the five men engaged in the "Sons of Peace Trouble" guilty.⁷³

The Sons of Peace did not have a monopoly on unusual decorum. In 1909 the press again reported a "near riot."⁷⁴ This time a patrol wagon and a police squad were sent to quell a riot in process at the New Hebrew Congregation on Edgewood Avenue. This particular dispute stemmed from the notice given members that children under a certain age were not permitted to attend services. A woman who failed to comply responded violently when approached to leave and "before she was ousted the entire congregation took a hand in the melee."⁷⁵ In this case no arrests were made although several observers offered to swear out warrants against those who had started the trouble. The bent for active lay participation which characterized typical Orthodox decorum was usually more productively channeled in this congregation by spirited involvement in the services. The cantor received considerable vocal assistance in his "amens" and there were numerous other lay contributions involving vocal "embellishments" and "curlicues."⁷⁶

The "spirited" temperaments of still another Orthodox congregation, Anshe Sfard, can be inferred from several clauses in their Constitution, which incidentally are reminiscent of the earlier Akron Hebrew Association rules. Thus, the duties of the president state that "He must positively keep order at the meeting . . . [can] fine a member \$3.00 for disobedience or disorder, the fine can only be removed by a special meeting." The converse of the president's duties appeared in statements regarding members' obligations which included injunctions to "keep order and obey the chairman." Anyone failing thereof was not

only susceptible to fine but the chairman could "take away the right of speech [sic]." ⁷⁷ Furthermore, the rights and obligations of members specified that "All members must behave during prayer, avoid arguments or use of insulting language." ⁷⁸ In situations involving differences among members the Constitution provided for a special committee whose decision was binding on all parties.

Anshe Sfar'd's constitution (c. 1924) provides insight into the Congregation's attempt to find a point of equilibrium between new and old world cultural patterns. It is written in both Yiddish and English-- with the latter quite noticeably imperfect. ("Members appropriating property of the congregation, cemetery or Free Loan, may be suspended at a special meeting, also when he [sic] has been found guilty of murder, attack, robbery, or immoral turpid [sic].") ⁷⁹ Distinctive idioms entered into the constitutional language as well: "If an officer resigns or god forbid dies" ⁸⁰ The intent to maintain Yiddish (i.e., resist change) is specifically indicated in the very first article of the Constitution which provides that "whenever possible the language used at the meeting shall always be Yiddish." ⁸¹

The Constitution provided for a unique objective by assuring not only an Orthodox House of Prayer and Study and ritual burial but also confirming support for "the Free Loan of the Gmilas Chesed" (free loan society) which was organized by the members of the Congregation. Also of interest were Congregation membership admission policies. Membership was available to "any good moral Jew . . . who must conduct himself in an honorable Jewish way, and make a living. He must be married according to the Orthodox Law." ⁸² A candidate had to be

proposed by an existing member and had to submit in writing such details as his Jewish name, employment or business, age, and family.

If much of this document was distinctively Jewish, many American components were already clearly visible. The Constitution did have an English version. Furthermore, familiarity with standard American organizational procedures was indicated by constitutional provision for such typical offices as president, vice president, treasurer (who, surprisingly, was paid and could be bonded by the congregation). Procedures for nomination of officers, secret balloting and majority vote (not characteristic of East European Jewish practice) were detailed. Admission was contingent on a two-thirds majority vote, a quorum for meetings was defined, and amendment procedures described.

Parallel elements of the Orthodox experience are clearly evident in the history of the Ahavas Zedek congregation. Here, too, ethnicity played a decisive role in initiating the religious organization. Thus, a brief synagogue history identifies "a handful of men, recently originating from the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy [who] got together in 1917 to organize a congregation."⁸³ The early members, incidentally, were described as "not of the well to do class" and were viewed as prone to "spiritual indifference" in the face of perpetual preoccupation with economic pressures.⁸⁴ As formalized in its Constitution, written in English in 1924, the aims of this congregation included the maintenance of a house of worship and the conduct of services "in an orthodox way."⁸⁵ Also included was specific reference to maintenance of a cemetery and assurance that burial of members would follow Jewish religious tradition. Membership was constitutionally declared available

to every Jew "believing in the Jewish religion and the Jewish law . . . possessing a good moral character, married according to the Jewish law, or . . . single men, age 18 or over."⁸⁶

Conclusions regarding a strong commitment to the Orthodox form of worship seem justified based on the opportunities for traditional religious expression provided by the numerous synagogues described above. Such views must be tempered, however, by the awareness that many new immigrant community members chose to remain unaffiliated with any synagogue and that the piety of some of those who did attend could be casual. This seems to have been the case for some of the younger people who drifted downtown during Yom Kippur afternoon services to see the results of the World Series flashed to the public outside the Beacon Journal offices.⁸⁷ Other downtown diversions attracting the "drifters" from the Orthodox shuls were the shows offered at a downtown theater. Sabbath service attendance was also inevitably affected by the fact that many Jews elected to work on that day.

Much as the religious experience of the founders of Akron Jewish institutions included concerns beyond the immediate confines of the synagogue and the worship service, so too the religious adjustment of Orthodox Jews was heavily preoccupied with concerns relating to kashrut, religious education, and burial procedures. While the Reform Jews had made arrangements to insure that they received kosher meat, the surge of new Orthodox residents required more specialized attention to this matter. A Mr. Luntz opened the first Kosher Meat Market in Akron located on South Broadway near East Exchange during the 1890s.⁸⁸ Over the years other kosher butchers followed. The son of one of them

recalled his father making daily deliveries by horse and wagon or if need be by sleigh.⁸⁹ Memories were also associated with the community's various shochets (ritual slaughterers). As was the case in the earlier period some of them combined these talents with the conduct of religious services (e.g., Rabbis Blott and Danzig).⁹⁰ One former resident of the Wooster Avenue area--the center of Orthodox Jewish residential life in the twenties and thirties--remembered watching the shochet beheading chickens after which the senseless fowl could be seen running about on the street.⁹¹

The ready availability of kosher butchers failed to eliminate kashrut problems. Indeed, one local source felt the butcher shops actually aggravated the situation promoting communal disunity.⁹² There is no doubt that the Orthodox rabbis who came and went during this period found themselves in perpetual conflict over kashrut questions: was the meat washed sufficiently, the chicken killed correctly, etc. At one point the controversy became so intense that the whole Orthodox community became involved. This occurred in 1923 when the Orthodox rabbi in town closed up the shops of three butchers accused of selling "tref" (non-kosher products). Considerable disagreement ensued about how this controversy should be resolved. A mass meeting was called at the old Talmud Torah (the community Hebrew school located on the corner of Euclid and Wabash). Some 250 people jammed into the building with half of them supporting the rabbinical position, the other half standing fast behind the butchers.⁹³ Open conflict seemed imminent. Several concerned individuals had talked Charles Schwarz, then known for his successful role as the Talmud Torah Bazaar co-chairman, into

attending the meeting. Schwarz found himself pushed up to the rostrum and into the role of presiding chairman. Addressing the crowd in Yiddish, he succeeded in defusing the explosive situation by convincing those present that a satisfactory solution could best be reached in a smaller representative group and suggesting that the officers of the five Orthodox congregations meet with the three butchers in the study of nearby Anshe Sfarid. This proposal was agreed to and the selected assembly "marched" the several blocks to the shul and argued until two o'clock in the morning without reaching a decision. Local decision-making having reached an obvious impasse, several rabbis from New York were brought in to settle the issue.

Another issue of major concern to the Orthodox Jewish community was the religious education of their children. No single institutional solution developed to meet this need. Some community members remember the bicycle-riding teachers or malamuds who came to their home to give lessons. Several Orthodox congregations provided instruction, e.g., the Bowery Street Shul maintained a religious school which expanded from some ten boys around 1910 to seventy children in 1927.⁹⁴ For a while the Balch Street Synagogue (Anshe Emeth) had its own small Talmud Torah or Hebrew Bible school with sessions every day except Friday and a program on Sunday from nine to one.⁹⁵ The Golden Book history of Ahava Zedek also refers to a religious school maintained on Sundays. The most important schools to emerge in the community at this time, however, were not associated with the individual synagogues but were broadly based community institutions like the Talmud Torah or special schools connected with the immigrant mutual aid societies such as the

Sirkan Folk School (Farband) and the Workmen's Circle school. (These institutions will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter on Jewish organizational life.)

Concern with proper observance of burial traditions has been of central importance to Jews throughout their history. Just as Akron's Jewish founding fathers made provisions for this need so did the new Orthodox immigrants. The oldest extant Orthodox cemetery is the small, well-shaded burial ground on South Street. The oldest legible grave stone there is dated 1897.⁹⁶ In 1907 the matter of Orthodox burial was more systematically approached with the organization of a non-profit Orthodox Jewish Cemetery Association which proceeded to purchase land on Sherbondy Hill.⁹⁷ As had been the case with the origin of the Sons of Peace congregation, a prominent early settler, J. P. Whitelaw, was associated with this enterprise.⁹⁸ The first Jewish burial in Sherbondy Hill occurred in 1908. The immigrants also established a Chevra Kadisha (burial society) to meet the necessary ritual needs before internment. No Jewish undertaker or funeral home was established during this period and such services were obtained by arrangements with local funeral parlors, typically with the Prentice or Kesslers funeral home.

The Orthodox Jewish Cemetery Association was not associated with a particular congregation. However, some synagogues, such as Anshe Sfard and Ahavas Zedek soon established their own cemeteries (as did the mutual-aid fraternal organizations). The importance attached to such matters is indicated by the precise details concerning burial rights and privileges incorporated into the Ahavas Zedek and Anshe

Sfard constitutions of the early 1920s. Ahavas Zedek members in good standing were entitled to burial ground in the Congregation's cemetery. The Congregation would furnish a hearse and defray the expenses connected with proper care of the body and digging the grave. The Congregation's Board of Directors had the right to fix the price of family lots, assign graves, and assure the erection of proper head stones. Provisions were also made for free burials if this should prove necessary. Disputes regarding burial (and heated ones did occur--for example, over the assignment of grave sites) were left to the President's discretion.⁹⁹ Strict regulations also circumscribed burial provisions in the Anshe Sfard constitution. Thus, "Burial shall be conducted according to the Orthodox way and the family cannot change it in the least.. If they do not abide by our regulations they are not entitled even to burial ground."¹⁰⁰

The person most directly charged with assisting the Orthodox community to meet its religious ritual needs was the rabbi. Although in this period there were many "rabbi-less" years, the City Directories between 1904 and 1929 indicate some nineteen Orthodox spiritual leaders. Some of these rabbis probably helped promote ties within the Orthodox community as they identified with several congregations in turn, or served more than one congregation simultaneously. Rabbis assigned such multiple congregational responsibilities were commonly known as "city rabbis." Thus, in 1928, Rabbi Yood was installed as rabbi and spiritual leader of Anshe Sfard, Minyan Chodesh (New Hebrew Congregation), Ahavas Zedek, and Anshe Emeth.¹⁰¹ What these spiritual leaders shared in common was material poverty. Acknowledging this, as well as

his helpful role in sheltering new immigrants, the Jewish Social Service Federation moved that Rabbi Braver, "inasmuch as he is very poor," be given \$10 for Passover.¹⁰² At times support for these rabbis was limited to the virtual begging of their congregants and a head tax on koshered animals.¹⁰³

The rise of Orthodoxy was undoubtedly the most significant aspect of Akron's religious life in the period 1885-1929. However, the Reform congregation, under the new name it assumed during this period-- Temple Israel--was undergoing important changes of its own. First, the congregational list grew. From some 45 members in 1899, the roll was up to 145 in 1916 and 219 in 1925.¹⁰⁴ As new German Jewish immigration was minimal during this period, this upsurge undoubtedly reflected a fairly rapid "liberalization" and "Americanization" of some of the new East European immigrants. Significant changes in membership criteria occurred around this time, showing a further move from the traditional toward the American liberal Christian position. Thus, as early as 1900 changes in the Constitution were proposed which would open membership to women in their own right.¹⁰⁵ In striking contrast to the Orthodox constitutions mentioned above, the membership clause of the new Reform temple constitution adopted in the early 1920s made all males and females of the Jewish faith over eighteen eligible for membership and gave women equal voice and vote in the conduct and deliberations of the Congregation as well as extending them the privilege of service on the Board of Trustees.¹⁰⁶ The experience of half a century produced some changes in the wording of congregational objectives as well. As restated, these now provided for the establishment and

maintenance of a synagogue for worship, the provision of a school, and the ownership of cemetery land within the county for family burial lots.

There is evidence that the Temple also wrestled with changes in religious practices during this period. The fact that by 1887 Rabbi Rabino was lecturing in German and English on alternate Friday nights suggests the increasing use of English in the service.¹⁰⁷ That German did not disappear overnight, however, is evident in the twenty-fifth anniversary service of the congregation which was still marked by a "very eloquent address in German."¹⁰⁸ This ambiguous transition stage is evident in minutes from the year 1896 which commend Rabbi Kleïn for providing German instruction one night a week "solely on his own" initiative.¹⁰⁹ The regular daily German school had obviously fallen by the wayside. This was underscored by Rabbi Alexander's request in 1925 that the use of Temple facilities be granted to a group of Temple members during the week so they might provide Hebrew instruction to children of interested members.¹¹⁰ The group involved was to defray all expenses incurred. Although this particular proposal seems to have demanded little in the way of temple services, it was not acted upon.

There were other moves to change the pattern of religious observances. Around the turn of the century the American Jewish Year Book listed no Saturday morning services at the Reform congregation. Pressures were building for what would have been a major step toward assimilation--changing the Sabbath day to Sunday. Rabbi Isidor Philo formally came out in opposition to such a change in 1899.¹¹¹ Although

acknowledging the Reform position that the Bible was not divine and the Sabbath consequently a human institution, he argued that the abolition of the traditional Sabbath would mean the destruction of Jewish solidarity. His opposition rested not on grounds of divine authority but on the historically hostile etiology of the Sunday Sabbath and the positive needs of group self-respect and individuality. The issue of a Sunday Jewish Sabbath in Akron was still active some eighteen years later. Although adopted by Reform temples elsewhere, Akron's Temple board eventually notified the rabbi that the question of changing the Friday evening service to Sunday had been "dropped."¹¹²

Another area of internal Reform dispute which essentially related to the decorum of the service involved the extent of lay participation. Congregational singing apparently was eliminated around the turn of the century because in 1905 Rabbi Philo asked the Board for permission to reintroduce it. The "push and pull" surrounding this issue was evident again thirteen years later when the rabbi was told to discontinue the congregational responsive singing.¹¹³ The restriction of such active lay participation can be interpreted as an attempt to "Americanize" religious form. Meanwhile, specifically American content entered the service as well. For example, in 1899 prayers were offered for Spanish-American war victims with accompanying "patriotic" music.¹¹⁴ Several years later Rabbi Philo invited Company B and Battery J to Temple to "fittingly celebrate" McKinley's birthday.¹¹⁵

The Reform message as enunciated in Akron did not waver in the face of Orthodoxy. Thus, in 1899 Philo enunciated the principles of his pulpit: "I believe in a free and liberal pulpit . . . I believe

in a pulpit that preaches a broad theology and still broader humanity."¹¹⁶ A decade later Rabbi Louis Gross sounded the same message but with a new caveat. The liberalism to be emulated was that of Isaac M. Wise and this did not mean sweeping away all tradition or pursuing the disintegrating tendency of radicalism. The chief function of religion remained the lesson of God's fatherhood and man's brotherhood. Gross went on to pledge himself "to no dogmatic platform, to no system of abstract theology" and promised to guide his religious interpretations according to the best dictates of his reason and conscience.¹¹⁷ He appealed for an end to theological quibbling and discord because "Judaism is something infinitely higher and broader and grander than race or ritual, cult or creed, orthodoxy or reform." In Gross' view, "Unrelenting orthodoxy" in Judaism as in other religions was a "fossil . . . uninspiring static thing . . . [which] . . . peers into the ghostly past . . . a shed of medievalism."¹¹⁸ Judaism instead should be fluid and ready to apply new truths.

Temple's commitment to a religious education program continued during this period although with some modification. Changes in curriculum brought about by changing language patterns have already been indicated (e.g., in 1909 a class in Hebrew was organized--as an elective).¹¹⁹ Symptomatic of this change was the removal of the German (Hebrew) school listing under the parochial school heading in the City Directory after 1896. The daily class schedule also came to an end and the Temple Minutes in 1908 refer to seventy-six pupils who met on Sundays from 9:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. By 1919 the school's weekly sessions consisted of ten classes, ten teachers and 120 pupils.¹²⁰

What references there were to the subject matter of the school mentioned classes in Bible, history, religion, psalms, and ethics.¹²¹

The pattern of frequent changes in Reform rabbinical leadership continued between 1885-1929. Although the record is not clear as to why they came and went, it does indicate that eleven rabbis served during these years with only three, Rabbis Philo, Gross, and Alexander, retaining their pulpits for eight or more years. In contrast to the Orthodox rabbis, these Reform leaders were economically more solvent, professionally more akin to ministers (no shochet duties, more English preaching, etc.), and socially and civically considerably more active. Rabbi Philo was especially noteworthy for his early interpretation of the rabbinical role as including active involvement in the greater community. He served as a prison chaplain, joined the Elks, and was the featured speaker at a major labor-day meeting.¹²² He also proposed astonishing social agendas for the community at large--one year suggesting the idea of a remember-your-streetcar-conductor-at-Xmas project and the next year introducing a similar library-donation Xmas.¹²³ Such activities led to increased influence in the community. Thus, the Akron Central Labor Union passed a special resolution expressing appreciation of the rabbi's efforts in 1905. The press similarly acknowledged his efforts in a two column sketch praising his role in the community: "Perhaps few pastors better known in Akron than Rabbi Isidor Philo, Pastor of the Hebrew Reformed Church [sic]. Although he has been in Akron but a few years, his courageous stands . . . on prominent questions of reform and his lively interest in all public affairs, both state and local, has given him an influence . . . felt

throughout the city. . . ."124

Such positive responses, reflected both in the press and in the Temple minutes, apparently co-existed with considerable negative internal congregational sentiments. While the relative impact of complaints based on Philo's labor-oriented political activities, as compared to charges that he was a "crook" and collected unreasonable fees, is unclear, strong action was eventually taken against him. Thus, a 1909 Board resolution provided that the rabbi could not occupy the pulpit or serve as a Sunday school teacher for at least the ensuing ten years, "in order to promote peace and harmony among Congregation members (who will) again be privileged to act in unison."¹²⁵

Another rabbi who mixed pulpit and greater community concerns was Abraham Cronbach, probably the most controversial Reform rabbi to ever hold the Akron pulpit, certainly the one destined to become most eminent nationally. In a biographical chapter entitled, "Voice in the Wilderness," Albert Vorspan referred to the famous rabbi's stay in Akron as part of an odyssey of "ecclesiastical frustration."¹²⁶ A committed and passionate pacifist, Cronbach arrived in Akron in 1917, a vintage year for pro-war sentiment. The rabbi's failure to verbalize the appropriate patriotic sentiments profoundly concerned his congregation. The armistice did not end Cronbach's difficulties with his flock. On April 24, 1919, he preached a sermon entitled "Bolshevism-- Bane or Blessing" in which he sought to analyze the Russian Revolution objectively. Appealing to the congregation to suspend final judgments until more was known, his comments resulted in an "explosion [that] almost tore the roof off Temple Israel."¹²⁷ Widespread condemnation

followed. The Temple Board censured him; an emergency meeting was called to consider his expulsion. Although the Board, after bitter debate, voted for retention, it was generally understood that his pulpit days in Akron were numbered. In the face of this congregational upheaval, Cronbach decided to act on his own and submitted a letter severing his connection not only with Temple Israel but with the pulpit ministry.

Recollections of Cronbach have remained intense. He is remembered as the "saint" who sat on the dais of the old Music Hall along with Eugene Debbs and his pressured withdrawal has been attributed to "the old man Polsky" who "split a gut" at such provocation.¹²⁸ Another community member identified Cronbach as the single rabbi who commanded more loyalty than any other he had ever known and expressed regret at the "bad break" he got here.¹²⁹ Descendants of the Temple's founding fathers noted that Cronbach's enthusiasms were not limited to pacifism but extended into meddling inquiry of the number of Jews economically associated with the liquor trade.¹³⁰ (Not everyone attributed the congregation's displeasure with the rabbi solely to his political and philosophical stance. One old-timer claimed that Cronbach's release was also related to the disturbing jerking facial motions which marked the delivery of his sermons.)¹³¹

If Cronbach was a potentially embarrassing envoy to the greater community, Rabbi David Alexander was a model culturally assimilated Ambassador to the Gentiles. Acknowledged in the press as "an outstanding figure in Akron not only in church affairs but in community and civic life," Alexander belonged to Rotary and served as president

of the Traveler's Aid Society, member of the executive board of the Better Akron Federation, and chairman of Temple's Boy Scout troop committee.¹³²

Rabbinical ventures into the civic life of the city were indicative of other significant contacts between the Jewish religious community and the greater Akron community. For example, in 1911 a form letter was circulated by the Akron Hebrew Association soliciting outside assistance to help erect the new synagogue.¹³³ The Masonic fraternity subsequently played a major role in the cornerstone laying ceremonies for the new building. Rabbi Gross remarked that while he did not know if it was common practice for Masons to participate in such a ritual, he felt their role was entirely appropriate, that their rite for such an occasion was "splendid," that Masonic traditions were founded on "the history of the children of Israel"--and furthermore that many leading members of the Congregation were Masons.¹³⁴

There is some local evidence of the national trend toward increased interfaith contacts between Jews and liberal Christians in the late nineteenth century. For example, in 1890 Christian ministers took part in the services marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the congregation. Rabbi Wasserman remarked that such joint participation made the time spoken of by Isaiah seem near at hand.¹³⁵ Almost a decade later, Rabbi Philo introduced a guest speaker, Rev. Ira Priest, the President of Buchtel College (forerunner of the University of Akron), to his congregation in the context of a broadening Jewish perspective which no longer believed "in confining everything to (their sect)."¹³⁶ The article describing this event concluded that "this will probably be the begin-

ning of a more free intercourse between this sect and the other denominations."¹³⁷ This indeed seemed to be the case as Rabbi Philo spoke on "How we Jews regard Christ and his Teachings" in the Universalist church in 1899. Examples of such interaction continued as the pastor of the First Universalist Church participated in Rabbi Gross' installation (1909) and Rabbi Gross in turn undertook the unique assignment of being the first Jewish rabbi to preach from the pulpit of an Akron Baptist church.¹³⁸ That such interactions could reflect perceived Jewish-Christian commonality rather than mere exotic curiosity is suggested in Rabbi Gross' installation services. As reported in the local press, the "most interesting scene" occurred when the young rabbi's hand was taken by the pastor of the First Universalist Church as he delivered his address of greeting: "The work you are about to undertake . . . in practice the same as mine italics added for emphasis"¹³⁹

The precise impact of the national "parting of the ways" between the Reform movement and liberal Christianity is difficult to pinpoint. There was, however, public criticism by a local minister of Rabbi Gross' continued practice of inviting Protestant ministers to visit the Temple pulpit. In response to this critique, Gross contended that the "Day of theology is long past . . . we call this the day of enlightened thought and breadth We ministers of today must become less theological and more religious." He noted that his Christian colleague--in this case a Congregational minister--had brought the congregation a "clean, broad, manly message--not a word of theology" and declared that the day had come for modern ministers to declare fearlessly for a broader outlook. He concluded that he felt certain that most Christian

ministers were "not narrow and bigoted."¹⁴⁰ Interfaith contacts were also nurtured during Rabbi Alexander's rabbinate. For example, a Protestant and Roman Catholic joined Alexander in a Temple program specifically designed to encourage improved understanding. On this occasion, the rabbi noted that what was needed was increased thought about the meaning of "Americanism" and the application of it in daily life.¹⁴¹

While the Reform movement tended towards one type of interaction with the community, the presence of Orthodoxy had other implications. In a community increasingly identified with fundamental Christianity, the potential for friction arising from strong adherence to different Sabbath days can easily be imagined. Examples of such conflict made the papers in 1899 and 1924. The former incident involved the arrest of two Jewish barbers for working on Sunday. A front page headline read, "Barber is a Jew: Claimed he had a right to work Sunday."¹⁴² The legal defense of this particular barber was in major part based on the alleged right of Jews to work on the Christian Sabbath. The defendant was found guilty although mention was made of impending trials and actual sentencing was deferred. The second example involved a more extensive organizational effort. In response to the urging of the Akron Ministerial Association that City Council close all grocery stores on Sunday, the Jewish merchants on Wooster Avenue joined to "fight any attempt of Council to pass Sunday legislation which may close their businesses."¹⁴³ The merchants prevailed when the active enforcement of blue laws failed to secure Council support. The fact that large numbers of Orthodox Jews did work on Saturdays undoubtedly

averted more frequent problems in this area.

Considering the period of influx as a whole, it clearly marked the time of greatest religious institutional development and diversity in the history of Akron Jewry. Within the Orthodox community, the desire to meet religious needs nurtured over half a dozen organizational attempts. Ethnicity loomed large as an organizing principle of these congregations. The state of flux already identified as characteristic of Akron Jewish religious life remained in effect: a multitude of synagogues, a plethora of locations and rabbis. Religion also continued to be both a unifying and divisive force. On the unifying side, the need for spiritual leadership coupled with limited resources enabled the congregations on occasion to make joint use of a city rabbi. (Common interest could also bring the various groups together such as when a large number of Sons of Peace members gathered at the High Street Temple to plan a campaign on behalf of Russian Jews or when the six Orthodox congregations passed a joint resolution concerning an immigration bill.)¹⁴⁴ Religious bonds encouraged participation of Reform lay leaders and rabbis in Orthodox concerns (e.g., the role of Whitelaws vis-a-vis the Sons of Peace and the Cemetery Association, Rabbis Philo's and Alexander's presence at special Orthodox functions, the Jewish Federation's financial gift to Rabbi Bravor). That religion, however, was not always the great harmonizer in this period was evident in the problems over kashrut, the splintering off of factions into new Orthodox congregations, and the lack of harmony within such congregations as the Sons of Peace. Meanwhile, the distinctions between Orthodox and

Reform practice were if anything widening as Temple Israel moved ever further from traditionalism (e.g., reduced use of Hebrew and congregational responses and flirtation with a Sunday Sabbath). Furthermore, Orthodox and Reform rabbinical functions were widely disparate, with the Reform rabbinate moving toward prominent civic status and a more ministerial role.

In general, Akron Jewry's religious experiences during this period reflected the national Jewish experience. East European Orthodoxy was generally engaged in establishing its own religious institutions just as it was in Akron. Similarly, ethnicity played a major role nation-wide in differentiating congregations and typically at least some measure of support and recognition came from the Reform establishment. The Akron Orthodox experience was, however, more atypical of the national Orthodox experience than had been the case of the founding fathers of Akron Jewry vis-a-vis the overall Reform experience. This was so because Orthodoxy was heavily concentrated in the larger Eastern cities whereas the Reform movement was generally widespread and not strongly identified with urban ghetto strongholds. Orthodox clustering introduced a new religious focal point for Akron's more traditionally observant Jews: New York (in contrast to Cincinnati's continuing role for the Reform movement). Thus, in the case of the Kosher conflict of 1923, it was New York that was looked to for religious guidance. While Orthodoxy was preoccupied with founding its own institutions, the national Reform Jewish movement increasingly modified its religious format and identity toward a more liberal position. Temple Israel mirrored this trend in the changing format of its

practices and the role of its rabbis.

If Akron Jewry's religious experiences between 1885-1929 are analyzed using Gordon's model of the integration process, some aspects of the theory are confirmed and others seem at least temporarily negated. It will be recalled that Gordon claimed that structural assimilation did not occur as far as primary integration with the greater community but did occur within the Jewish community. Looking just at these years, a different process seems to be in effect. Reform philosophy and practice were directed toward increasing interaction and homogeneity with the greater Akron community rather than with the Jewish newcomers. Meanwhile, the Orthodox community itself was in the process of splintering into separate groups. However, it should be noted that structural assimilation vis-a-vis the greater community was never fully achieved, even by Reform Jews, and such decisions as the rejection of the Sunday Sabbath meant that separate worship patterns were guaranteed to remain in effect. The evidence for cultural assimilation is also somewhat ambiguous in this period. Orthodoxy certainly did not change the format or language of the service as rapidly as the founding fathers had done although Anshe Emeth made tentative moves in this direction. A stronger case in this regard can be made for Reform Temple Israel, which moved further along the road to total adoption of English, imitation of establishment decorum, and participation in civic affairs and inter-community relationships.

The Depression and World War II Era: 1929-1945

In a historical period that tried peoples' souls more sorely than most, religious adjustment--on the local and national scene--proved to

be unusually complex and full of personal and institutional changes. Nationally, at the same time that the number of congregations increased and a vital new religious movement emerged (Conservative Judaism), a spirit of irreligion was widely acknowledged.¹⁴⁵ The national trend was towards reduction of ethnic and denominational barriers as East Europeans joined Reform synagogues and in turn moved Reform practices to the right (at the very time Conservative Judaism was moving Orthodox practices to the left). Judaism distinguished by ethnicity was beginning to become Judaism differentiated by denomination.

With some exceptions--most notably in the decline of new congregational development and a slower rate of modification of Reform practices--Akron Jewry reflected the national religious picture. Thus, when Leonard Bloom described Akron Jewry in 1939 he identified: one Conservative-Orthodox synagogue (Conservative Judaism); "weakening religious ties and doctrinal compromises" (spirit of irreligion); the drifting of second and third generations of Russian, Polish, and Hungarian immigrants to the "prestige enhancing and less hampering" Reform synagogue . . . " (ethnic-orthodox moves to join Reform movement).¹⁴⁶ In this period, as in earlier ones, Akron's religious adjustment was characterized by considerable flux and by religious push and pull over issues of orthodoxy, Americanization, and personalities. Unique to these years was the special impact of the Depression and World War II years on local religious institutional life.

At the beginning of the Depression era there were seven Jewish synagogues in Akron: Temple Israel, Sons of Peace, New Hebrew Congregation, Anshe Emeth (United Modern Orthodox Congregation), Ahavas

Zedek, Anshe Sfard, and Beyth Jacob. In 1945 all but one of these congregations were still listed in the Akron City Directory. However, the fortunes of these various organizations varied considerably over these years. The Sons of Peace was a striking example. In 1929 the Congregation claimed its own spiritual leader (apart from the city rabbi shared by four other Orthodox congregations) and reported holding services three times daily plus weekly Sabbath observances. By 1940 the Congregation was no longer listed under that name and met at the old Bowery Street address as the newly reorganized Beth Jacob.¹⁴⁷ The congregation was kept financially afloat by a single congregant, Jacob Baruch, a local accountant who wanted to assure perpetual minyans in memory of his father.¹⁴⁸ Listed as a Free Synagogue in the 1945 Center Yearbook, Beth Jacob charged no admission and relied on the assistance of guest rabbis for the holidays. The reasons for the decline of this old Orthodox synagogue are undoubtedly multiple but one interesting speculation contended that the Sons of Peace was "too Orthodox even for the Orthodox."¹⁴⁹

Other Orthodox synagogues survived the period considerably more intact. Anshe Sfard showed considerable membership gains (depending on which figures are used, membership increased from a total of 40 in 1921 to between 90 and 120 over the next two decades).¹⁵⁰ The demand for daily services remained sufficiently high to keep the synagogue open every day of the year as well as to offer daily classes in Torah. By 1937 there were no outstanding synagogue or cemetery debts and the free loan association connected with the congregation had expanded its initial capital base from \$170 to \$8,000.¹⁵¹ For congregations like

Ahavas Zedek which had just completed its building in 1926, the Depression had the adverse effect of keeping an extremely high level of indebtedness. However, the congregation enhanced its situation by obtaining its own rabbi, Avram Hartstein, in 1939, burning its mortgage in 1940, and improving its level of service attendance. The religious life of the congregation at that point was described as "quite intense."¹⁵²

The repercussions of the Depression were especially keenly felt by Temple Israel due to its extensive budget and considerable commitments. During the worst of the Depression, the Congregation had to borrow \$6,500 from a local bank.¹⁵³ Between 1929 and 1934, Rabbi Alexander's salary was reduced from \$9,000 to \$4,200. Temple income was reduced from \$15,000 to \$9,000 annually and the Sisterhood became the sole source of resources enabling Temple obligations to the Sunday school teachers to be met.¹⁵⁴ Members frequently chose to resign rather than let their dues fall into arrears. A sample letter of 1932 noted, "There is nothing that would suit me better than to be able to send you (a) check at this time but I am sorry that I cannot do it as I have many bills to be paid at home and which I cannot do at present. . . . In the meantime please accept my resignation as there is no use in running up another bill which I can't pay."¹⁵⁵

Temple Board meetings devoted entire sessions in the thirties to discussion of congregational finances: dues cut in half, deficits incurred, payless pay days for the rabbi, etc. The extent of congregational difficulties was reported by the secretary. He found the annual report more painful to compile than in any previous year "because no

good tidings showing progress can be presented. . . ."156 The financial fortunes of the Congregation were finally restored when the Congregation's bank note was repaid in 1941.

In view of the importance of the rise of Conservative Judaism nationally, the activities of the United Modern Orthodox Congregation (formerly Anshe Emeth) during these years are of special interest. The congregation and its leaders played a prominent part in promoting the Jewish Center (initially, they planned a synagogue-center). They donated their Balch Street property to the Center in exchange for congregational space within the new structure and they continued to retain a close connection with the newly emerging institution. Their religious gropings led to the formation of a Planning Committee in 1945 which was charged with organizing a new Conservative congregation. The objectives of such a congregation were to provide "an all-embracing program of modern Jewish life in accordance with Jewish tradition, in a modern conservative manner."¹⁵⁷ In establishing such a new congregation, its founders believed that they were bringing the community a "new type of modern traditional Judaism" thereby meeting Akron Jewry's long felt need "for a traditional synagogue consonant with the modern world."¹⁵⁸ The group approached the *Jewish Theological Seminary in New York* for spiritual leadership in 1945 and within the year new Conservative services were being conducted in the Center facilities. The congregation was formally reorganized into a Conservative synagogue to be known as *Beth El* and became affiliated with the United Synagogue of America (the national Conservative organization); Rabbi Reuben Katz became the congregation's first new spiritual leader.

Whether Orthodox, Reform, or Conservative, Akron's Jewish congregations were preoccupied with their worship services. An overriding concern that cut across synagogues was regular service attendance, or, more precisely, the lack of it. Bloom reported such attendance down in both Orthodox and Conservative synagogues. Thus, one congregation (Conservative) which attracted as many as 1,200 on the most important holy days had only twenty-five present on the Sabbath.¹⁵⁹ Attendance at Ahavas Zedek became so erratic that the regular daily services schedule was temporarily discontinued. As late as 1944, the president of Anshe Sfard commented that the synagogue for which the boys were allegedly fighting " . . . is deserted and still has to depend upon a few octogenarians and orphans for a minyan."¹⁶⁰ Regular Reform Temple attendance was also remembered as minimal or, as the minutes of January 8, 1939, concisely described it, "not great."¹⁶¹ The implications of this fact were expressed in dire terms of Reform Judaism facing "the inevitable, if this disinterest continues."¹⁶²

Meanwhile, in many cases the service itself was undergoing considerable change in style and format. English appeared in sermons in the Orthodox synagogues (although Yiddish speeches could still be heard).¹⁶³ The use of English was even more evident in the Conservative synagogue where conscious popularizing efforts included prayer books with English translations, sermons in English, and emphasis on such youth-attracting ceremonies as the bar mitzvah. Friday night services were also rescheduled at a later hour.¹⁶⁴ Specifically American influences at times entered the service. Thus, Ahavas Zedek included the local post of the Jewish War Veterans in the service cele-

brating the final payment on its mortgage. At the end of the ceremony, Rabbi Hartstein was presented with and blessed both the American and Jewish flags.¹⁶⁵

Meanwhile, the Reform congregation, paralleling the national experience, continued to be far to the left of its more Orthodox compatriots despite the influx of many new members from these very same Orthodox backgrounds. According to Bloom, this shift to Reform membership was accompanied by "anguish" in Orthodox homes and "murmurs in Temple circles."¹⁶⁶ While the anguish related primarily to religious and traditional concerns, the murmurs probably more clearly reflected elements of German-Jewish exclusiveness. Reform services in the late thirties were reported as fairly indistinguishable from Protestant services. The unceremonially garbed and sexually mixed congregation prayed with limited intrusions of Hebrew phrases and listened to "the mild . . . exhortations of the rabbi . . . equivalent to that of the Methodist minister across the way."¹⁶⁷ Services were conducted without a cantor and such ritual ceremonies as the bar mitzvah were not performed at all. Noting the contrast in later Reform rabbinical styles, a subsequent incumbent of the Temple pulpit, Rabbi Morton Applebaum, remarked that Rabbi Alexander was considerably more "churchy."¹⁶⁸ A significant move back towards the traditional end of the religious spectrum was achieved by Alexander's immediate successor when he re-introduced the role of a cantor--to the vocal objection of some of the congregants.¹⁶⁹

Except for the Reform congregation, which retained Alexander until his retirement as Rabbi emeritus in 1944, frequent changes of rabbinical leadership remained typical religious operating procedure

for Akron's Jewish community. The tradition of city rabbis serving more than one congregation continued (e.g., Rabbis Yood and Stampfer) as did their kashrut obligations and their impoverished lot. (They were reduced at times to selling candles door to door and their yearly income was estimated at some \$600.)¹⁷⁰ In addition to more spiritual fare, the rabbis sometimes provided grist for the active communal gossip mill. Enticing rabbinical tidbits made the rounds regarding Rabbi Yood's departure which involved catching (framing) the rabbi with a Negro prostitute, thereby forcing him to leave. The departure was followed by the communal assumption of the debts the errant leader had incurred.¹⁷¹ Yood's successor, Rabbi Elijah Stampfer, also proved to be far from universally beloved and was asked to leave. Even the Reform pulpit was not immune to scandal and Rabbi Marshall Taxay in his turn was viewed as a "womanizer" and driven from his position.

Strong sentiments about particular rabbis were not confined to their respective congregants. A non-Temple member remembers the label "pope" applied to the Reform rabbi by more traditional community members.¹⁷² Bloom similarly confirmed Orthodox distrust of the Reform leader, both by the laity and by the Orthodox rabbis who sustained limited interaction with him.¹⁷³ Fortunately, not all the rabbinical leaders of this period seem to have had poor relations with their congregations or with the various Jewish sub-groups in the community. Apparently one such leader was Rabbi Hartstein, a refugee from the Nazis who was brought here in 1939 to head Congregation Ahavas Zedek.

It was Rabbi Hartstein who observed, articulated, and responded to a spirit of irreligion in his congregation. He noted that he had

been hired to "stem the tide of environment . . . not conducive to Jewish ways of life" especially as it affected the younger generation and to "halt the members from slowly drifting away."¹⁷⁴ Noting that the sanctuary was almost deserted throughout the year, Hartstein moved to restore the daily services "which [had been] functioning with some interruptions." He also established a free cheder [school] and sought to "foster the religious spirit among his congregants" by "every means at his disposal."¹⁷⁵

Seeing virtually a similar situation on a community-wide scale, Rabbi Alexander commented that "it would be a good thing to inaugurate a movement having for its purpose (the) building up of any local synagogue. . . ."¹⁷⁶ He believed that all the city's synagogues needed larger memberships. Alexander's analysis of Akron's spiritual life indicated to him that "our synagogues need to be revitalized." He was convinced that Jewish life would be stronger if only the synagogues "occupied the place they should in our minds and hearts."¹⁷⁷

One symptom of irreligion--the lack of regular Sabbath service attendance--has already been discussed in connection with its relationship to the worship service. Interestingly, Temple's diagnosis and solution to the problem was presented in social terms. Thus, the President's report of 1937 urged that private parties be planned for other than Friday nights so that no excuse for absence could be imposed on others.¹⁷⁸ Another solution--reminiscent of an earlier period--suggested that Sunday services coinciding with Sunday school hours be offered every two weeks. If time allocations are indicative of religious commitment, then the Sunday school reflected a considerably reduced level of

involvement. By October 31, 1934, the minutes recorded a Sunday school limited to "barely an hour and a half one day a week."¹⁷⁹ Similarly, a Temple official's report of 1935 charged that most of the membership only appeared on the high holy days or dropped off their children on Sunday mornings. The report questioned whether the zeal and sacrifice responsible for building the Temple still existed and with reference to the world's precarious state argued that "it behooves . . . us to go back to the synagogue and drink . . . from wells of reason and ethical conduct."¹⁸⁰ As indicated above, however, the spirit of irreligion apparently extended into the war years (e.g., the public complaint of the Orthodox lay leader regarding the all but deserted war-time synagogues).¹⁸¹

The problem of observances to be kept, modified, or discarded was not confined to service attendance. Bloom reported that the rabbis admitted to the lack of influence which religion had on people's lives in general and the Orthodox leaders were specifically concerned with the "decline in . . . compulsiveness" of ritual observances.¹⁸² At stake were practices associated with such things as kashrut, burial rites, Sabbath observance, etc.

Much as it was in the two earlier periods, kashrut was a major concern. If Bloom's observations in 1939 were correct, then the faithful adherence to dietary rules was limited. Although he identified three schochtim (ritual slaughterers) as then currently active in the community, he concluded that some five times that number would have been needed if the whole Jewish community were actually committed to keeping strictly kosher homes. Nevertheless, personal and institutional

preoccupation with this issue was substantial. Thus, the Vaad Hoir, an organization representing all the Orthodox groups in the community, functioned primarily to maintain dietary laws according to the Mosaic code and the kosher laws of Ohio.¹⁸³

Adherents and non-adherents of kashrut were destined to clash in the new Jewish Center which proposed to serve them both. The Center minutes of 1929 (the year the Center opened its doors) indicate that Rabbi Yood had agreed to give his services without charge to the Center kitchen as the mashgiach, the supervisor of the kosher preparation of food. Attempting to maintain control of kitchen practices, the Kitchen Committee established rules giving the Center staff sole responsibility for selecting caterers and cleaning up the kitchen.¹⁸⁴ Such precautionary measures were apparently insufficient because the Committee's chairperson resigned and only agreed to resume her duties "providing the kitchen will be strictly kosher."¹⁸⁵ Consequently, rules and procedures were spelled out more precisely. Only kosher food could be brought into the kitchen and 250 sets of dishes and silverware plus essential cooking utensils were put under lock and key. Even such measures failed to eliminate the problem and the report of the Center House Committee fifteen years later complained that kitchen supervision was a major problem involving missing articles, utensils kept out of the proper order, and the failure of some groups using the kitchen to abide by kashrut rules.¹⁸⁶

Problems over kashrut did not always stay within the confines of the Jewish community. In July, 1939, Rabbi Yood and the local Jewish butchers met in the Prosecutor's office regarding the sale of meat

which Yood contended was not kosher.¹⁸⁷ The butchers saw the dispute in terms of the rabbinical supervision fee. The Prosecutor's office became involved because Ohio law held the misrepresentation of kosher meat a punishable offense. The meat dispute was not resolved and after "stewing" in municipal court for several weeks became a public crisis with the arrest and arraignment of a Wooster Avenue meat market proprietor.¹⁸⁸ The warrant alleged that one Rose Greenstein had purchased 3 1/2 pounds of veal breast which was not kosher. The press account of the incident indicated that scores of kosher customers were expected to gather in the courtroom along with rabbis, inspectors, and the judge. "They will gather around a piece of meat, the 3 1/2 pounds of veal breast purchased by Rose Greenstein and will discuss whether or not it is 'kosher.'" In the meantime the meat was being kept under lock and key in the Prosecutor's office, "which is not equipped with a refrigerator."¹⁸⁹

If kashrut concerns remained alive in this period, so too did preoccupation with burial procedures. Indeed, Bloom found that of all ritual practices, those regarding death were most likely to survive intact (e.g., this included practices bordering on the superstitious such as the covering of mirrors).¹⁹⁰ Thus, Jews who were not religious in their daily lives were buried with full ceremony and those who failed to attend services with their parents said kaddish on the anniversary of their deaths. The number of burial societies and cemeteries continued to grow. For example, Temple Israel purchased new ground in Rose Hill cemetery. As in the previous period, however, burial was not necessarily associated with a particular congregation. Thus, the IWO (Inter-

national Worker's Organization), a left-wing Communist offshoot of the Workmen's Circle, established its own cemetery on Schwartz Road in the thirties.¹⁹¹ Although the precise dates when variations in burial procedures first appeared in Akron is not clear, they did occur. For a while Sherbondy Hill had a mausoleum, embalming was practiced, and open caskets were not unknown.¹⁹²

Just as the final burial rituals remained under Jewish auspices so did the initial birth rites. Bloom found circumcision practically universal throughout the Jewish community. In part he believed this ritual was reinforced by then current medical opinion and gentile adoption of the practice. The procedure, however--especially in non-Reform circles--remained entrusted to the mohel, the religious practitioner of ritual circumcision. ("While it is being done, it might as well be done right.")¹⁹³ While the use of the mikvah (ritual bath for women) was less pervasive in the religious community, one did exist in the Jewish residential area during this period. A worker in the Center suggested that that institution at one point may have also fulfilled this need. Eventually local mikvah facilities became extinct and those seeking such services had to travel to Cleveland.¹⁹⁴

Other compromises occurred in Orthodox homes and shops. Bloom claims beards were trimmed, more Jews worked on Saturday, and Sabbath observances became more casual. Taboos such as those regarding riding on the Sabbath virtually disappeared.¹⁹⁵ Even those working for Jewish institutions were seen as guilty of violating the Sabbath. Thus, in 1939 representatives of the United Modern Orthodox Congregation filed a complaint with the Center's Board of Trustees regarding Center staff

working beyond the proper closing time on Friday evening. It was also charged that a Center worker who was Jewish had been seen working in that institution on Saturday.¹⁹⁶

Throughout this period of readjustment the levels of interaction between the religious Jewish community and the greater Akron community remained widely divergent depending on the particular synagogue and rabbi involved. At one extreme was Rabbi Alexander, who viewed himself and was viewed by his congregation (favorably) and the greater Jewish community (more questionably) as the "ambassador to the Christians."¹⁹⁷ He visited Christian pulpits and continued his role as a leader in the social and civic work of the community. Alexander explained his activity as based on the conviction, ". . . I owe something to the community as a whole as well as to my own group, my church [sic]."¹⁹⁸ The Akron community editorially expressed its approval acknowledging that Alexander had been associated with "practically every good cause" in the city and noting ". . . there are many Akronites who can testify . . . that he has paid many times over what he owes to the community."¹⁹⁹ Alexander's relationship to his fellow-Christian clergy was indicated in his comment to the press that he "rejoiced in the friends I've made among the clergy of Akron" and by his inclusion in such joint clerical ventures as a good will tour of the surrounding counties aimed at promoting better feeling among different creeds and fostering peace programs in the various churches.²⁰⁰

By way of contrast, Rabbi Stampfer represents a totally different response to the value of community interaction. The extreme to which he carried an inner-directed Jewish communal orientation was illustrated

by his suggestion that Christmas cards received from the greater community should be thrown out before even being opened. Stampfer feared American Jewry's collapse was at hand because ". . . we are Americanized more than the Americans. . . ."201

Interfaith points of contact between the greater community and the Jewish religious community continued along many of the same lines mentioned in earlier periods. An important new point of interaction occurred in the schools when Buchtel High School for the first time included Chanukkah festivities in its regular school Christmas celebration in 1944. This program which included the traditional Chanukkah candles and songs was commended by the Akron Center News as setting a valuable precedent for the recognition of all religions in holiday celebrations. The Center News suggested that other Akron schools might well follow similar procedures and concluded that "A milestone has been passed in making secure one of the Four Freedoms. . . ."202

As signs of the impending Holocaust became more menacing, the Jewish religious community in Akron took increasing cognizance of international events. In the early thirties, Rabbi Stampfer had predicted that the world was heading for war unless it returned to the teaching of the Jewish prophets. He pressed for the upbuilding of Palestine and warned his audience there could be no compromise in the Zionist movement.²⁰³ In 1938 another local rabbi noted that Yom Kippur services in the city that year would inevitably focus on the troubles of the millions of European Jews threatened with war.²⁰⁴ The greater Akron community was also aware of the dangers facing Jews abroad and made the connection between their religious situation and that of the

local Jewish citizenry. Thus, an editorial of April, 1939 compared the conditions under which Passover was being observed here with the "Egypt's" of the day.²⁰⁵ The editorial concluded that no one was safe when any single group was singled out for persecution.

War brought heightened awareness of links with fellow Jews and the American nation. Temple Israel's president remarked that the sending of sacred Hebrew scrolls as well as the Magna Charta to this country for safekeeping made America and American Jewry the keepers and trustees of the world's most priceless treasures.²⁰⁶ He assured the congregation that in the ensuing months the Rabbi and Board would exert every effort to make the Temple play a viable role in the existing world emergency. He believed the world situation mandated an obligation to keep the "light of Judaism burning not only for ourselves but for others for a more fortunate day."²⁰⁷ To this end he proposed to inaugurate a wider program, attract more members, raise a larger budget, provide more services for youth, and expand the staff by adding an assistant rabbi. Rabbi Hartstein of Ahavas Zedek was also keenly aware of the fate of "brethren overseas . . . helplessly caught in the whirlwind of war. . . ." He was convinced that in such times his congregation would successfully fill two roles: "the compatible duties of loyal citizens of our blessed United States and those of faithful sons of Israel."²⁰⁸

The evidence suggests that Akron Jews faced the years of Depression and War in much the same religious fashion as other Jews throughout the nation--with the emergence of a Conservative denominational

position midway between Reform and Orthodoxy, with increased entry of East European immigrants into the Reform temple, with an apparent low level of spiritual intensity, and with the rejection and modification of many ritual practices. This last trend, a spirit of irreligion, is especially significant because religion has been identified as the central organizing principle of the Akron Jewish community--with the synagogue being the major institutional expression of that identification. Religious life in general and the synagogues in particular were potentially the most potent integrative feature of Akron Jewish community life. The crucial question, then, is just how widespread was the "falling away"; how did the community members disperse themselves on the continuum from Orthodoxy to Agnosticism? At one point in his study, Bloom attempted to categorize the Akron Jewish community in terms of an existing scale model. Although the scale contained other than purely religious elements, essentially it differentiated four classes of Jews: traditional, typically Yiddish-speaking Jews; more liberal religious Jews who might also speak Yiddish; free thinkers who ignored ritual and the Sabbath, relied exclusively on the local language and intermarried--although not in large percentages; those identified as Agnostics who had completed the break with religious practice, were hesitant about intermarrying but were part of the group with the highest out-marriage rate, and who remained Jewish out of a sense of "conscientiousness." Writing in 1939 Bloom claimed that 10 percent of Akron's Jews fit in Class I, 40 percent in Class II, 30 percent in Class III, and 20 percent in Class IV.²⁰⁷ The traditional and liberal Jews with perhaps an occasional assist from the free thinkers

(on holidays and in connection with specific Jewish customs) seem to have been sufficiently strong to carry the religious identification of the lay community through this period and into the next. As for the rabbinical leadership, the view of Judaism as first and foremost a religion remained intact with its most liberal advocate. Addressing a mixed audience forum on religions, Alexander indicated a preference for the label Jew rather than Hebrew or Israelite because of its more specific religious connotation.²¹⁰

Finally, in terms of agreement with available theories of the integration process, this period strongly supports Kramer and Leventman's description of generational change in religious affiliations on the part of the East European immigrants (e.g., its less traditional synagogues). It also marks the preliminary steps toward intra-group structural assimilation which Gordon (and Herberg) found characteristic of Jewish integration patterns. Furthermore, much as these theories concluded, full scale merger with the greater community's Christian religious life did not occur. Gordon's behavioral assimilation is evident on a large scale in the religious life of this period. Reform services became more closely modeled on the liberal Christian than ever before--or again. English increasingly appeared in the Orthodox congregations and the Conservative synagogue consciously moved toward religious expression more consistent with contemporary society. More tantalizing is the hypothesis that the religious push and pull of this period, as shown in denominational shifts, the overt conflicts over kashrut, and the existing distrust among the rabbinical leadership, were indicative of Liebman's theory of conflicting values in operation.

Conflicting values might also explain the quote Bloom attributed to a local rabbi of this period: "The Orthodox Jews are reformed and they don't know it; the Reformed are deformed. They are not Jews at all."²¹¹

Post-War Era: 1945-1975

The fourth and final period of religious adjustment in the Akron Jewish Community encompasses the post World War II era. It will be recalled that on the national Jewish scene, this period included a decade of Revival and an upsurge in synagogue building and membership. Although the Revival seems to have peaked by the sixties, some aspects of religiosity remained staunchly intact in subsequent years.²¹² Much of this religious activity, however, occurred outside or even at the expense of traditional Orthodox Judaism and such formerly central ritual practices as kashrut and Sabbath observance experienced further decline.

Akron Jews mirrored many of these national trends as they wrestled with institutional development, worship services, and special religious concerns within the context of the greater Akron community. The most dramatic local change occurred in the rate of synagogue affiliation. In the immediate post war years, the director of the local Jewish Community Council reported that "a very substantial portion of our community is unaffiliated with synagogues. . . ."²¹³ Taking cognizance of this continuing situation, the Akron Rabbinical Council condemned the choice of non-affiliation and indicated such a decision could only prove to be meaningless because no Jew could divorce himself from the Jewish community.²¹⁴ Which of these arguments ultimately

proved persuasive in the community's mind is not clear but by the mid-1970s the communal demographic study established the level of synagogue membership at 83 percent (which put religious affiliation ahead of such secular affiliation as the Center at 72 percent). Interestingly, the director of the Jewish Federation had estimated affiliation at an even higher rate (90 percent) and attributed this to the dual factors of the impossibility of anonymity in the community and such side benefits as active synagogue social groups.²¹⁶

Individual synagogues did not benefit equally from the upsurge in community affiliation. The two major beneficiaries were the Reform and Conservative synagogues. Beth El's membership went from some 100 families at the beginning of this period to over 650 families in the early 1970s, ultimately claiming some 41 percent of all congregational memberships by 1975.²¹⁷ Similarly, Temple Israel's membership expanded from 450 members in 1953 to almost 600 a decade later and increased even further to a total of some 700 members by 1975.²¹⁸ The fate of the Orthodox synagogues was more varied. None of them achieved the large scale allegiance of the above institutions. Anshe Sfard, however, did expand from approximately 100 families in 1952 to some 300 families by the 1970s, thereby reaching an additional 9 percent of the community.²¹⁹ Anshe Sfard's ability to survive while the other Orthodox synagogues faded has been attributed to the loyalty of successive congregational generations (some 40 percent are second or third generation members), the specific attractions--leadership and otherwise--of the institution itself, and the continuing commitment of a segment of the American Jewish community to Orthodoxy.²²⁰ As for the other well-

established Orthodox congregations, the Sons of Peace, the New Hebrew Congregation, the Barberton Shul, and Ahavas Zedek--one by one they were phased out in the 1950s and 1960s and their Torahs and members were distributed among the remaining congregations. The last to dissolve was Ahavas Zedek, the old Hungarian synagogue. Attempts to merge with Anshe Sfard proved unsuccessful and the 1969 phone directory was the last to contain a listing of this long important institution.

By 1970, the new religious order seemed firmly entrenched: each denomination--Reform, Orthodox, and Conservative--had its respective synagogue and following. The era of ethnic religious differentiation expressed in formal institutional structure was ended. Furthermore, the massive generational shift from Orthodox identification to a more liberal religious stance, while not total, was decisive and not likely to be reversed. Thus, the 1975 demographic study showed that over 50 percent of the respondents identified their mothers as being Orthodox while only 11 percent claimed similar identification.²²¹ The respondents typically identified themselves as either Conservative (46 percent) or Reform (37 percent). In marked contrast to this generational shift, the oldest children of the respondents seemed more willing to retain the religious identities of their parents (36 percent Conservative and 36 percent Reform). Although the drop in allegiance to Orthodoxy continued (6 percent) the rate of disaffection was nevertheless less than in the previous generation. Expressed in statistical terms, the denominational similarity of respondents and their parents had a correlation of .27 while the similarity between respondents and their children correlated at the higher level of .40 (significant at the

.001 level).²²² (These data confirm Kramer and Leventman's findings of the direction of generational shifts in religious adjustment.) It should also be noted that some 4 percent of the respondents acknowledged having one or more children who belonged to religions other than Judaism.

The emergence of three major synagogues in a period of expanding memberships and general community prosperity proved an impetus to capital expansion in Akron much as it did throughout the country. The cornerstone for Anshe Sfard's new synagogue was laid in April, 1950. At the dedication the following year specific note was taken of the fact that this event marked the first time in three decades that a new synagogue had been completed in the city.²²³ At virtually the same time Beth El was involved in its own synagogue building program. Ground was broken for the new structure in 1950, the new congregation was officially dedicated in December, 1951, and the building itself was finally completed in the spring of 1954.²²⁴ Meanwhile, Temple Israel was similarly engaged in expansion activities. Major additions to the existing facilities were begun in the fall of 1951 and two years later a weekend of festivities marked the official Temple rededication.²²⁵ The bricks and mortar of the fifties on Copley (Anshe Sfard), Hawkins (Beth El), and Merriman (Temple Israel) served the community until the early 1970s when Anshe Sfard, faced with the problems of a racially changing neighborhood, undertook a new building campaign. By the mid-seventies the new facilities along with a new name, the Revere Road Synagogue, were available for the Orthodox members of the community.

Institutional changes were not confined to new structures.

There were changes in religious leadership as well. Perhaps the most significant change was the abolition of the position of community rabbi in favor of individual congregational spiritual leadership. For Anshe Sfard and Temple Israel the pattern of turnover in the pulpit ended with the arrival in the early fifties of Rabbis Abraham Leibtag and Morton Applebaum. Both were destined to serve their respective congregations into the mid-seventies. Beth El, however, continued to experience frequent shifts in rabbinical leadership. The relationship between a rabbi and his congregation at times was subject to considerable strain. Mention has already been made of Rabbi Applebaum's predecessor, Rabbi Taxay, who was finally forced out of his job in the early fifties. The congregation was sharply divided in its view of this man--acknowledged as a superb speaker and fine intellect yet condemned for mental instability and charged with sexual improprieties.²²⁶ While this was the most dramatic such incident in the community during this period, the perception of instability also attached to a rabbi from Beth El.²²⁷ Dispute was not limited to the congregational family. It could also take the form of jurisdictional disputes between a rabbi's proper sphere of operation and that of another Jewish communal institution.²²⁸ On the more positive side, considerable strides were made in improving the relations among the rabbis themselves. This was evident in the formation of the Rabbinical Association of Akron in 1946. Originally consisting of five rabbis representing all three denominations, this group took joint actions aimed at both the Jewish community and the greater Akron community. An example of the former was their joint open

letter to the Jewish community deprecating the use of physicians to perform the bris (circumcision) ceremony and asserting the sole legitimacy of the mohel to function in this regard.²²⁹ The rabbis also jointly acted to communicate with school authorities to prevent the scheduling of school activities on the Sabbath or Jewish holidays. In 1951 the rabbis planned a joint Friday night service at the Center for the Jewish Welfare Fund which was advertised to the community as "one of the outstanding and most significant events in the history of Akron Jewry."²³⁰

Increased rabbinical interaction occurred at a time of increasing homogeneity of religious expression in the synagogues. While the Orthodox did not move as far to the left as the Conservatives, there is no doubt that they did move. There is also no doubt that the Reform moved back towards the right during this period. Numerous instances of such changes can be cited. For example, one of the first projects of the newly organized Anshe Sfard men's club in 1947 was the purchase of prayer books with English translations. It was not long thereafter that English reading itself was introduced in some services. While the offering of a high holiday sermon in Yiddish was still expected of Rabbi Leibtag at the time he was hired in 1952, the practice disappeared shortly thereafter. Other changes in the needs and demands of the congregation led to the introduction of a second Friday night service which met later than the traditional sundown hour, included responsive readings in English, and permitted mixed seating.²³¹

The question of mixed seating was destined to be a major issue for Orthodox synagogues. The Sisterhood minutes of Ahavas Zedek in

1962 reported a discussion of the use of a curtain to divide the sexes at prayer. The women went on record as favoring the synagogue's move toward a more liberal and "Americanized" position.²³² In the late sixties Anshe Sfard experimented with mixed seating at two bar mitzvah Sabbath services. The attempt proved premature. Inevitably, the question resurfaced when plans for the new synagogue were introduced. The compromise finally adopted allotted the front three rows on each side of the aisle to those preferring separate seating while the remaining rows were available on a mixed-seating basis.²³³ This question is related to the larger issue of the role of women in the service and congregation. Bas mitzvahs (the female equivalent of bar mitzvahs) were introduced in Anshe Sfard in the late 1950s. About this same time women began to serve on the synagogue Board.

Still another change in the Orthodox format affected the overall decorum of the service. The elimination of the auctioning off of aliyahs (honors of being called to the pulpit during the Torah reading) in the mid-sixties, assured a decorum that conformed more closely to that of the more liberal denominations. Furthermore, decreasing familiarity of the Orthodox laity with the order and language of the traditional service by the mid-seventies provoked rabbinical consideration of such possible changes in the high holiday service as alternative services.²³⁴ If enacted, this would mean an additional shift in the direction of a more liberalized and Anglicized service. Even though changes in the services were considerable and more were anticipated, certain elements of the tradition were rigidly maintained. Paramount among these was the commitment to offering services three times a day,

every day.

While Orthodoxy in Akron was moving in the direction of its more liberal co-religionists, the distance between extreme points of the religious Jewish spectrum was being simultaneously reduced from the Reform end. Changes such as the reintroduction of a cantor, lighting candles on Friday night, the reinstatement of the bar mitzvah service-- and later the introduction of the bas mitzvah service, renewed Saturday morning services, and the introduction of more Hebrew into the services and the religious school curriculum, jointly acted to bring Temple Israel's religious experiences into closer alignment with the worship experiences into closer alignment with the worship experiences of the rest of the Akron Jewish community as well as locally enacting the changes embraced by the National Reform movement.²³⁵ (In the area of women's roles, however, Temple Israel moved faster and further than the other local denominations, installing the first female congregation president in the community's history by the mid-seventies.)

Declining levels of religious observance remained a reality and a concern. In 1946, Rabbi Pelcovitz of Anshe Sfard charged that the Sabbath had become just another work day. His proposed solution was not one of accommodation but rather of renewed religious pressure-- longer services "to make up for all the praying we have neglected" and an increased emphasis on Jewish education for the younger generation.²³⁶ By the seventies even the Orthodox rabbi could only count on one hand those of his congregants whom he credited with complete Sabbath observance.²³⁷ For the community as a whole, the demographic study figures suggest that only 36 percent always lit Sabbath candles and only 12

percent claimed regular attendance on a weekly basis at services.²³⁸

While the matter of Sabbath service attendance and individual observance was of obvious relevance to synagogue Boards and individual rabbis, the question became one of general communal concern when applied to the Sabbath opening or closing of particular community institutions. That such religious issues were repeatedly raised regarding the general operating procedures of secular agencies, such as the Center and Federation, supports this chapter's major contention that religion was widely recognized as having a legitimate claim in all areas of Akron Jewish communal life. Religious issues regarding kashrut or Sabbath closings might be hotly debated (in effect taking the community's religious temperature); they were never dismissed as "out of order." Thus, in 1946 the Federation was attacked by the executive director of the local Jewish Community Council and by the chairman of Akron's Rabbinical Association for keeping Sabbath hours, a practice charged as deviating from all other similar institutions in the country.²³⁹ After half a year of committee consideration and debate, a motion to keep the offices closed on Saturday carried. The questions of closing Jewish Welfare Agencies for all the Jewish holidays was still being discussed in 1970 with the Reform rabbi in agreement with his colleagues that the full holiday be observed out of respect for traditional Jews in the community.²⁴⁰

The Sabbath-closing controversy was considerably more acute in the case of the Jewish Center as members desiring active Saturday programming clashed with those demanding strict Sabbath observance. Such disputes could be triggered by a wide array of Center activities.

For example, a complaint to the Center Board in 1949 cited the Sabbath desecration involved in mounting lights in the gym after sundown Friday in preparation for a state-wide ping-pong tournament and further charged that participants in the event assembled before sundown Saturday.²⁴¹ To combat such pressures the Center surveyed and reported on comparable institutions which were open on Saturday and appointed Committees to explore the question of Saturday programming. The Center minutes also included the positions of some sixteen participants in one full-dress debate in 1953 on the respective merits of the case.²⁴² The pro-opening side offered arguments on the grounds of "progress," similar church activities, Biblical sanction for such recreational activity, individual rights to determine personal Sabbath activities, and the hypocrisy of those attending the YMCA who denied the Center Health Club the right to be open. Opponents feared an entering wedge against traditional observances with the Jewish holidays subject to the next assault. They argued for conformity with tradition and with the closing decision of a majority of American-Jewish Centers. The consensus of Akron's rabbinical leaders at two special meetings supported the closed-door forces to avoid the possibility of Sabbath desecration and prevent the disruption of community unity.²⁴³ A dozen more years went by before a Center Board by a close vote finally opened the facilities on Saturdays for children's programming. Letters in opposition to this decision included the earlier arguments and expressed the additional concern that "if we want respect from the Gentile community, we must maintain certain standards, traditions and commandments."²⁴⁴ At the close of the sixties the debate continued over such

details as acceptable Sabbath poolside behavior regarding smoking, spending money, and the wringing out of bathing suits.

The single ritual area that seems to have most frequently dominated the attention of each successive historical period was the matter of kashrut. In 1949 the Vaad Hakashruth provided supervision for four establishments selling *delicatessen* products locally. In the early seventies there were still two kosher markets on Copley and one on Wooster Avenue. However, the strict observance of the dietary laws was generally perceived as declining over these years. By 1972 the operator of one of the kosher meat markets claimed that, "Just the old-timers obey the dietary laws. . . ." ²⁴⁵ Supporting this contention was the reduction in the number of shochets in the community from three to none. The data on this subject in the demographic study indicated that by the mid-seventies 75 percent never used separate meat and dairy dishes while only 21 percent always did; 23 percent always bought meat at a kosher butcher, 57 percent never did. ²⁴⁶

The observance of kashrut may have declined but the potential for controversy surrounding this issue remained very much alive. Again, the Center--specifically, the Center kitchen--was the major arena of conflict. In 1946 the Vaad Hakashruth sent a letter to the Center's executive director claiming that the Center kitchen was not currently kosher and asserting "there can be no equivocation in the field of Kashruth." ²⁴⁷ The Orthodox organization demanded that this situation be rectified with a series of specific measures including the purchase of new dishes and employment of a *mashgiach* (supervisor). By the seventies when strict observance of kashrut was at a minimum

the problem still existed. As one Center official remarked, for some thirty families it (kosher observance) costs the Center thousands of dollars a year.²⁴⁸ Furthermore, a wealthy Center member allegedly withdrew his pledge to the Center building fund because he was denied permission to hold a non-kosher affair.²⁴⁹ The argument sustaining kosher observance was the basic proposition of the Kashruth Board: the community must acknowledge the needs of its religiously observant Jews.²⁵⁰

Communal kashrut problems extended beyond the confines of the Center kitchen. At one point the Jewish Community Council director openly acknowledged, "We will not disguise the fact that there are many difficult problems entailed in the administration of a Kashruth program; . . . butcher, shochet, supervisor, and customer must . . . find . . . relationship in which (no one) is exploited. . . ."²⁵¹ Mundane considerations such as fear of competition and the right to compete also became attached to the issue of kashrut. Thus, Jewish grocers objected to the Talmud Torah selling matzohs, thereby jeopardizing their Passover business and the denial of an application for a Kosher Meat Department by the Kashruth Board became a matter of some dispute.²⁵²

Another religious concern which spanned Akron's four historical periods was the preoccupation with burial procedures and Jewish cemeteries. The intensity of that concern in this final period was evident in the successful movement to obtain a local Jewish funeral chapel. To that end representatives of such diverse groups as the Orthodox Jewish Cemetery Association, Farband, Congregation Ahavas Zedek, the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, Congregation Anshe Sfard met in 1948

as a Committee to ensure the creation of just such a funeral home.²⁵³

It was not long thereafter that the Gordon Memorial Home, Akron's only Jewish funeral home, was established on Copley Road.

Analogous to the move towards greater homogeneity in Jewish religious worship was the increasing agreement on appropriate death and funeral observances. The Reform rabbi disapproved of open caskets; the Orthodox rabbi modified grave-filling practices in favor of symbolic covering of the casket. The return to such traditional practices as closed caskets, rapid burial, no embalming, and no mausoleums seemed to have gained increased acceptance in the community. One of the interesting if short-lived episodes of Akron Jewish communal life--the era of the left wing Jewish People's Fraternal Order--was briefly resurrected when the abandoned Communist cemetery, facing land dispossession, became the concern of communal leaders. In 1975, under the supervision of the community's funeral director, the old IWO graves were dug up and moved to other Jewish burial sites.²⁵⁴

In this period, as in earlier ones, the religious community was concerned with the education of its children. During the Depression and World War II years the community had delegated much of that function (apart from the limited training provided by Temple Israel) to communal rather than religious institutions--most importantly the Talmud Torah. Now the burden of meeting the demand for Jewish education shifted to the synagogues. In the early fifties Beth El determined to start its own school. The inevitable threat this posed to the Talmud Torah did not go unnoticed or unchallenged but the congregation prevailed. In a probably unintended exposition of the dual

pulls of American and Jewish forces on the second and third generation immigrant community, the Ph.D. director of education at Beth El clarified the new school's approach: the methods and techniques were to be "American and progressive, but Jewish in content."²⁵⁵ The program was to be grounded in knowledge of child psychology and education, including Jewish pedagogy. Teaching methods were described as flexible and experimental and "not encrusted by the Eastern-European methods . . . which have heretofore rendered Jewish education . . . ineffective."²⁵⁶ By the early fifties some 250 students were enrolled in Beth El's weekday and Sunday school program.²⁵⁷

Seeing the handwriting on the wall, Anshe Sfard began its own school in the mid-fifties. From an initial group of six students the school grew to some 110 pupils by 1962.²⁵⁸ At that point enrollment began to wane due to a combination of factors including parental concerns about the school's location with its attending neighborhood problems and the opening of Akron's first Jewish day school (which inevitably drew from Anshe Sfard's natural constituency). By the mid-seventies--even with a new building--enrollment was down by 50 percent and the initial four-afternoon schedule had been modified to two afternoons and Sunday mornings. Meanwhile, the remaining member of the triumverate of religious institutions, Temple Israel, initiated--and was successful in sustaining--an expanded religious education program which now included mid-week Hebrew. By the early 1960s, the congregation boasted over 400 pupils with a staff of some seventeen teachers.²⁵⁹

Attempts to establish the overall Jewish educational level of the community were incorporated into the 1975 demographic study. Only 13 percent of the heads of households interviewed were identified as having no formal Jewish education. Fifty-nine percent claimed a Jewish education at the junior or senior high level.²⁶⁰ Seventy-five percent of the respondents' children have received Jewish education outside of the home. Of those with children under fifteen, less than 2 percent had no plans for such training. The goal of promoting personal Jewish identity (28 percent) surpassed such other choices as religious instructions (18 percent), preservation of Jewish culture (13 percent), and bar (bas) mitzvah (.4 percent) as the reasons for sending children to institutions providing Jewish education.²⁶¹

Vis-a-vis the Akron community at large, the issue of religion in the public schools became an increasingly vocalized concern. In 1949, the Jewish Community Council sponsored several meetings for the Jewish community on "Religion in the Public Schools" which focused on such issues as the distribution of Gideon Bibles, Bible readings, singing of Christmas carols and hymns, Christmas and Chanukkah programs, U.S. court decisions, etc. The following year the director of the Council credited several local Christian clergy plus Rabbi Pelcovitz and himself for success in persuading the Board of Education to discontinue distribution of the Gideon Bibles throughout the school system.²⁶²

There is little doubt that the Jewish community supported the termination of the Gideon Bible program. The strategy of how to handle Jewish holidays--whether to bring them into the schools or try

to get all religious observances out of the schools--was more open to dispute. As indicated above, the Akron Jewish News applauded the introduction of Chanukkah into the schools presaging the general Jewish position in the years immediately after World War II. This approach, however, did not satisfactorily resolve the problem of Christmas observances in the schools. In the early 1960s, Rabbi Applebaum declared that "we do not condone what takes place in the public schools at Christmas. . . ." ²⁶³ He believed that expedience dictated yielding to the majority's wishes in this matter but supported "trying to keep the celebration down to a minimum." As to the appropriate response for Jewish students during such school festivities, the rabbi counseled that carols "will not taint your souls . . . (as long as) your hearts beat with the rhythm of the Rock of Ages." ²⁶⁴ Lead roles in Christmas plays were another matter and were more properly reserved to those personally identifying with specific Christian characters.

Examples of positive interactions between Akron rabbinical leaders and the Christian community have been duly cited and they continued. In one notable instance during this period, however, the contact seemed to go well beyond the secondary relationships which typically characterized the earlier interactions and which Gordon postulated as the norm for Jewish religious assimilation. The reference here is to Rabbi Emeritus Alexander of Temple Israel who served as one of the three clergy-men conducting the funeral services of Akron's pioneer rubber industrialist, Charles Seiberling. ²⁶⁵ It was Alexander who was reported as saying the last words over the grave. On that occasion

he emotionally referred to his long-standing personal friendship with the leading industrialist.

If the period of Depression and War can be summarized as a period of loose and shifting spiritual attachments for Akron Jewry, then the post War period by way of contrast emerges as a more stable religious era with more frequent religious affiliation and a greater commonality of worship forms. It is in this period that several crucial aspects of Akron Jewry's religious adjustment were completed: denominational distinctions supplanted ethnic organizational principles; three major religious institutions emerged; the paradox unfolded-- fewer synagogues with higher levels of institutional affiliation. Other generalizations such as continuing institutional flux (e.g., changes in physical facilities, the service, role of religious schools, etc.) also found supporting evidence in this period. Religious "push and pull" still surrounded such issues as Sabbath observance, kashrut, individual rabbis. Most importantly, Judaism as religion emerged as a central identifying feature of Akron Jewry, with a rate of congregational affiliation exceeding that of any other Jewish institutional connection. (Indeed, as the following chapter will show, organizational affiliation essentially came to supplement--not replace--this central religious affiliation.)

In addition to the unique aspects of Akron's post-war religious adjustment, it seems clear that Akron Jews remained in the mainstream of the American Jewish experience. Both local and national experiences included increased congregational membership, extensive building

programs, widespread support of the Reform and Conservative branches of Judaism--at the expense of Orthodox connections--reduced levels of observance in such ritual areas as kashrut, but retained high levels of participation in observing such holidays as Passover and Chanukkah (locally, 78 percent "always" attended Seders and 79 percent always lit Chanukkah candles).²⁶⁶

The post-war period further substantiated some of the theoretical positions outlined above. Thus, the religious response which Kramer and Leventman found characteristic of the third immigrant generation, namely a greater acceptance of the parents' religious position than had been the case for the preceding two generations, proved to be an accurate description of religious generational relationships in Akron. Gordon's claim, that structural assimilation occurred within the ranks of the Jewish community, while structural pluralism prevailed vis-a-vis the larger community, adequately describes Akron Jewry's situation at this time. The evidence for Gordon's assertion of extensive cultural assimilation is more ambiguous. Conscious efforts to Americanize, liberalize, and modernize were indeed undertaken by the Conservative and Orthodox elements in the community. However, a countervailing tendency to retreat from the imitation of liberal Christianity's model characterized Reform Judaism. The stresses and strains in religious life over communal observance of the Sabbath, kashrut, and religious education (communal afternoon vs. synagogue sponsored vs. parochial day) suggest the likelihood of a local basis in fact of Liebman's theory of conflicting values.

Several conclusions about the overall religious adjustment of the Akron Jewish community across a century of religious commitment now seem possible. First, and this has emerged repeatedly in the preceding pages, religion was a major organizing principle of Akron Jewish life, playing a key role in maintaining group identity. Without question, then, religious adjustment is a central component of the total integration process experienced by the Akron Jewish community. Perhaps the most evident recurrent theme in Akron's Jewish religious adjustment is that of continual flux (in numbers and locations of institutions, in number and roles of rabbis, in styles of worship and levels of ritual observance). This generalization must be modified, however, to take into account the stability provided by one religious institution, Temple Israel. Indeed, the existence of the Temple spans the entire history of the community and its ranks included members of each successive generation. Several other congregations both surviving and disbanded can also claim substantial records extending over at least half a century. Lay leadership of the various congregations reached down the generations and, especially in more recent years, stability in rabbinical leadership was finally achieved.

Only two unifying principles significantly affected religious affiliation: ethnicity and denomination, the former being supplanted by the latter. This is significant not only for insight into the sources of bonding in religious life but for possible implications regarding social stratification. For example, an ethnic base of congregational life could effectively sustain German-Jewish exclusiveness.

Several apparent paradoxes characterized the religious life of the community. For example, while general agreement on the importance of Jewish religious identification puts religion in a harmonizing role, divergent views of the correct way to express and act upon religious convictions produced continuing friction within and among Jewish groups. A more descriptive title for this chapter might well be "Religious Push and Pull," with the major areas of disagreement involving issues of Orthodoxy, Americanization, and the personalities of individual religious leaders. Another seeming paradox relates to apparently incompatible figures showing that the number of synagogues declined while religious affiliation increased. This unusual correlation is actually the result of a community becoming less visibly orthodox and observant, and eventually halving its number of small, ethnic-based Orthodox shuls, at the same time that a greater overall percentage of the Jewish community assumed associational ties with the remaining, denominationally differentiated congregations.

The general attitude of Akron Jewry toward its own religious experience is complex and ambivalent. Thus, assessments of the relative harmony or conflict within and among individual congregations or religious factions vary considerably depending on the record or individual consulted. The data seem to suggest, however, that the most hopeful, optimistic, and congenial views are associated with the first (1865-1885) and the last (1945-1975) historical periods studied, due no doubt to the relatively greater levels of communal homogeneity and/or socio-economic well-being existing during those two eras.

More difficult is the question of motivation for religious change. Involved here, for example, is the attempt to determine what prompted significant shifts by Akron's Reform Jews away from traditional Judaism and towards a structure and format more closely akin to liberal Christianity. In other words, who or what influenced the "churchy" atmosphere associated especially with the late nineteenth century (disappearance of Saturday service and flirtation with Sunday Sabbath, increased roles for women, pulpit exchanges, etc.) and the 1920s and 1930s (no bar-mitzvahs or cantorial services, rabbis known as "pope" or "ambassador to the gentiles"): Several explanations are possible: awareness and imitation of trends characterizing the national Reform movement; indigenous bread-based acculturation; strong rabbinical leadership (Philo and Alexander); conscious or unconscious need to erect barriers assuring distance from the new East European immigrants; response to perceived anti-semitism. The last two hypotheses require further comment. The issue of German-Jewish exclusiveness has been alluded to above in connection with the ethnic component of religious bonding. It is not inconceivable that the rejection of common elements of Jewish worship was nurtured by the expectation that this would discourage massive entry into German-Jewish ranks. Simultaneously, it might reasonably be hoped that the acceptance of a more Christian religious style might alleviate negative Christian images of Jews. Nativism and anti-semitism, it will be recalled, were much in evidence in the 1890s and the 1920s and '30s. It is difficult to determine the precise impact of Christianity--in its strictly religious or cultural guises--on Jewish religious choices, either as a model of the

American way or as the source of anti-semitism. While a later chapter will reopen the question of Christian influence, the general thrust of this chapter has been on internally determined Jewish choices--influenced no doubt by external forces, but nonetheless undertaken neither as a direct response to duress or as a conscious move toward ultimate conversion. At this point, then, the best that can be inferred is that a multiplicity of factors, ranging from the personalities of individual rabbis to duplication of national practices, influenced the particular form that Jewish religious adjustment assumed in Akron.

Finally, considerable complexity surrounds the issue of how genuinely "religious" the Akron Jewish community was, religious in this sense meaning a commitment to something beyond a group offering social identity. This question is especially difficult because Judaism for the East Europeans was innately a "communal" affair--as distinct from Christianity or even German Judaism as it developed during the Enlightenment. When the level of synagogue affiliation goes up after 1945, is this a sign of "God regained" or "civil religion," or "social-club belonging"? It is difficult to be sure and perhaps the most satisfactory response--although admittedly one full of ambiguity--is in terms of a many-faceted identity. At the very least, it is clear that a century of choice in religious life resulted in the acceptance of the religious component of that Jewish identity and the commitment to certain Jewish practices and to local Jewish religious institutions. The expression of this religious identity occurred within the context of a hyphenated Jewish-American community which remained very much in the mainstream of the national American-Jewish experience.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Glazer and Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot, p. 142.
- ²Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 188.
- ³Ibid.
- ⁴Temple Israel (Akron Hebrew Association and Akron Hebrew Congregation), Minutes, 10 September 1865. Note that from here on the Minutes and Constitution will be identified by the synagogue's later name, Temple Israel.
- ⁵Engelman, "Jewish Statistics in the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies," p. 127.
- ⁶Glazer, American Judaism, p. 60.
- ⁷Temple Israel, "Preamble," Constitution and By-laws, 1865.
- ⁸Temple Israel, Constitution and By-laws, 1865.
- ⁹Ibid.
- ¹⁰Samuel Lane identifies fifteen prominent Jews involved in organizing the Association in his serialized feature "Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County," Akron Beacon Journal, 13 October 1888. Twenty signatures are affixed to the Temple Constitution and By-laws, 1865.
- ¹¹American Israelite, 17 December 1880; Akron Beacon Journal, 15 April 1885; Lane, Ibid.
- ¹²Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, pp. 4-15, passim.; Akron City Directories, 1873-1885.
- ¹³Akron Beacon Journal, 28 November 1974.
- ¹⁴N. L. Holstein, Secretary of Akron Hebrew Association, to Secretary, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1 March 1875, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati.
- ¹⁵For discussion on Minhag America see Temple Israel, Minutes, 20 January 1867; 7 April 1867; 6 October 1867.

¹⁶ Einhorn's book and further search for an English-Hebrew prayer book are discussed in Ibid., 6 February 1870; 3 January 1875.

¹⁷ Ibid., 2 November 1869; 6 February 1870; 3 January 1875; Akron Beacon Journal, 6 June 1870; Olin, Akron and Environs, p. 186.

¹⁸ Temple Israel, Minutes, 15 January 1870; 6 February 1870; 6 November 1870.

¹⁹ Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 12.

²⁰ For sample references to poor attendance and attentiveness, see Temple Israel, Minutes, 5 October 1873; 4 October 1874; 4 April 1875. Decorum quote is from Ibid., 14 September 1873.

²¹ Akron Beacon Journal, 6 June 1870.

²² Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 15.

²³ Harry Leopold, Bar Mitzvah Speech, 1885, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati.

²⁴ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 November 1874.

²⁵ Temple Israel, Minutes, 1 October 1865.

²⁶ Ibid., 15 January 1870; 6 February 1870.

²⁷ Ibid., 5 March 1871.

²⁸ Ibid., 19 July 1874.

²⁹ Akron Beacon Journal, 4 December 1874.

³⁰ Temple Israel, Minutes, 1 October 1865.

³¹ Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 7.

³² Temple Israel, Minutes, 26 August 1866; 4 April 1875; 4 July 1875.

³³ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 November 1874.

³⁴ Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 8.

³⁵ American Israelite, 1 June 1883.

³⁶ In his history of Baltimore Jewry, Isaac M. Fein points out that the joint function of chazan and teacher typically served to make education the step-child of early Jewish communities. This does not seem to be the case in Akron where provision for education preceded

even the procurement of cemetery grounds. Isaac M. Fein, The Making of an American Jewish Community: The History of Baltimore Jewry, 1773-1926 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), p. 70.

³⁷ Isaac Fein also noted that purchase of a cemetery typically preceded the legal incorporation of the mother synagogue. *Ibid.*, p. 19; Anderson, "The Jews of Toledo," p. 73.

³⁸ Temple Israel, Minutes, 26 August 1866.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 16 September 1866.

⁴⁰ Akron Beacon Journal, 2 May 1867.

⁴¹ Temple Israel, Minutes, 20 February 1870; 3 September 1871.

⁴² Well into the 19th century, American Jews practiced general burial without family distinctions. Adler and Connolly, From Ararat to Suburbia, p. 51. General burial was apparently never practiced in Akron. Temple Israel, Minutes, 22 May 1872.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 5 July 1874.

⁴⁴ The Occident, October 1865, p. 333; Temple Israel, Minutes, 1 October 1865.

⁴⁵ Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Olin, Akron and Environs, p. 186; Temple Israel, Minutes, 5 October 1873.

⁴⁷ Temple Israel, Minutes, 20 June 1872.

⁴⁸ Occident, October 1865, p. 333; American Israelite, 4 December 1874; 17 December 1880.

⁴⁹ Akron Beacon Journal, 2 May 1867; 17 September 1868; 6 June 1870; 24 July 1883; 28 November 1874; 15 April 1885; 26 September 1874.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 17 September 1868; Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 13.

⁵¹ Lane, "Fifty Years and Over--Akron and Summit County," p. 8; Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," p. 42.

⁵² For examples of holiday closing reports, see Akron Beacon Journal, 17 September 1868; 19 September 1870.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 5 July 1879.

⁵⁴ Glazer, American Judaism, pp. 192, 193, 195.

⁵⁵ Akron City Directory, 1885-86, p. 41; Samuel Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," p. 43; Gartner, History of the Jews of Cleveland, pp. 168-69, 199.

⁵⁶ Lane, "Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County," p. 8.

⁵⁷ Akron Beacon Journal, 30 December 1893.

⁵⁸ Taped interviews with Hyman Ekus, 1972; Abraham Pules, 1972.

⁵⁹ Nathan Hurvitz, "The History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, 1924-1942, as an Agency Fostering Jewish Identifications and Values" (Masters Thesis, Washington Univ., 1949), p. 87.

⁶⁰ Taped interview with Max Arenson, 1972; interview with Rabbi Abraham Leibtag, September 1976.

⁶¹ Malvyn Wachner, "Progressive Jewish Organizations," Akron and Summit County Ohio, ed. Kenfield, p. 535; Max Schneier tape; Beth El Congregation, This Is Our Beth El (Akron, c. 1950).

⁶² Beth El Congregation, This Is Our Beth El.

⁶³ Akron Beacon Journal, 24 February 1902; 13 February 1928.

⁶⁴ Wachner, "Progressive Jewish Organizations," p. 535; Akron Beacon Journal, 24 February 1902; 10 November 1915.

⁶⁵ Akron Beacon Journal, 29 February 1904.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 November 1874; 24 February 1902.

⁶⁸ Ben Marks letter.

⁶⁹ Akron Beacon Journal, 21 June 1902.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 24 June 1902.

⁷³ Ibid., 2 July 1902.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 17 September 1909.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ben Marks letter.

- ⁷⁷ Adath Israel Anshe Sfard Congregation, Constitution and By-laws (c. 1924), pp. 4, 13.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 10.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 12.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 9.
- ⁸¹ Ibid., p. 4.
- ⁸² Ibid., p. 9.
- ⁸³ Avram Hartstein, "History of the Ahavas Zedek Congregation," Golden Book of Life, Akron, 1941.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid.
- ⁸⁵ Ahavas Zedek Congregation, Constitution.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid.
- ⁸⁷ Ben Marks letter.
- ⁸⁸ Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," p. 43.
- ⁸⁹ Interview with Ben Hahn, October 1972.
- ⁹⁰ Ben Marks letter.
- ⁹¹ Interview with Ben Hahn.
- ⁹² Taped interview with Meyer Wise, 1972.
- ⁹³ Charles Schwartz tape; Notes for Akron Jewish Center annual meeting, 22 January 1961.
- ⁹⁴ Max Arenson tape; Akron Beacon Journal, 25 February 1927.
- ⁹⁵ Akron Beacon Journal, 8 July 1920.
- ⁹⁶ Tour of Jewish cemeteries with Akron's Jewish funeral director, Robert Gordon, 8 September 1975.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid.; Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1940, p. 58.
- ⁹⁸ American Jewish Year Book, 1919-20, p. 110; Max Schneir tape.
- ⁹⁹ Interview with Ruth Cooper, Fall 1972.
- ¹⁰⁰ Anshe Sfard, Constitution, p. 12.

- ¹⁰¹ Akron Beacon Journal, 30 December 1927.
- ¹⁰² Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 1 April 1914.
- ¹⁰³ Max Schneier tape.
- ¹⁰⁴ American Jewish Year Book, 1899-1900, p. 225; Temple Israel, Minutes, 8 October 1916; 5 November 1925.
- ¹⁰⁵ Temple Israel, Minutes, 7 October 1900; 20 January 1901.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid., Constitution of Akron Hebrew Congregation, 1921.
- ¹⁰⁷ American Israelite, 17 January 1887.
- ¹⁰⁸ Akron Beacon Journal, 19 May 1890.
- ¹⁰⁹ Temple Israel, Minutes, 5 January 1896.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid., 19 October 1925; 29 October 1925.
- ¹¹¹ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 January 1899.
- ¹¹² Temple Israel, Minutes, 8 December 1918.
- ¹¹³ Ibid., 24 September 1905; 8 December 1918.
- ¹¹⁴ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 January 1899.
- ¹¹⁵ Temple Israel, Minutes, 1902.
- ¹¹⁶ Akron Beacon Journal, 4 March 1899.
- ¹¹⁷ Akron Beacon Journal, 30 October 1909.
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁹ Temple Israel, Minutes, 4 April 1909.
- ¹²⁰ American Jewish Year Book, 1919-20.
- ¹²¹ American Israelite, 17 January 1887; Temple Israel, Minutes, 4 April 1909.
- ¹²² Akron Beacon Journal, 8 September 1903.
- ¹²³ Ibid., 25 October 1902.
- ¹²⁴ Akron Central Labor Union Resolution, 4 April 1905 (American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati); Akron Beacon Journal, 24 December 1901.

- ¹²⁵ Temple Israel, Minutes, 4 July 1909; notes of Leslie Flaksman's interview with Meryll Sicherman.
- ¹²⁶ Albert Vorspan, "Voice in the Wilderness," Giants of Justice (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1960), p. 205.
- ¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 206.
- ¹²⁸ Ben Marks letter.
- ¹²⁹ Meyer Wise tape, 1972.
- ¹³⁰ Interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.
- ¹³¹ Notes of Leslie Flaksman's interview with Ira Jacobs, 1972.
- ¹³² Akron Beacon Journal, 29 January 1929, p. 25.
- ¹³³ Temple Israel, Minutes, 1 May 1911.
- ¹³⁴ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 June 1911.
- ¹³⁵ Ibid., 19 May 1890.
- ¹³⁶ Ibid., 14 May 1898.
- ¹³⁷ Ibid.
- ¹³⁸ Ibid., 30 October 1909; 23 October 1899; 10 July 1911.
- ¹³⁹ Ibid., 30 October 1909.
- ¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 22 November 1909.
- ¹⁴¹ Ibid., 18 March 1925.
- ¹⁴² Ibid., 7 June 1899; 9 June 1899.
- ¹⁴³ Ibid., 21 March 1924; 28 May 1924.
- ¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 13 November 1905; 11 May 1921.
- ¹⁴⁵ See Chapter I above, pp. 27-28.
- ¹⁴⁶ Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," pp. 185-86.
- ¹⁴⁷ Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1940, p. 62.
- ¹⁴⁸ Interview with Jack Reich.
- ¹⁴⁹ Interview with Belle Weiss.

- 150 Hyman Ekus tape; Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1937.
- 151 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, Ibid.
- 152 Ibid., 1940, p. 60; Hartstein, "History of Ahavas Zedek Congregation."
- 153 Temple Israel, Minutes, 7 December 1941.
- 154 Letter of Rabbi Alexander, 23 October 1935, Temple Israel Archives.
- 155 Temple Israel, Minutes, 4 August 1932.
- 156 Ibid., 27 December 1931.
- 157 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1945, p. 54.
- 158 Ibid., 1946, p. 46.
- 159 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 186.
- 160 Hartstein, "History of Ahavas Zedek Congregation"; Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1944, p. 54.
- 161 Temple Israel, Minutes, 8 January 1939; notes of Leslie Flaksman's interview with Dr. Sidney Freeman, 1972.
- 162 Temple Israel, Minutes, Ibid.
- 163 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 186.
- 164 Ibid., p. 188; Akron Beacon Journal, 15 February 1934.
- 165 Hartstein, "History of Ahavas Zedek Congregation."
- 166 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 185.
- 167 Ibid., pp. 186-87.
- 168 Rabbi Morton Applebaum, teacher's seminar, 10 September 1972.
- 169 Notes of Leslie Flaksman's interview with Dr. Sidney Freeman.
- 170 Interview with Rabbi Abraham Feffer, 26 April 1972.
- 171 Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 29 January 1931.
- 172 Interview with Ida Sigalow, 15 November 1972.
- 173 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 186.

- 174 Hartstein, "History of Ahavas Zedek Congregation."
- 175 Ibid.
- 176 Akron Center News, 31 March 1939.
- 177 Ibid.
- 178 Temple Israel, Minutes, 24 January 1937.
- 179 Ibid., 31 October 1934.
- 180 Ibid., 8 December 1935.
- 181 See Footnote 160 above.
- 182 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 188.
- 183 Akron Beacon Journal, 22 January 1930.
- 184 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 18 August 1929.
- 185 Ibid., 14 November 1929.
- 186 Ibid., October 1944.
- 187 Akron Beacon Journal, 18 July 1929.
- 188 Ibid., 30 October 1929.
- 189 Ibid.
- 190 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 188.
- 191 Interview with Robert Gordon.
- 192 Ibid.
- 193 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 187.
- 194 Interview with Ida Sigalow; interview with Robert Rosenthal, 13 November 1972.
- 195 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 187.
- 196 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 15 November 1939.
- 197 Interviews with Ida Sigalow; Belle Segal; Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 186.
- 198 Akron Beacon Journal, 2 November 1939.

- 199 Ibid.; 4 November 1939.
- 200 Ibid., 2 November 1939.
- 201 Interview with Ruth Cooper, 22 October 1972; Akron Beacon Journal, 17 October 1931.
- 202 Akron Center News, 14 January 1944.
- 203 Akron Beacon Journal, 24 October 1931; 14 November 1931.
- 204 Ibid., 5 October 1938.
- 205 Ibid., 5 April 1939.
- 206 Temple Israel, Minutes, 3 December 1939.
- 207 Ibid.
- 208 Hartstein, "History of Ahavas Zedek Congregation."
- 209 Bloom. "The Jews of Buna," p. 189-90.
- 210 Akron Beacon Journal, 29 May 1930.
- 211 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 187.
- 212 See Chapter I above, pp. 34-35.
- 213 Akron Jewish News, 6 January 1950.
- 214 Ibid., 2 September 1955.
- 215 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 25, 38.
- 216 Such an explanation is probably more helpful in explaining affiliation rates than rapidly shifting figures. Paradoxically, a clue to the change may reside in the reasons given for failure to join a synagogue by unaffiliated respondents in the 1975 communal demographic study (Ibid., p. 117). Ideological reasons were cited least frequently, well behind such factors as cost. Perhaps the generational passage of immigrant "free thinkers" at odds with Orthodoxy but uncomfortable with Reform is significant here as well as the ritual compromise between extreme Orthodoxy and Reform. More conventional explanations would stress the impact of the holocaust and Israel.
- 217 Max Schneier tape; Beth El Congregation, 25th Anniversary Book, August 1971; Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 117.
- 218 Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 31; Annual Report of Temple Israel President, 5 June 1962; data received from Temple Israel office, 20 October 1976.

- 219 Interview with Rabbi Abraham Leibtag, 10 September 1976; Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 25, 117.
- 220 Interview with Rabbi Leibtag.
- 221 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 116, 117.
- 222 Ibid., pp. 79, 195.
- 223 Akron Jewish News, 7 April 1950; 1 June 1951.
- 224 Beth El Congregation, 25th Anniversary Book, 1971; Beth El Dedication Journal (Akron: Exchange Printing Co., 1951); Letter from Sigmund Braverman, architect (American Jewish Archives), 17 February 1958.
- 225 Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, pp. 31, 36-40.
- 226 Interview with Seymour Kaplan, May 1974.
- 227 Interview with Gloria Reich, Summer 1972.
- 228 Jewish Family Service, Minutes, 14 May 1957.
- 229 Akron Jewish News, 16 April 1948.
- 230 Ibid., 3 April 1951.
- 231 Anshe Sfarad Congregation, Dedication Journal, 1951; interview with Rabbi Leibtag.
- 232 Ahavas Zedek Sisterhood, Minutes, 19 December 1962.
- 233 Interview with Rabbi Leibtag.
- 234 Ibid.
- 235 A sundown candle-lighting service is listed in the Akron Jewish News, 5 March 1948. Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 28; Temple Israel, Bulletin, January 1962; Temple Israel Archives Manuscript, "Our First Century, 1865-1965."
- 236 Akron Jewish News, 8 November 1946.
- 237 Interview with Rabbi Leibtag.
- 238 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 117-18.
- 239 Rabbi Efraim Rosenzweig to President, Jewish Social Service Federation, 6 August 1946, Akron Jewish Federation Records; Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 19 December 1946.

- 240 Rabbi Morton Applebaum to James Nobil and Mrs. Edward Raab, 5 June 1970.
- 241 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 27 April 1949.
- 242 *Ibid.*, 6 October 1953.
- 243 *Ibid.*, 8 November 1953; 23 June 1955.
- 244 Marvin Manes to Akron Jewish Center, 23 November 1965, Akron Jewish Center files.
- 245 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.
- 246 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 118.
- 247 Samuel Kaplin, President of Vaad Hakashruth, to Akron Jewish Center, 13 November 1946, Akron Jewish Center files.
- 248 Interview with Robert Rosenthal.
- 249 *Ibid.*
- 250 Akron Jewish News, 6 January 1950.
- 251 *Ibid.*
- 252 Jewish Welfare Fund Record, 16 December 1947; Akron Jewish News, 3 September 1948; 17 September 1948.
- 253 Akron Jewish News, 4 May 1948.
- 254 The impact of standing among the few remaining graves in this abandoned cemetery was substantial and was enhanced by the personal stories which emerged--such as the death certificate which recorded the only known Jewish death attributed to syphilis which Funeral Director Robert Gordon had ever seen.
- 255 Congregation Beth El, Dedication Journal.
- 256 *Ibid.*
- 257 *Ibid.*
- 258 Interview with Rabbi Leibtag.
- 259 Temple Israel, Bulletin, 5 June 1962; Manuscript in Temple Israel Archives, p. 10.
- 260 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 108, 112.

261 Ibid., p. 113.

262 Akron Jewish News, 10 June 1949; 7 October 1949; 6 January
1950.

263 Temple Israel, Bulletin, 8 December 1961.

264 Ibid.

265 Akron Beacon Journal, 23 September 1946; 24 September 1946.

266 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 117-18.

CHAPTER IV

PEOPLE OF THE ORGANIZATION

The critical components of Jewish identity over a century of immigrant adjustment included more than acknowledgment of a religious connection. In Akron, as in the nation at large, the "People of the Book" often seemed more accurately labeled the "People of the Organization." Thus, one listing of American Jewish Organizations (subdivided into civic, social and cultural, overseas assistance, religious and intellectual, fraternal, welfare and Israel-related) included the names of 215 organizations.¹ Such a listing reveals not only the staying power of old agencies (Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1873) but the emergence of new groups (eleven national organizations between 1960 and 1970). As one commentator aptly observed, "Generally, the Jewish population is a 'joining' one."² Bloom came to a similar conclusion about the Jews of Akron when he noted that there was one Jewish organization for every fifty Jewish adults.³

Akron's Jews not only shared the national Jewish penchant for joining--they belonged to the very same organizations (e.g., local branches of B'nai B'rith, Council of Jewish Women, Workmen's Circle), or established local versions of national institutional movements (e.g., Federation, Jewish Center, Jewish Community Council). In these as in other ways--cradle to grave institutional coverage and extensive group focus on Israel--the Akron Jewish community was in the mainstream

of American-Jewish institutional development. Furthermore, both local and national Jewish organizations were strongly affected by such American historical events as the Depression and World War II.

Jewish organizational life in Akron can be tested against theories of immigration adjustment. If Gordon is correct in concluding that primary relationships remained the preserve of the ethnic enclaves, then there should be strong evidence of local organizations meeting such needs. If he is correct that behavioral assimilation occurred (even though structural assimilation did not), then the specific groups which emerged should frequently imitate and parallel the institutional goals, language, and programs of existing groups in the greater community. Furthermore, if Gordon's model of the "ethclass" is valid, Akron's Jewish organizations should reflect inner communal stratification. In Kramer and Leventman's terms there should be recognizable indications of "lodgniks" and "clubniks" with distinctive status levels and social patterns.⁴ Finally, Liebman's theory of conflicting values can be applied to Akron's Jewish organizational life. So too can his assertions that affiliation with Jewish organizations supplemented rather than replaced synagogue membership and that Israel became central to all Jewish organizational life.⁵

Before such historical and theoretical associations can be meaningfully explored, the institutional history of the local Jewish community must be studied in its own right. As discussed below this inevitably involves a cataloging of organization names, functions, memberships, etc. Special attention is given to the Jewish Federation and the Akron Jewish Center because of their overriding significance

in communal affairs. Beyond such an accounting, mention is also made of the types of organizations which emerged (ethnic, mirror-image, Zionist, etc.), the impact of outside events on group fortunes, the life style these institutions nurtured, and the clues they provide about communal priorities, internal social stratification, and the state of Jewish-gentile relations. (Again, the Federation and Center assume special importance as sources of relevant data.) Considered together, these observations advance the central theme of this chapter: the continuing and increasing importance of secular institutional forms in the adjustment process of the Akron Jewish community.

Organizational Life Emerges: The First Half Century

Nationally, it will be recalled that the characteristic feature of nineteenth-century German-Jewish institutional life included initial involvement with established organizations in the greater community (especially German groups), development of parallel Jewish institutions, philanthropic concerns (especially for East European immigrants), and increasing social self-segregation.⁶ Thus, German Jews entered such established groups as the American Masonic orders (at times forming the majority of local lodges) and participated in German glee clubs. The parallel institutions they rapidly established ranged from B'nai B'rith (1843) to the Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association (1850); from the Cleveland Jewish Orphanage (1868) to the YMHA (1874). In the last two decades of the century, organized Federations began to appear in the major cities to meet the welfare needs of the new immigrants. (Typically, cities having Jewish populations of 5,000 to

40,000 received supporting funds for their Federations from their local community chests.)⁷ Meanwhile, such social groups as the Standard Club provided a congenial environment for a process of double self-selection: German Jews could meet apart from German gentiles; German Jews could meet apart from East European Jews.

The pioneer members of the Akron Hebrew Association reflected the national trend of early German-Jewish affiliation with American fraternal orders and active involvement with German immigrant concerns and institutions.⁸ Thus, many of the Association's charter members belonged to the Masonic order and one of them, Michael Joseph, served as master of Akron Masonic Lodge #83 in the early 1870s.⁹ The extent of local Jewish connections with German-gentile immigrants will be elaborated in a subsequent chapter on community interactions. Suffice it to say at this point that Akron Jews were active in the local German singing society and involved in organized activities relating to the emerging independence movement in the fatherland.

Parallel Jewish groups--fraternal, social, literary, women's groups--developed rapidly, some as fairly autonomous local ventures, others as branches of national organizations. Probably the oldest group was the Schwesterbund, which was planned in 1867 and became active the following year.¹⁰ Officially affiliated with the Akron Hebrew Association, its membership was limited to immediate female relatives of Association members. Similar auspices were proposed for a literary association the following year.¹¹ Although no such formal affiliation characterized the Harmonia club (which also dates back to the late sixties), its leading members over a decade were typically

active Association members (H. W. Moss, Jacob Koch, I. Cohen, I. J. Frank, M. Joseph, B. Desenberg, S. B. Hopfman).¹²

Local branches of national Jewish organizations such as the I.O.B.B. (B'nai B'rith), YMHA, and Jewish Chautauqua, all fairly obvious copies of groups in the greater society, appeared in Akron during the first half century of Jewish communal life. There is reference to a local B'nai B'rith chapter in the 1879-80 City Directory. As Ohio Lodge #310, this group, as well as the Harmonia Club, met in the same rooms used by the Akron Hebrew Association.¹³ By the mid-1890s the YMHA was meeting once a month and the names included on some early program notes were once again familiar Association names such as Hollander, Leopold, Polsky, Reder.¹⁴ Similarly, Rabbi Philo was a leading force in organizing the local branch of the Jewish Chautauqua society (1899) which was committed to the study of Jewish history and literature.¹⁵

Other groups essentially established by and for early German-speaking settlers included the Young People's Montefiore Society (1883), whose members shared literary and social interests, and such purely social clubs as the Standard Club (c. 1890) and the Progress Club (1899).¹⁶ A competing group to the Schwesterbund with a decidedly ethnic flavor emerged in 1891 when a score of Hungarian-Jewish women organized the Daughters of Franz Joseph Society.¹⁷ The names of active members in any one of these groups typically overlapped with the rosters of other groups as well as the membership list of the Akron Hebrew Association. (This latter cross-listing indicates the supplementary nature of secular affiliations even at this early date.) The

consequences of such multiple memberships, namely a Jewish organizational life style, affected entire families. One outstanding example was the Moss family who had prominent connections with the Akron Hebrew Association, Harmonia Club, Schwesterbund, Young People's Montefiore Society, and the Standard Club. Similarly, the Leopold name, strongly identified with the Association, was also well known in the Schwesterbund, Young People's Montefiore Society, YMHA, and Jewish Chautauqua while the Hollander name was associated with the Association, Schwesterbund, Young People's Montefiore Society, Progress Club, and YMHA.¹⁸

There is evidence that Akron's Jewish groups scheduled activities which imitated (in classic behavioral assimilation style) those occurring in the greater community. For example, the local paper reported "dime parties" held by Methodist, Congregational, and Lutheran church groups.¹⁹ The Schwesterbund held similar "dime parties" in addition to "sewing circles" and "annual picnics."²⁰ The Hebrew Literary and Musical Society's programs included recitations of "The Battle of Waterloo" and Poe's "The Bells" (as well as discussions of ways to help the Hebrew College fund and a rendition of "The Polish Exile").²¹ For its part, the Progress Club prepared a minstrel show before the turn of the century.²²

Philanthropic concerns preoccupied many of these early groups. The B'nai B'rith chapter's contributions to the Cleveland Jewish Orphan Asylum were duly noted in the press.²³ So was the widespread local Jewish support for an Akron branch of the Hebrew Union Agricultural Society (a group supportive of Russian Jewish immigration and settlement).²⁴ The women's groups were especially noteworthy in this

regard. The Schwesterbund's minutes indicate the recipients of their largesse: a Russian fund, National Farm School, Jewish Orphan Asylum, Jewish Consumptive Hospital, etc.²⁵ The Daughters of the Francis Joseph Society also existed "to assist all worthy charitable causes."²⁶ Around the turn of the century other women's groups were organized for relief work (Ladies Hebrew Relief Association--1900) and to provide assistance to the new Talmud Torah school, the Shelter House, etc. (Akron Hebrew Ladies Aid Society--1903).

The major Jewish educational institution of this period was directly connected with the Akron Hebrew Association. The new East European immigrants also had a small school associated with one of their early congregations, the Sons of Peace. However, much of the early Jewish instruction of the new immigrant children was dispensed by individual "malamuds" on a more private basis. It wasn't until 1909 that the Talmud Torah (also called the Free Hebrew School), which was destined to become the community's central effort in communal Jewish education, began as a one room, twelve pupil school.²⁷

In this period, then, Akron seemed to reflect the mainline Jewish experience by its involvement in greater community groups such as the Masons and by its initial intimate ties with German-gentile immigrants. Just as on the national scene, parallel Jewish institutions were established to meet primary group needs and philanthropic obligations. These adjustment patterns seem to relate to Gordon's theory. While Jewish involvement in the greater community's lodges and in German affairs suggests a degree of structural assimilation, the simul-

taneous initiation and support of Jewish institutions indicates that such assimilation was quite tentative. That internal social stratification based on special considerations--in this case, ethnicity--prompted the formation of a group like the Daughters of Franz Joseph seems clear and supports Gordon's position. So do the "ethclass" characteristics which apparently surrounded such early Akron social groups as the Standard Club. Another hypothesis which seems supported in this early period is Liebman's contention that Jewish group affiliation supplemented synagogue membership rather than provided an alternative to it. Finally, in considering Akron's Jewish institutional development on its own merits, it seems noteworthy that so many groups appeared so soon and that even at this stage there is reason to conclude that an organization-centered life style existed.

Institutional Boom--The Teens to the Depression

While the number of existing American-Jewish organizations by the last half of the nineteenth century was impressive, it was but a prelude to the institutional boom associated with the arrival of the Yiddish-speaking immigrants. It will be recalled that the new immigrants often turned from the established German-Jewish welfare and educational institutions to create comparable self-help groups which could meet their in-group social and cultural needs.²⁸ The Federation, however, with their greater access to such resources as local Community Chests, continued to expand across the country during the 1910s.²⁹ Besides meeting pressing welfare needs, they were rudimentary umbrella agencies for diverse communal groups and potential meeting grounds for

German and East European factions. Another major national movement which had potential for Jewish unification was the Jewish Center Movement of the twenties. One theoretical explanation for the upsurge of immigrant institutions (Gordon) points to the offspring who sought to enter the established community's club rooms and found the doors closed to them.³⁰ Returning to their home base, the rejected second generation joined those who had never ventured forth because of timidity or ideological commitment. Together these ethnic elements built up social institutions within ethnic enclaves which in turn were frequently differentiated by social class distinctions.

The Akron Jewish community participated in the period's nationwide expansion of Jewish institutional life. Indeed, the number and diversity of these groups were so extensive that they can be categorized by types. Thus, there were the fraternal and self-help organizations, the women's groups, the mirror-image organizations, the clubs, the Zionist groups, and the educational institutions. Finally, there were two institutions which were so significant in the life of the community that they merit special attention in their own right, namely the *Federation and the Jewish Center*.

The oldest Akron national fraternal order mentioned in the previous section, B'nai B'rith, was apparently unsuccessful in establishing a permanent on-going group because later records typically refer to the local order as dating back to 1912. From then on, however, the lodge attracted continuing support. By 1930 the group had three hundred members.³¹ While the organization eventually cut across ethnic and denominational lines, the early leaders were typically affiliated

with Temple Israel and were Jewish establishment figures (e.g., Henry Fuerst, Maurice Krohngold, L. D. Freiberg, I. H. Birnbaum). The purposes of the organization included philanthropic ventures (e.g., Jewish Orphan's Home in Cleveland) and commitment to improved inter-group relations (e.g., sponsoring meetings of various religious leaders).

A fraternal order more directly identifiable with the new immigrants was Workmen's Circle (Arberter Ring). Organized locally in 1916 by twenty-five charter members, the group soon obtained sufficient support to maintain a building on Raymond Street for recreational and educational purposes. At its peak in the mid-twenties--one estimate was 250 members--membership by the end of the period was about 175.³² Local members were less typically proletarian than their lodgemates on the national level; they tended to be painters, tailors, milkmen, hucksters, dry cleaners, shoemakers, grocers, etc. All moved fairly quickly into the role of small businessmen (the group's long-time leader was in insurance).³³ Nonetheless, the organization was strongly labor-oriented. Fund-raising affairs were geared to raising money for laborers elsewhere, and contributions were funneled to the Jewish Labor Committee. Essentially the prevailing view was that what was good for labor (not merely Jewish labor) was good for the Jews.³⁴ The group's ideological affinities tended toward Socialism; their ideological hostilities were reserved for traditional religion and Zionism.³⁵ More pragmatically, the fraternal order offered substantial membership benefits such as insurance protection, health benefits, old-age assistance, and separate cemetery privileges.³⁶ A final major area of concern was Yiddish culture. Drama or lectures with a Yiddish cultural emphasis

were brought to the community and, more importantly, a Yiddish school was supported. The curriculum of this afternoon school focused on Yiddish reading, writing, and history with emphasis on current events of special interest to its liberal members. One former student remembered school programming which had children assuming different work roles such as mining, and singing songs relating to Jewish labor and the Jewish Bund (choral music and mandolin groups were enthusiastically supported by the lodge).³⁷

A strong primary in-group cohesiveness was characteristic of Workmen's Circle. A former milkman recalled going to meetings even though this meant losing sleep. Another member found comfort from childhood fears of Hitler by dreaming of hiding-out in the Workmen's Circle school.³⁸ At times this cohesiveness even infringed on the more typical Jewish pattern of multiple memberships as those who became involved in "outside" Jewish communal institutions were somewhat suspect.³⁹ Strong fraternal bonds, however, failed to overcome the serious internal conflict which split the lodge in the late twenties and early thirties along left vs. far left political lines. This conflict led to the eventual splintering off of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order of International Workers.

Still another major fraternal and mutual aid immigrant society which spawned several active Akron branches was Farband (Jewish National Workers Alliance). While sharing the labor orientation, mutual aid commitments, Yiddish cultural enthusiasms, and "lodgenik" membership patterns of Workmen's Circle, Farband was different in its ardent support of the Zionist cause and the more traditional religious orienta-

tion of some of its members.⁴⁰ The combination of labor and Zionist interests led to an active fund raising program for such groups as the Histadruth (United Jewish Trade Union of Palestine). The Jewish National Fund also received extensive support from Farband. Stories of the elderly Mrs. Rogovy pounding the pavements in the Wooster Avenue area and perpetually in the business of "selling tickets" have almost a legendary quality (complete with recollections of those who tried to "escape" when they saw her coming).⁴¹

The mutual-aid benefits offered to members of Farband were similar to those of Workmen's Circle and included insurance and loans. Similarly, in the early 1920s Farband started its own school which met in an old house on Euclid Avenue. The school stressed strong attachments and loyalty to the Yiddish language, Jewish culture, history, ideals, and a national homeland.⁴² That the Lodge also met primary-group social needs is revealed in recollections of many Saturday nights when Farband couples combined playing pinochle with preparing chickens for upcoming functions.⁴³

Social bonding for other Jewish groups sometimes rested on narrowly defined ethnic grounds. This organizing principle was already attributed to the Daughters of Franz Joseph Society--which, incidentally, underwent a timely name change during World War I to become the Daughters of Israel. A similar national bond led the newer Hungarian immigrants to form a group known as the Sons of David.⁴⁴ This group maintained close connections with the Ahavas Zedek congregation. Still another bonding principle--Orthodoxy--sustained the Vaad Hoir which was committed to promoting Orthodox interests in the community.⁴⁵

The Anshe Sfard Free Loan Society emerged in response to the urgent immigrant need for funds combined with a preference for obtaining such aid from a "landsmann" (who demanded far less in the way of disclosure than did the German-Jewish controlled Federation). The society was formed in 1921 by a small group of men gathered at a bris [circumcision] celebration who agreed to pool their donations.⁴⁶ Starting with extremely limited capital, the loans remained minimal during this period--a maximum of fifty dollars, which was sufficient to "get a horse."⁴⁷ The aim was to lend money without interest which was then repayable in small weekly payments. Society policy eschewed inquiries about the specific use of the loan, but the intent was to provide help in starting businesses or other self-improvement projects. Operating funds were raised through membership drives, banquets, and picnics. While the Society was under the auspices of the Anshe Sfard congregation, it was open to the entire Jewish community and from 1927 on it met on a weekly basis.⁴⁸

The largest category of Jewish communal groups during this period was the women's groups. These organizations ranged from synagogue-affiliated sisterhoods to Zionist organizations, from educational and charitable groups to auxiliaries for most of the existing men's groups. Such early women's groups as the Schwesterbund continued to be active in this period and continued to exhibit "eth-class" distinctions vis-a-vis immigrant women's groups. They were involved in raising funds for the new Temple in 1910 and continued to provide assistance to the local poor. At times this aid was granted on a fairly long term basis--two dollars a month to "an old Jewish lady" until further notice, or one

dollar a week toward sustaining a poor child.⁴⁹ Moreover, such assistance was more than a casual undertaking and included provisions for investigating committees and consultations with physicians.⁵⁰ The ubiquitous problem of transients led the Schwesterbund to provide the necessary fares for travel to Cleveland, Youngstown, Chicago, etc. Meanwhile, another Temple-related group of women formed for the specific purpose of helping the congregation meet its religious, social, and educational needs. By the end of the twenties this Temple Sisterhood had some two hundred members.⁵¹ Initially, the group worked to supervise the kitchen, arrange congregational dinners, furnish treats for Sunday school pupils, and raise money for the salaries of religious school teachers and the choir.⁵² Other congregations, such as the Sons of Peace and Ahavas Zedek, developed similar sisterhoods.

Undoubtedly the best known national women's group committed to projects in Palestine was Hadassah. Branches of Hadassah and Junior Hadassah were established in Akron in the early twenties.⁵³ Women's charitable groups which continued into this period were the Ladies Aid Society (which had some thirty members in the late twenties) and the Ladies' Hebrew Relief Association (with thier direct relief work pre-empted by the Federation, this group turned to helping major charitable instituons and providing loans).⁵⁴ Educational, cultural, and civic goals were probably as vital as strictly philanthropic concerns to the Akron chapter of the Council of Jewish Women. In 1920 the Council rented a small community house. Here they provided services to Jewish children every afternoon and sponsored evening classes in English and "Americanization" and offered assorted discussion groups.⁵⁵ Saturday

afternoons were occasions for Sabbath tea, and between 1924-1928 the Council conducted a summer camp. While the original leadership of this group was drawn from the Temple (Mrs. Louis Loeb was the first president and other key figures were Temple Mesdames Tuholsky, Greenberger, Havre, Berk), and would fit Kramer and Leventman's "clubnik" criterion, the Council accepted the goal of becoming a widely representative and cross-denominational group. By the late twenties the group boasted over two hundred members.⁵⁶

For each Jewish men's lodge of organization there seemed to be an accompanying women's division. This was so for the Anshe Sfard Free Loan Society, B'nai B'rith, Farband, Workmen's Circle, etc. Destined to be the largest Jewish women's organization in Akron, the Center Auxiliary was first organized by a dozen women in 1928 to provide financial and volunteer assistance for that institution.⁵⁷

Many of the organizations discussed above can be categorized as parallel institutions because they readily compare to similar groups in the Christian community. Cases in point are the apparent resemblance of the I.O.B.B. (B'nai B'rith) with, say, the I.O.O.F. or the similarities between Jewish mutual aid societies and those of other immigrant groups. The Jewish version of these groups, however, also relates comfortably to the Jewish experience and a tradition of self-help, charity, educational concerns, etc. The following groups are more blatant imitative copies of WASP institutions which are not so easily related to the European Jewish experience. This makes them especially significant as indications of the extent and type of assimilation occurring within the Akron Jewish community.

Although reference has been made above to existing YMHA activities in the 1890s, the group apparently did not take hold for it is later identified (along with its sister YWHA) as emerging in 1920 from a Junior Council group which existed at Temple Israel.⁵⁸ That this group consciously compared itself to other clubs in the city is reflected in this self-evaluation: "The YMHA club is one of the finest in the city and compares favorably with the Elks, City Club, Masonic Lodge, or any other club in the city."⁵⁹ When asked why Rosemont, the Jewish country club, was established in Akron (1922), one Jewish communal leader claimed it was because "some Jews like to play golf."⁶⁰ Implicit in this comment was the commonly held conviction within the Jewish community that Jews were not welcome in any of the city's private country clubs (and that the response to such rejection was the establishment of a mirror-image Jewish club).⁶¹ There is some contradictory evidence on this point. A local city history lists Bert Polsky (Polsky's department store) as members of the Fairlawn Country Club (as well as Rosemont Country Club).⁶² A peculiarly Jewish imprint on the Rosemont Country Club was the stipulation that the equivalent of at least one year's dues must be paid to Jewish Welfare annually to maintain membership.⁶³ The reasoning behind this policy was that anyone able to join a luxury club ("clubnik") should give at least a similar amount to charity.

An interesting variant of the parallel institutionalism described above was Jewish-sponsored scouting. In this case, efforts were not directed toward establishing an independent Jewish scouting movement, but rather toward providing Jewish sponsorship for regular scout troops.

This attempt was consistent with the purposes of the National Jewish Committee on Scouting. Even prior to the formation of this national group, Temple Israel had moved to sponsor Akron's Boy Scout Troop #2.⁶⁴ Eight years later (1929) some forty boys appeared at a rally aimed at organizing troop #31 at the Akron Jewish Center.⁶⁵ Another category of Jewish communal organization which was active at this time was the club. The 1913-1914 American Jewish Yearbook lists three of them: the Menorah Club, the Utopian Club, and the Imperial Club.⁶⁶ Eventually a group called the Criterian Club became the most popular of these groups. The Criterian Club was composed of young men and women interested in social and educational objectives and reached a peak membership of two hundred in 1927.⁶⁷

An historical review of the Jewish groups and facilities which existed in 1925 mentions numerous Zionist organizations.⁶⁸ Probably the first major organization devoted exclusively to Zionism (Zionist Organization of America--ZOA) was organized here in 1917 after the Balfour declaration.⁶⁹ By 1928 it had a membership of one hundred. The Federation, too, fairly quickly became involved in Palestinian concerns. Its Committee on Palestinian Institutions in 1919 recommended that a permanent committee be established to investigate and pass upon Palestinian solicitations and that a fixed proportion of the Federation's income be set aside for such charities.⁷⁰ Other organizations which fit in this category and have already been mentioned include Hadassah and Farband.

Jewish schooling during this period continued to be offered by some of the religious institutions as well as by the two fraternal

orders, Workmen's Circle and Farband. A community Talmud Torah also took hold as a major communal educational institution. This school purchased its first building at the corner of Wabash and Euclid Avenues in 1911.⁷¹ A decade later the school's purpose was defined as the teaching of Hebrew and Jewish history to boys and girls between six and fourteen; enrollment was listed at over 130.⁷² By that time the faculty consisted of three or four teachers and school was open from four to eight every afternoon except Friday, and on Sunday mornings.

Dues were minimal (six dollars) and the Federation provided an annual subsidy of \$1,500.⁷³ Such funding scarcely met the school's needs. Indeed, much of Jewish education in Akron faced serious financial problems (some of the private "bicycle-riding teachers" actually threatened to sue for unpaid back wages). It was finally decided to organize a bazaar in the Akron Armory in Spring, 1922 with the understanding that the proceeds would meet outstanding educational debts and that from then on the Talmud Torah would in effect supplant the private tutors and small separate Hebrew schools.⁷⁴ This still left the Talmud Torah with the challenge of meeting a \$16,000-plus annual budget. The major yearly fund-raising effort to meet this need was the High Holy Days appeal. Charles Schwartz, president of Talmud Torah from 1922 until 1930, personally visited the synagogues and solicited pledges.⁷⁵ Religious proscriptions regarding writing and spending money were circumvented by non-Jewish scribes who remained discreetly out of sight but who recorded pledge commitments. Schwartz also personally approached such wealthy Jewish merchants as the Polskys and Jerome Dauby for sizeable donations.⁷⁶ While the Talmud Torah primarily served the new immi-

grants with their more traditional Jewish orientations, its activities were noted and approved by Temple Israel. Thus, the minutes of November 19, 1919 lauded the "splendid work being done by the Talmud Torah." The report went on to describe the school's enrollment in Americanization classes and concluded that "we trust our members will lend it their moral support."⁷⁷

Given the welter of Jewish communal institutions which emerged by the early teens and which competed for the same community dollars to help the same clientele, it is not surprising that Akron, like many other cities across the nation, moved toward establishing a Federation of Jewish Charities. The initial objectives of the Federation were to serve both as a Jewish Community Chest and as a bureau dealing with Jewish social welfare problems. Thus, the Federation's stated constitutional objective was the collection and apportionment of contributions, membership dues, and donations among deserving local and national Jewish groups.⁷⁸ In the process of discharging this objective, the Federation specifically aimed to eliminate unauthorized solicitations, secure fair distribution of funds, provide full accounting of distributions and "represent an organized effort for good in the community."⁷⁹ To put teeth into the new institution, the Constitution provided that no organization would receive aid if it sold tickets or solicited contributions without specific Federation consent.⁸⁰

The organization was initially sustained by private memberships which increased from one hundred to six hundred in the first three years of its existence.⁸¹ In 1919, the Federation of Jewish Charities assumed a new name, the Jewish Social Service Federation, and, as was

the case in many communities across the nation, an important new connection with the local community's social service federation, in this case the Better Akron Federation. The early leadership of the Jewish Federation relied heavily on prominent merchants and Temple members, such as Maurice Krohngold, its first president. Charter Federation members included Temple's rabbi, Louis Gross; Temple president, Louis Loeb; and other Temple stalwarts such as Henry Fuerst, Louis Freiberg, Jacob Nobil, and J. H. Vineberg. Such noted establishment figures as I. J. Frank and H. O. Polsky served as early trustees. Malvyn Wachner, who quickly assumed the role of executive secretary and played a continuing major role in guiding the organization over three decades, had similar establishment connections. The primary concerns of these leaders were revealed in the committees they established: relief, finances, sheltering aid, legal aid, national institutions.⁸² The matter of loans received special attention when the Federation became the parent agency in 1916 of the A. Polsky Memorial Free Loan Fund. Incorporated under a separate charter, this fund received subsequent monies from donations, bequests, repaid loans, and gifts. (By 1934 loans totaling over forty-three hundred dollars had been made.)⁸³

Comparative data from annual Federation reports reveal the social problems that confronted the Jewish community during this period as well as the resources that were available to deal with them. In 1914, 440 cases were handled with a budget of \$3,000. Relief was the single largest request (309) and the single largest budget item (\$669).⁸⁴ Considerable time was also devoted to the problem of transients. The typical method of handling such wayfarers was the distribution of trans-

portation tickets previously bought en-masse.⁸⁵ Thus, a transient from Canton was awarded a ride to Cleveland and vice versa. Such procedures were fairly rapidly discarded as unsatisfactory.

In the early Federation years, relief remained the critical problem. In addition to outright relief grants, a shelter house was maintained, loans were made available, employment aid provided, and Thanksgiving baskets distributed with predictably ambivalent responses of appreciation and resentment on the part of the recipients. Miss Wachner reported twelve-hour office days and acknowledged the dilemma of competing humanitarian and economizing pressures: "We cannot permit our people to go hungry, but must practice strictest economy."⁸⁶ Ten years after its founding, relief was still a major Federation budget item as \$11,214 was assigned for this need alone and forty-eight families were identified as recipients of total or supplementary relief aid.⁸⁷ Transient services were down (from 180 to 87) and unemployment, which had comprised the second highest referral group in 1914 (93), was reduced to 33.⁸⁸ In 1924 fourteen cases were listed as receiving immigrant aid but the following year that figure was down to one, probably reflecting the impact of the 1924 national immigration legislation.⁸⁹

The annual report that year indicated Federation policy was to visit homes of indigent families at least once a week. During the year, 1,185 such home calls were made.⁹⁰ Even at this early stage, references in the *Federation minutes* suggest concern with changing social work procedures from dispensing food doles as "soothing syrups" to careful family studies and joint family planning on such things as household budgets. Mental as well as physical weaknesses were taken into account

resulting in provisions for psychiatric consultation. There was specific intent "to rehabilitate the family and reeducate the individual so he may take his place as a normal, healthy member of society."⁹¹

Statistics of case loads and budget dollars tend to obscure the individual client's unique situation and his/her relationship to the Federation as an institution. The earliest case histories were frequently directly reported in the Board minutes. Although not as elaborate as later client files, they are especially interesting for what they reveal about the Eastern European immigrant's early economic adjustment in Akron and the role the Federation played in that adjustment. For example, Mr. L. who had only lived in Akron for four months, had peddled during the summer of 1914 but his horse had now died.⁹² He was out of work and unable to get other employment. As he owned a fish wagon, the Federation secretary had "ordered" him to buy fish, giving him \$7.35 for this purpose. He made a profit of three dollars on the fish and now needed a horse to continue in this business. A Federation Board member was put in charge of the case and authorized to buy or rent a horse as he deemed best.

The following year, Mrs. S. came to the Federation office and asked assistance in buying a horse.⁹³ Her husband had lost his in a fire several weeks ago and by now they were without coal. The Federation executive secretary investigated and found a man unloading coal while Mrs. S. cried bitterly. She said the man had refused to leave the coal unless he was paid and she had experienced difficulties in getting sufficient funds from neighbors for that purpose. As the coal was found to be from an active leader of the Jewish community, the

secretary promptly called him on the phone and he in turn ordered the driver to return the money. Mrs. S. reiterated her wish for no other charity than a \$25 loan to help buy a horse. The appropriate Federation committee decided it was inadvisable to provide money for such a purpose because so many men who already had horses could not make a living peddling this way. The committee was willing, however, to provide family groceries if requested.

These two cases are especially instructive not only for their insight into the economic situation of the families involved but for the revelation of Federation philosophy and procedures. They show evidence of personalized attention, use of in-group contacts, paternalism in decision-making, and charitable concern. Finally, in a more humorous note with classic "ethnic stomach" overtones, there is the case of Mr. C., confined to a local TB Sanitarium, whose wife approached the Federation for very specialized help--to obtain a barrel of herring.⁹⁴ The minutes record that the proper committee authorized the purchase of said herring.

If the Federation more than any institution touched the pocket-books and met the social service needs of the Jewish community, the Center eventually, if not initially, emerged as the institution which most directly influenced all their leisure-time calendars. As reported above, a varied and extensive Jewish institutional life was thriving in the city by the mid-twenties. What was perceived as lacking was an all-inclusive local Jewish institution which would meet social, cultural, and, very importantly, recreational needs. At this time Jewish athletes were likely to attend the YMCA or play with local church teams.⁹⁵ One

Center staff member recalled playing with a baseball team which required Christian Sunday school attendance twice a month to maintain eligibility.⁹⁶ Some felt unwelcome or uncomfortable in these settings. As Charles Schwartz, the Center's first president, described it: "For many years we felt the need of a communal home. We knew that our people as individuals could benefit greatly in physical health if we had modern athletic facilities We desired these things for ourselves, but more especially for our children."⁹⁷

Social needs rivaled recreational ones in promoting a Center. "We also dreamed of having a Center where we could come for social activities. And, once again we were anxious that these things should be available, especially for our children."⁹⁸ The Center was also planned to house communal organizations with no place of their own, in an environment where they could feel "at ease and one in spirit with the atmosphere. . . ."⁹⁹

Beyond the recreational and social program was the dream of a home in which cultural activities " . . . would make our children acquainted with our language, history, literature, festivals . . . our Jewish heritage." Furthermore, the new institution was intended to be a unifying force in the community. "We wanted to build an institution which would be the home of all of our people regardless . . . orthodox, conservative or reform . . . rich or poor; Zionist or non-Zionist, conservative, liberal or radical in political outlook . . . in the belief that the heritage that binds us together is of much more importance . . . than the minor differences that exist between us."¹⁰⁰ Even if the Center did not immediately succeed in breaking down all barriers

between "clubniks" and "lodgeniks" it was a joint project of unprecedented proportions and great potential for future bonding across ethnic lines. Much later another Center president would repeat this theme in praising the Center as "the first real united, cooperative community-wide tangible undertaking, motivated not by fear of persecution, nor by religious fervor, not by pity for the strong or suffering bretheren, not by . . . pressure from some national organization or movement. It was a real and genuine grass roots movement. We lifted ourselves by *our own boot straps*. Akron Jews conceived it, planned it, financed it . . . Akron operates and maintains it."¹⁰¹

Although the need for a Center was recognized and Centers were successfully emerging on the national scene, the specific form Akron's should take was disputed. There was disagreement which model, i.e., a synagogue-center or a community-center, should be followed.¹⁰² In 1922 the first attempt to build a facility modeled on a Cleveland synagogue-center failed. This failure led to the incorporation of a community-center two years later. Due to insufficient support for this venture, the synagogue-center idea was raised again. The ambivalence was finally resolved in 1928 with the \$20,000 pledge of the Schulman family towards a community-center type institution. A subsequent private meeting produced an additional \$57,000 and after the appeal was taken to the general community that total was quickly raised to over \$85,000.¹⁰³ With this and subsequent encouraging responses, original plans were elaborated to include such features as a pool. The Center itself was built on the donated property of Anshe Emeth (Balch Street) synagogue. In exchange for this gift, the congregation was assured a

place to worship in the new structure. Anshe Emeth for some time maintained a special relationship to the Center and many of its trustees also assumed leading Center positions.

In 1929, the first year of the Center's existence, over 61,000 visits to the Center were recorded.¹⁰⁴ As one Center official chose to interpret these figures: estimating a population of 6,000, every member of the Jewish community used the facilities ten times. There were twenty-two free memberships that year, sponsored by the Federation; this out of a total of 707 memberships representing 1,152 individual members.¹⁰⁵ Although Temple members financially supported the Center and served on early Center Boards, few initially attended Center events.¹⁰⁶ The original appeal may have included noble hopes for social intermingling of all Jews but in reality the Center first served the more recent immigrant population.

To summarize: the period from the teens to the Depression found Akron Jews behaving much as the national Jewish community did vis-a-vis communal institutions--i.e., they developed many of them, including immigrant self-help groups, local branches of national organizations, and a local Federation and Jewish Center. Sometimes this replication of national trends extended to such organizational details as Federation affiliation with the local Community Chest (Better Akron Federation). Descriptions of such groups as Workmen's Circle and Farband confirm the view that immigrant institutions filled primary-group social intimacy needs. Gordon's contention that rejection produced mirror-image institutions seems applicable to the history of such groups as the Rosemont Country Club. Theoretical positions regarding the develop-

ment of "ethclass" stratification within immigrant communities or the differentiation of "clubniks" and "lodgeniks" seem supported by the ability in this period to so distinguish between the memberships of Farband and the Country Club or Workmen's Circle's Mothers' Club and the Council of Jewish Women. Even within a single institution, the Center, there was an initial ethclass separation between many of those who supported and directed its operations and the early rank and file membership.

Institutional Activity in the Era of Depression and World War (1929-1945)

During the 1920s the national Jewish community worked hard at finding the necessary resources for maintaining its self-help philanthropic obligations. The Depression changed much of that. By 1934 between 70 percent and 90 percent of dependent Jewish families were receiving their assistance from public relief.¹⁰⁷ From that point on, Jewish social service agencies ceased to play a significant role in providing relief income and moved into other social service roles.¹⁰⁸ The Depression had other effects on Jewish communal institutions across the country. Foremost among these was the lack of available funds for maintaining them. For those cities which had recently built communal facilities financed by mortgages the situation was even more precarious.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, mounting anti-semitic pressures at home and abroad led to the activation of Jewish Community Councils. Preoccupation with the international scene and the human fallout it produced was inevitably a major national Jewish concern during the thirties and forties; Jewish Welfare Funds emerged to help raise the necessary funds to meet

these crises.

In Akron, communal institutional life continued to flourish in the same general areas outlined for the previous period (fraternal, women's, mirror-image, etc.) and frequently gave evidence of sharing in national Jewish concerns. For example, B'nai B'rith, which had increased in numbers from three hundred in 1930 to five hundred by the end of the decade, was especially concerned with protecting Jewish rights.¹¹⁰ Thus, the lodge described its role in 1937 as "championing fundamental doctrines of true Americans . . . vigilant and on the march in its challenge to those who slander and libel the good name of the Jew"¹¹¹ The local group distributed national Jewish literature to libraries, labor organizations, and civic clubs and provided speakers to counter discriminatory attacks. During World War II, B'nai B'rith served as the local communal organization coordinating the sale of U.S. war bonds among well over two dozen Jewish organizations.¹¹² Significant developments occurred during this period in the mutual-aid fraternal groups. Workmen's Circle continued to be active and continued to exhibit "lodgenik" characteristics. By 1935 lodge membership was given as 165. In the late thirties the group defined itself as a fraternal order "allying [itself] with those progressive forces that strive to relieve sufferings of mankind, promote civil rights and carry on activities to raise cultural and educational standards especially among Jews."¹¹³ Meanwhile, the more leftist members had broken their ties with the lodge and became identified with the Jewish People's Fraternal Order of the International Workers Order (becoming a branch of the national Communist order organized in the thirties which claimed

some three hundred lodges nationwide and a membership of 47,000).¹¹⁴
In 1934 this small local offshoot group claimed twenty-two members.¹¹⁵
Akron membership may have reached as high as eighty and, as mentioned
in the previous chapter, the group even maintained its own cemetery.¹¹⁶

Questions involving IWO were debated at the Center in 1937 and again in 1943, giving some insight into the group's acceptance in the larger Jewish community.¹¹⁷ At issue was whether Center facilities should be made available to the group. Objections to such use were based on the order's political connections and the problem of distribution of radical propaganda. Permission was not granted--apparently the only group so refused. By 1943, however, when the issue arose again, there was some sentiment that participation in the Army-Navy committee and changes in leadership and programming pointed to the end "of the old trouble."¹¹⁸ Despite this, the IWO application was rejected "to avoid possible disturbance or misunderstanding that might arise based on the group's political activity."¹¹⁹ The following year the lodge again asked to meet in the Center as a Jewish fraternal organization and in recognition of their role in helping Nazi victims. This time a ninety-day-only contract was issued with the provision that a member of the Center house committee be present at all meetings.

By 1937 there were three branches of still another continuing local "Iodgenik" fraternal society, Farband. This organization was especially active in the local Jewish National Fund Council (Zionist) and also gave considerable support to the Center's Jewish Forum. Its Credit Union sold stocks at ten dollars a share and every share-holder was entitled to borrow up to three hundred dollars repayable in small

weekly payments with nominal interest charges. The peak total membership of its various branches during this period was about 250.¹²⁰ The country-of-origin bonding mentioned in earlier periods continued to exist. The front page of the October 19, 1937 issue of the Akron Jewish News reported the activities of a local group identified as the Association of Hungarian Jews regarding economic boycott activities directed against the Nazis.

The impact of the Depression was especially visible in the loan statistics of the Anshe Sfard Free Loan Society. Between 1928-1934, the Society issued 1,669 loans for a total amount of over \$83,000.¹²¹ A significant drop the following year probably can be explained by the lack of supporting funds during the Depression and/or the seeking of aid elsewhere (221 loans were granted that year, amounting to \$9,435).¹²² Averaged out over its first quarter century, the Society had loaned some \$10,000 annually.¹²³ The group boasted that it never lost any money during this time. A former Board member suggested, however, that some probably borrowed funds and in turn deposited them, collecting the interest, while others used the interest-free money for vacations.¹²⁴ It was even intimated that Board members may have put in their own money to meet any deficiencies.¹²⁵

Women's groups continued to be active during this period. Many contributed members to such large-scale community efforts as Community Chest and Red Cross drives.¹²⁶ The strength of the synagogue sisterhoods was indicated by the fact that in 1935 Temple Israel Sisterhood claimed 175 members while Ahavas Zedek sisterhood reported 100.¹²⁷ Even during its declining years, the Sons of Peace retained its sisterhood

and there is reference to a membership of forty women in 1939.¹²⁸ The very first "sisterhood," however, the Schwesterbund, did not survive and went out of existence in 1940. The passing of these last two groups signalled the eclipse of some of the most extreme examples of ethnic and ethclass differentiation. Zionist women's groups such as Hadassah continued to thrive with 225 members by 1937 (a special division of Business and Professional Women was initiated that year).¹²⁹ An additional 125 women were identified with the Hadassah group for younger women, Jr. Hadassah. Having similar interests but tending to attract a different stratum of the community, namely one drawn from the newer immigrants and lower socio-economic circles, the local branch of the women's Zionist group known as Pioneer Women was organized in 1930 and within seven years had sixty members.¹³⁰ This group was associated with the Zionist Labor party and aided pioneer women in Palestine.

The auxiliaries continued to be visible and new ones emerged. The auxiliary for Vaad Hoir, the communal lay Orthodox organization, was organized in 1931 to assist in carrying our Orthodox ideals in the community and it reported 120 members in 1935.¹³¹ Three other auxiliaries which emerged during this period were associated with B'nai B'rith, Anshe Sfard Free Loan Society, and the Jewish War Veterans. Meanwhile, the Center Auxiliary had become the largest Jewish women's organization in Akron with some six hundred members by 1942.¹³² A major function of this group, outside its obvious duties vis-a-vis the Center, was active participation in the Community Chest drive. Philanthropic women's groups whose activities continued into this period were the Daughters of Israel, the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society, the Hebrew

Ladies Relief Association, and the Barberton Ladies Aid. In the second half of the thirties their combined membership totaled close to two hundred.¹³³ One of the best known of local women's groups, the Council of Jewish Women was especially active during this period in providing aid to the refugees of the thirties.¹³⁴ They maintained a reception center and offered classes in Americanization and naturalization. The Council also cooperated with the Center in a summer camp program.

The "mirror image" institutions of the preceding period continued in this era as well. Although the YMHA gradually receded in importance, it was one of the first Jewish groups to relocate in the new Center-- with some attending difficulties, namely the charge of suspected gambling in the YMHA room. The proposed remedy: a peep hole to monitor such forbidden activities.¹³⁵ Another mirror-image institution, the Rosemont Country Club, experienced especially hard times in the early thirties, and not solely due to the *Depression*. It seems that the club chef was an arsonist who applied a match to the club facilities. The insurance policy had lapsed and not much more was left than a hole in the ground.¹³⁶ Jewish communal leader Charles Schwartz proceeded to put the situation in the context of a "Jewish problem" and indicated that if foreclosure were permitted, Jews could never get a club again-- implying anticipated credit difficulties in the community.¹³⁷ (Drawing such connections between the fate of a single institution and the total Jewish community was to be repeated in the case of the Center. This is not unlike the results of Marshall Sklare's study which found considerable Jewish support for the position that every Jew represents the total Jewish group and must act accordingly.)¹³⁸ In any event, a bank

loan was secured and eventually a new club house was built. By World War II the club was free of debt.

A new example of an institution imitating and paralleling a group in the greater society was Akron Post #62 of the Jewish War Veterans. Organized in 1932 it had some seventy-six members by the time World War II erupted in Europe.¹³⁹ The wife of a founding member claimed the regular American Legion tended to ostracize "those with accents" and so World War I Jewish vets, confronted with rejection in its nativistic and/or anti-semitic guise, formed their own group.¹⁴⁰ One function of this group was to offer Jewish veterans business and educational aid through the Jewish Veterans Welfare Fund. The group also insured the proper markings of Jewish graves and appropriate annual memorial services. Much like other veterans' groups, Post #62 repeatedly expressed its goal as the promotion of "Americanism," a likely indication of cultural assimilation. Thus, encouraging Jewish immigrants to become citizens and educating them in the "principles of American democracy . . . and [the] American way of life" were important lodge activities.¹⁴¹ The members worked on local Community Chest and Jewish Welfare Fund drives and were the predictable donors of a new flagpole for the Center. They instituted a non-sectarian Thanksgiving Day observance and in 1938 the Summit County Division of War Veterans assigned them complete responsibility for Memorial Day services in Akron.¹⁴² The following year Post #62 took out a Flag Day ad in the local paper warning that "Communism, Fascism or Marxism were all equally dangerous." They warned the young of "the pitfalls that confront them if teachings of subversive movements should make any headway. . . ."¹⁴³ They also

urged continued prosecution of the German boycott and during the war raised money toward their national organization's campaign for donating six pursuit planes. In 1942 alone they were involved in selling \$125,000 in bonds to local residents."¹⁴⁴ Their social theories were underscored in a 1944 statement directly linking anti-semitism to the discontent produced by such things as unemployment and insisting that such dislocation must be avoided.¹⁴⁵

The presence of the University of Akron in the greater community gave rise to still another type of mirror-image institution, the Jewish version of the "Greeks." Bloom's view in 1939 was that the two Jewish "Greek" groups on campus spent most of their energies struggling to maintain a very precarious existence even though the only membership requirement was being Jewish.¹⁴⁶ He claimed that while the more popular Jewish students were not receiving bids to join non-Jewish fraternal groups they did not elect to join the Jewish ones either.¹⁴⁷ Phi Kappa Rho, the Jewish fraternity, was actually founded in the preceding period during the early twenties but it did not assume a national affiliation (AEn) until 1940. The Jewish sorority, Delta Pi Iota, was established in 1934 by thirteen girls and initially met at members' homes. Some two dozen girls belonged to the group which expressed its aims in terms of promoting " . . . closer social contact among Jewish girls."¹⁴⁸

Tangential to the discussion of parallel immigrant institutions is the question of parallel programming, equally indicative of a level of behavioral assimilation. For example, card parties--in one case, twenty tables of bridge--were sponsored by a congregational sisterhood.

American holidays were duly observed. The Center's very first party in 1929 was a Hallowe'en affair for all the Jewish children of Akron, complete with pumpkin pie. American regional themes were appropriated by the Center as well: "Would'st thou sip mint juleps in a lazy atmosphere? Of course you would! And you can do that, too, at the Plantation Cotton Club Sunday night . . ." (or) "Care to see a minstrel show complete with chorus and . . . dance to southern melodies?"¹⁴⁹ If outside motifs influenced social programming, so too did more specifically Jewish themes (e.g., Yom Kippur and Purim balls). Sometimes the dual influences produced such widely discrepant programming as to seem almost irreconcilable within a single membership. Such communal split-personality was dramatically evident in two Center ads appearing side by side in the Akron Center News. The first announced a Sadie Hawkins Day dance complete with selection of a Daisy Mae and Lil' Abner and urged everyone to come "dressed like Dogpatchers."¹⁵⁰ The immediately adjacent ad reminded readers of the approaching Balfour day program which would include a Palestinean movie, free Zionist literature, and exhibits of Jewish books and religious objects.¹⁵¹

A Balfour day program was not an isolated event in Akron Jewish life during this period. The extent of interest in Zionist concerns is suggested by Bloom's figures that nearly a quarter of the fifty organizations he identified as active in 1939 could be labeled "Zionist societies."¹⁵² He undoubtedly had in mind such groups as Farband, Hadassah, and Pioneer Women. Other active groups included the previously mentioned ZOA, Zeire Zion (for those eighteen to twenty-five interested in the building up of Palestine), Young Poale Zion (a

Zionist Socialist group which became a Center club), Mizrahi Women, etc. These groups, among others, were represented on the Jewish National Fund Council.¹⁵³ Their existence signals a preoccupation with sustaining the Jewish side of the American-Jewish question and doing so by stressing the importance of Israel. The strength of the support for the Zionist movement is suggested by the fact that five hundred members of the Jewish community turned out for the annual Jewish National Fund banquet in 1943, proceeds of which were used for land redemption in Palestine.¹⁵⁴ The following year, ZOA reported a gain of close to four hundred new members. This was seen as a mere beginning because Zionism was no longer to be regarded as a matter of ideology but rather the specific instrumentality for solving the age-old Jewish problem of anti-semitism.

If Zionism was a growing commitment, local Jewish education was an increasing concern. The 1943 Center Yearbook reported a recent survey which showed that less than one third of Jewish children "not barring our own community" are exposed to some form of Jewish education. . . ."¹⁵⁵ Five years earlier the Talmud Torah principal had warned against laws like those in New York which provided one hour a week release time for religious instruction. He feared that parents might consider this an adequate substitute for the daily afternoon schools.¹⁵⁶ By the late thirties the three major educational institutions outside direct synagogue control were the Workmen's Circle school (fifty-five students in 1939), the Farband school, known as the Sirkin Folk School (eighty students in 1937) and the Talmud Torah (the largest program--in 1938 it enrolled 116 pupils at its two

branches' afternoon school and 190 in its Sunday school).¹⁵⁷

The early forties brought changes in the Jewish educational system. The Workmen's Circle school closed and a Bureau of Jewish Education was established in major part to supervise and revitalize the Talmud Torah (see discussion on the Bureau as a unifying institution below). By 1944, the Talmud Torah was attempting to disassociate itself from memories of the "melamed" who taught children to mumble incoherent phrases and instead evoked the image of "clean and cheerful" surroundings with a teacher bearing a B.S. from Teacher's College in New York and training in Jewish pedagogy.¹⁵⁸ The afternoon program was open to boys and girls between six and fourteen and offered courses in Bible, Hebrew language and prayer, history, current events. The Talmud Torah's Sunday school program was for youngsters from five to fourteen and stressed Jewish religion, history, customs, and holidays. A fairly similar course of study plus Yiddish courses were available to the students at the Farband school. Meanwhile, Temple Israel's educational program was available to children between five and seventeen. The Temple's Sunday morning program offered classes in Jewish religion, history, ethics, customs and ceremonies, Hebrew, and current events.¹⁵⁹ An addendum to the educational development of the community in these years was the expansion of institutional coverage under Jewish auspices. Thus, the Center began operating a kindergarten in the mid-thirties. The program more than doubled from six to fifteen children in just one year.¹⁶⁰

The continuing profusion of communal groups plus the particular pressures of this period produced a strong need for unifying institu-

tions in the community. Five agencies serving in this capacity merit further discussion: the Akron Jewish Community Council, the Bureau of Jewish Education, the Army and Navy Committee, the Jewish Social Service Federation and its offshoot the Jewish Welfare Fund, and the Akron Jewish Center. Their collective histories reveal the successes and failures of attempts to transcend more parochial ethclass associations, indicate the more general concerns of the community as well as the specific objectives of its major institutions, footnote the impact of external current events, and document both the resources made available to these agencies and the services they provided in return. Finally, these institutions give some insight into the more unified fronts which the Jewish community sought to present to the outer world.

A major effort at unification involved the initiation of a local Jewish Community Council. Those promoting such a Council for Akron felt there "must be a wider representation and participation in our decisions."¹⁶¹ Such an organization was held feasible by the late thirties because of the perceived increase in homogeneity and stability within the community (which in turn was related to the virtual end of immigration and a lessening of divisiveness among local groups). It was claimed that such a Council could be the official voice of the Jewish community. By arbitrating disagreements it could prevent public airing of "dirty linen" which might "discredit the community as a whole."¹⁶² (Another example of preoccupation with the acts of a single individual or institution as reflecting on the total group.) The potential role of the Council was also expressed in terms of combating discrimination and providing a "safety valve and ventilation" for all

elements of the community.¹⁶³ Such a group was finally established in 1939 and initially represented some twenty-five constituent groups. By the following year 60 percent of the adult local Jewish organizations had ratified its constitution.¹⁶⁴

In 1943 a Jewish Bureau of Education was established in an attempt to unify and improve all levels of Jewish education in Akron. Describing the situation which led to the formation of the Bureau, an article in the Akron Jewish News cited the decline in the numbers enrolled in Jewish educational programs and a general cultural atmosphere in the adult organizations which "had dwindled to [the] lowest depths."¹⁶⁵ The purpose of the new communal institution was to promote and coordinate the cultural and educational activities of the community, reorganize the Talmud Torah and its Sunday school and assist other groups with their programs. The Bureau set up four departments: schools, clubs, congregations, and organizations. Three years after it began the Bureau claimed an increase of one hundred in school attendance (leaving an additional estimated one hundred community youngsters still unregistered).¹⁶⁶ It had also initiated a high school department, set up a training school for Sunday school teachers, and become involved in establishing minimum standards for being bar mitzvahed (three years attendance at a daily afternoon school).¹⁶⁷ The Bureau message was clear: "There is no better investment you can make for your children than to give them a Jewish education."¹⁶⁸ Despite this seemingly creditable record by a well-qualified director (Isaac Levitats, Ph.D.), the Bureau only lasted a few years due to its considerable cost and the little cooperation given it by the various local educational

units which were more interested in their own autonomy.¹⁶⁹

World War II provided a strong impetus to joint communal efforts. Sometimes such efforts simply cut across existing groups without producing a new organizational structure (e.g., Red Cross work was sponsored by women in the Jewish Center Auxiliary, Council of Jewish Women, Senior Hadassah, Business and Professional Women's Hadassah, Temple Sisterhood, B'nai B'rith Auxiliary). A special community committee, however, was created to assist in coordinating the "defense activity" of the Jewish community and to eliminate duplication and overlapping of war efforts. This was the Jewish Welfare Board Army and Navy Committee.¹⁷⁰ Made up of representatives from the fifty-six local Jewish organizations, this Committee provided services for Jewish soldiers in the area (even obliging with wedding arrangements for one of the cadets at nearby Kent State University), prepared Jewish holiday packages for servicemen away from home, kept war records, conducted civilian defense and Red Cross classes, represented Akron Jews on the USO, etc.¹⁷¹

The impact of national and international events on local unifying communal institutions was especially evident in the case of the Jewish Social Service Federation (JSSF). By 1931 unemployment had overtaken all other referral categories. Seventy-three families were recorded as seeking help on these grounds and relief was granted them totaling \$11,500.¹⁷² Two years later, ninety families found themselves in the same position but with a tight Federation budget, only \$8,800 was available to assist them.¹⁷³ As the Depression deepened it became necessary to transfer a major portion of the relief cases to the Department of Public Charities. Federal intervention clearly was operative

by 1934 because the figures show a drop in unemployment referrals to thirty-one families and only \$800 was assigned for relief.¹⁷⁴ Along with the cases, staff was loaned out to greater community agencies so that Jewish clients could be cared for by Jewish workers. At one point a Federation caseworker was put on the Federal payroll as well.¹⁷⁵ Initially, the Federation acted as a sub-station for the public welfare agencies, disbursing relief on their behalf but eventually these agencies handled their own cases and gave aid directly. While such federal supervision and replacement threatened the original identity of the JSSF, it also prodded the institution to move into a new role which focused on family problems in a wider context than that of relief needs. By 1936, the Federation did not want the relief role back.¹⁷⁶ A role that was resumed, however, was that of immigrant aid as the Federation participated in the nation-wide 1930s refugee resettlement program.

It will be recalled that the Federation was the parent agency of the Polsky Memorial Free Loan Fund. As noted above, by 1934 loans had been made totaling \$4,363.¹⁷⁷ The following year marked the emergence of a second Federation offshoot, namely the Jewish Welfare Fund which became the fund-raising branch of the total community's philanthropic effort. It was established as an adjunct and supplement to the JSSF to meet the needs of local, national, and international causes. The three agencies, JSSF, Free Loan Fund, and Jewish Welfare Fund (JWF), functioned under separate boards but with a common executive secretary.

From its inception, however, JWF was sufficiently distinct and significant to warrant separate institutional study.¹⁷⁸ Its Board, consisting of representatives from the JSSF Board and the Jewish community at large, became a common meeting ground for Reform and old establishment names (e.g., Rabbi Alexander, Henry Fuerst, Lee Ferbstein) and the newer East European immigrants (e.g., Workmen's Circle leader Meyer Lifshitz and Farband's Max Rogovy). In the first year of its existence JWF secured 818 pledges totaling \$24,828.¹⁷⁹ The largest single beneficiary was the United Jewish Appeal but an amount equal to the UJA allocation was shared by two local institutions, the Center and the Talmud Torah. The impact of the European crisis was underscored by the fact that in 1940, fifty-nine cents of every local JWF campaign dollar went to foreign agencies. It was fairly common for families to double their pledges as the war approached. A continuing and increasing concern was reflected in the rapidly increasing annual campaign goals between 1939 and 1943: \$60,000, \$70,000, \$75,000, \$85,750, \$110,450.¹⁸⁰

The Akron Jewish Center played a uniquely important role among the above mentioned unifying secular groups. It alone provided the actual facilities permitting wide-scale programming involving all the diverse groups of the community. Its central position in the community is attested to by the fact that when questioned about the impact of the Depression on their community, Akron Jews typically first mention the near loss of the Center.¹⁸¹ The honeymoon of the Community with its new Center which opened in 1929 was short-lived. A 74 percent drop in membership and a \$57,000 deficit was felt almost immediately.¹⁸²

Such cutbacks also meant that the staff was repeatedly reduced. Obligations on an additional loan secured to meet mortgage payments were not being met. The financial situation finally reached the point that some \$7,000 had to be raised within twenty-four hours to avoid foreclosure.¹⁸³ The money was raised. That was not the end of the crisis, however, for similar instances of near financial disaster were repeated more than once.¹⁸⁴ In July 1932 the Center finance committee recommended that the Center be closed by September unless \$22,000 was raised by the community at large. A mass meeting was held to explain the current situation and as a result a campaign was launched to save the Center. A letter of appeal written in Yiddish and English noted that without general support the Center would have to close, perhaps permanently, and went on to assert that such disgraceful action on the part of the entire Jewish community would "never be forgotten or forgiven."¹⁸⁵

This crisis in turn was barely resolved when the situation worsened again. This time foreclosure proceedings were begun in Common Pleas Court of Summit County and in 1934 friendly receivership of the Center was assumed by Samuel Friedman. Center president H. S. Subrin dramatically summarized these events in his annual report: "The tragic event soon gained circulation and even the lips of the tiniest tots bore the sad message No greater catastrophe could have stricken this community and have left more shameful and disastrous results in its wake Future generations . . . would not and could not have forgiven us for such a shameful heritage."¹⁸⁶ It was clear to Subrin that loss of the Center would "engender disrespect and leave us in

ignoble disgrace."¹⁸⁷ To meet the challenge plans for a redemption fund were activated in the depths of the depression (1934). The campaign raised over \$20,000 and virtually ended the Center's critical period.¹⁸⁸ The financial recuperation of the community was sufficiently strong to permit mortgage-burning festivities in the early forties.¹⁸⁹

Just as the Federal government influenced the Federation, so too it affected the Center, in this case through the WPA Federal Recreation Program. A worker in the athletic and club department was supplied by WPA and four young NYA people worked in the Center office.¹⁹⁰ By 1939, with the help of Federal funds, classes were available at the Center in "Americanization" and literacy, current events, first aid, salesmanship, and oil painting.¹⁹¹ Such classes were only the tip of the programming effort. The total program was extremely diverse with something for almost everyone. Early figures show that the Center was first and foremost a recreational center and the largest attendance figures were in the physical education department.¹⁹² During the thirties one could find listings of basketball games, swimming classes, boxing tournaments, dances, pageants, plays, concerts, lecture forums, art classes, Americanization classes, English classes, and meeting dates of over twenty Jewish organizations.¹⁹³ There were also some twenty-six clubs of about fifteen youngsters each, bridge parties, city-wide dramatic tournaments, holiday celebrations and a reference library. Sometimes the Center served in unusual ways. Thus, in the thirties, Friday afternoon became "clean-up time" as the showers were used by nearby residents getting ready for the Sabbath who lacked such facilities in their own residences.

The most prominent Center cultural activity and one in which it took considerable pride was the Akron Civic Forum. The Forum was seen as "a credit to the Jewish people" which in turn brought "inestimable" prestige and good will to the Center.¹⁹⁴ The Forum which operated from 1930 to 1956 was a major point of contact with the greater community. From its platform such speakers as Robert LaFollette, Bertrand Russell, Paul Douglas, and Amelia Earhart spoke to the community. The Forum's greatest moment came in 1937 when Eleanor Roosevelt drew so large a crowd that her lecture had to be moved to the Akron armory.¹⁹⁵ While the Forum received city-wide recognition, there were apparently some in-group complaints in the early thirties that it was too "un-Jewish" and thus foreign to the Center.¹⁹⁶ Center leadership attempted to meet this criticism by proposing an expanded program permitting a wider range of speakers. A Jewish Forum was also supported which brought presentations with more specifically Jewish content to the Center such as a Yiddish folk song program and Yiddish theater.¹⁹⁷

The War produced a shift in programming priorities: "Civilian Defense is now a watchword in the Center program and the Center has become an important Civilian Defense Training Station."¹⁹⁸ A room at the Center was set aside for war-effort activities. Members of the community now attended meetings ranging from nutrition to Red Cross first aid classes and sewing groups. The Center became a focal point for scrap collection drives, kept in touch with its service-men, participated in USO activities, and worked closely with the local Army and Navy Committee mentioned above.¹⁹⁹ Nothing was left to chance as preparations were made in the eventuality of enemy bombing. The Center

planned for its own protective unit of air raid wardens, messengers, and first aid personnel plus the necessary equipment for a shelter area "that would be completely blacked out and where all would go in case of an alert."²⁰⁰ The Akron Jewish News reported a need for fifteen to eighteen year olds who could serve as wardens and a first aid corps.²⁰¹ Whether due to programming, increased prosperity, or renewed commitment, Center membership went up during these years from 1,005 in 1940 to 1,632 in 1946.²⁰²

Programming details of these early Center years provide clues to the Center's goals and intentions. Additional insight into what that institution hoped to achieve was evident in a 1934 listing of "Fifty Reasons Why to Join the Center." Many of the reasons enumerated reflected preoccupation with the Jewish side of the Jewish-American equation, and thus stressed the promotion of internal cohesiveness and self-sufficiency. The Center was "the only institution of its kind in Akron, for all Jews, built by Jews and operated by Jews."²⁰³ For Jewish youth it "meets the requirement of modern young men and women without losing desirable Jewish elements" as well as keeping boys and girls "from making associations with undesirable individuals."²⁰⁴ Furthermore, "All Jews may enjoy the privileges of the Center without being exposed to the prejudices of non-Jews." At the same time, however, as points were being made stressing the Center's contribution to Jewish self-sufficiency, arguments were put forward promoting the Center as an adapting agency to the American world. Thus, the value of the Civic Forum was hailed for its ability to "attract to our halls a large audience of non-Jews and emphasize to them the high plane and

caliber of Jewish thought."²⁰⁵ Perhaps the definitive statement of the hyphenated (and possibly conflicting) goals the Center cherished appears in the 1936 report of its executive director. "During its brief existence the Akron Jewish Center has demonstrated its splendid potentialities for developing and enriching the Jewish group consciousness while at the same time it provides a powerful medium for integrating the Jewish heritage with the American life of today."²⁰⁶

The Center was far from alone in promoting the advantages of belonging or contributing to a specific Jewish organization. The seemingly endless, though still incomplete, catalog of organizations presented in the preceding pages--only arbitrarily categorized as "unifying," "women's," "mirror-image," "Zionist," "fraternal," "educational"--all competed for membership from an obviously limited potential membership pool. The history of each of these groups was marked by a series of membership drives. The only reason such drives proved successful was the institutional adjustment pattern of overlapping memberships. Thus, Bloom's study reported that 30 percent of Jewish women and 20 percent of the men belonged to three or more Jewish organizations.²⁰⁷ Undoubtedly, much membership was nominal and there were those not affiliated at all (Bloom put this figure at as high as a thousand) but an institutional life-style certainly existed for many. This is particularly clear when contemplating the time demands on those 25 percent of officers of major Jewish organizations who Bloom found holding simultaneous positions in six or more groups or as he further noted, "some men . . . found again and again on boards of directors of Jewish communal institutions."²⁰⁸ (To cite the outstanding case in point: during this period alone, Charles Schwartz was the first Center president, headed the Talmud Torah, was

campaign chairman, treasurer and president of the JWF, president of Rosemont Country Club, and president of the local Zionist Organization of America.)

An intensity of involvement also characterized Jewish institutional life. Testimonials describe the Center as literally being a home which was used daily by individual family members and which as the "in" place in the thirties aroused a loyal following who "would have crawled to save it."²⁰⁹ One active participant recalled her mother's comment, "Why don't you just move in?" while another supporter confirmed that his children "lived" there.²¹⁰ Still a third member recalled moving to the city in the late thirties as a high school girl. A classmate approached her in study hall and said, "How about coming to the Center with me Sunday afternoon?"²¹¹ So began a lifetime of active involvement in communal organizational life for one Jewish community leader. The combination of this quantity and quality of organizational involvement produced the institutional life style which characterized Akron Jewish life during this period.

Taking stock of the health of Akron's Jewish institutional life in 1945, two rabbis and two lay community leaders reached different conclusions. While Temple Israel's Rabbi Alexander conceded the previous decade had brought increased prosperity as measured by membership figures and the financial state of communal groups, he expressed concern whether such increases were accompanied by "sincere interest" and "real understanding." He concluded that "our philosophy of life is not spiritual enough and it is not positively Jewish."²¹² Rabbi Hartstein of Ahavas Zedek still saw a community broken into segments and pulling in all directions with overlapping efforts and expenses and he urged

movement towards a Synagogue-center within the framework of the European-style Kehillah.²¹³ The lay respondents to the question "Where to, Akron Jewry?" were more optimistic. They commended Jewish leadership in the community and saw a strong sense of community responsibility as documented by the generous response to the JWF campaign and to the Center. They both concluded Akron Jewry was well on its way toward unity and in apparent response to more negative views circulating in the community one of them replied, "Frankly, I do not believe the Akron Jewish Community is withering."²¹⁴

The above section covering local Jewish institutional activity between 1929-1945 clearly presents an image of great vitality despite the formidable hurdles posed by the Depression and international crisis. Paralleling national Jewish experience, the Akron community found itself forced to handle the Depression without reliance on the Federation's relief role. That institution, both nationally and locally, was transformed into a major agency for handling family social problems. Just as Jewish communities nationwide experienced serious financial threats to their facilities, especially recently mortgaged buildings, so too Akron's Center almost went under. However, a spirited show of common purpose saw the Center through this crisis.

New local branches of national Jewish organizations were begun during this period (e.g., Jewish War Veterans, Pioneer Women, I.W.O., AETM) while those established in earlier periods typically continued to thrive (e.g., B'nai B'rith, Hadassah, Farband, Workmen's Circle). Major national institutional means for coping with Jewish community problems and the pressing needs imposed by the European catastrophe

were duplicated--if somewhat later--in Akron (e.g., Jewish Community Council, Jewish Welfare Fund, and a general growth of Zionist institutional activities).

As was the case in earlier periods, there are considerable data from these years which seem of special relevance to theories and findings about assimilation. Thus, the examples cited of continuing and new mirror-image institutions on the one hand and imitative or parallel programming on the other provide evidence of Gordon's structural pluralism in the first instance and cultural assimilation in the second. Diverse German and East European representation on the Jewish Welfare Fund board and the argumentation presented on behalf of a unified Jewish Community Council provide preliminary signs of the internal structural assimilation which Gordon claimed as integral to Jewish integration. There is insufficient reason to believe, however, that social intermingling was very far along. Meanwhile, "ethclass" distinctions or the "clubnik"- "lodgnik" dichotomy remained in evidence: the Rosemont Country Club membership was not interchangeable with *Workmen's Circle*, and *Hadassah* still tended to attract a different clientele than Pioneer Women.

Liebman's case for a dual conflicting value system is clearly supported during these years. The listing of "Fifty Reasons to Join the Center" and subsequent comments of the Center's executive director extoll the virtues and possibilities of simultaneous Jewish self-sufficiency and Americanization--without any overt recognition of possible discrepancies in these goals. The Center's efforts to program for both these value systems (e.g., Civic Forum and Jewish Forum) seem to have been generally acceptable. Finally, Akron's Jewish institutional life in this period was especially noteworthy for its quantity (at

least fifty-six separate groups), the intense impact it had on individual life styles, and the institutional adjustment behaviors it nurtured, namely multiple membership and leadership patterns.

Institutional Life in the Post-War Era

The American Jewish community entered the post war era with an impressive number of new organizations on the books: forty-seven national organizations emerged between 1940 and 1945; eleven national groups were added to the rolls in the decade of the sixties.²¹⁵ There can be little doubt that the post war era spanned by the above dates was organizationally active. Community studies conducted during this period confirm that the organizations were not only available but were joined. (For example, the frequently mentioned Elmira, New York study showed that 90 percent of the Jewish population belonged to one Jewish organization; 25 percent belonged to four or more.)²¹⁶ In view of the desperate human needs which were the aftermath of the Holocaust, it is not surprising that philanthropy was the over-arching institution of Jewish life in America. In 1948 when fund-raising efforts reached a peak unmatched until the sixties, over 1,300,000 contributors raised over two hundred million dollars for Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds.²¹⁷ The distribution pattern of these funds is indicated by the fact that an average 57 percent was allocated to the United Jewish Appeal over the decade between 1949 and 1958.²¹⁸ These figures do much to confirm Liebman's contention of the central role the state of Israel had assumed in Jewish communal life. As Liebman perceptively points out, it is "inconceivable that any Jewish organization would

elect a leader opposed to Israel."²¹⁹ During this period Jewish institutions in such areas as community relations, Jewish education, and recreation were typically operated by autonomous agencies with their own boards and with frequent connections with the local Jewish federations (this was considered especially typical for intermediate-sized cities across the nation). For example, in most of these cities, Jewish Centers were separate and autonomous while being constituents of the Federation.²²⁰ While overall affiliation rates with Jewish Centers never reached the level achieved by synagogues, the institution was exceptionally popular and could be found even in cities of under two thousand Jews. Where synagogue affiliation was over 70 percent, the majority of the Jewish community also tended to belong to a Center.²²¹

There was considerable flux in the institutions of Jewish education during this period. For the most part the trend seemed to be away from communal after-school-hours systems to religious education sponsored under synagogue auspices (Liebman argued this development was consistent with the role religion assumed in legitimizing the desire for Jewish communal survival).²²² And yet, perhaps paradoxically, this period also proved hospitable to the development of Jewish day schools (between 1962-1966, the number of day schools in the country increased by close to 20 percent).²²³

As in earlier periods, the various aspects of institutional development noted as typical of Jewish adjustment were also evident in Akron. Thus, the director of the Jewish Center in 1952 reported that "There has been a sharp increase in the number of organizations and various causes, local and otherwise, which compete for the time and

interest of men and women"224 The fate of the fraternal organizations was mixed. B'nai B'rith continued to be popular reaching new highs in membership levels of between seven hundred and one thousand.²²⁵ The order attracted members from all denominations and it was not unknown for members to have retained their affiliation for half a century.²²⁶ Meanwhile, the experiences of such mutual aid groups as Workmen's Circle and Farband were less fortuitous. Although both groups continued to survive--indeed, moving into new facilities on Copley and Garth Avenues respectively--their overall strength gradually declined, in large measure due to the waning familiarity and interest of the upcoming generation in Yiddish expression.²²⁷ Workman's Circle continued to provide sick benefits and insurance and to stress musical and other cultural activities but the level of its active support was reduced. The International Worker's Order lodge #181 disappeared altogether and in the mid-seventies the last graves from its cemetery were moved to nearby Jewish cemeteries. Farband maintained its benefits program and continued to work actively for Israel but in time its school could only be sustained by merging with the Talmud Torah. (While it still enjoyed independent existence, the Farband school offered an interesting example of adaptive institutional assimilation--an annual PTA Purim carnival.)²²⁸ As the future of Yiddish culture became less assured in Akron, Farband itself declined. Its women joined Pioneer Women chapters and money from the sale of its building was donated to Israel.²²⁹

Reference has already been made to the numerous clubs in the community. Some were associated with the synagogues (e.g., Anshe

Afard's Men's Club; Beth El's Young People League and Sunday Club) while others maintained closer connections to the Center (Hakoah, Menorah, and Maccabee clubs).²³⁰ By the early sixties over one thousand youngsters participated in the fourteen elementary, thirteen junior high, and thirteen senior high clubs sponsored by the Center.²³¹ The Anshe Sfard Free Loan Society still met a communal need after the war. Thus, in response to the needs of ex-servicemen, individual grants were increased up to five hundred dollars. A newspaper article in 1972 claimed that since its inception the society had lent more than three million dollars.

The women's groups became sufficiently numerous to warrant a supra-structure, namely the Presidents' League of Jewish Women's Organizations. In the early sixties this Council had representatives from the sisterhoods of Ahavas Zedek, Anshe Sfard, Beth El, and Temple Israel; the auxiliaries of B'nai B'rith, Brandeis, the Center, Jewish War Veterans; the Council of Jewish Women, Hadassah chapters, Women's Division of the Jewish Welfare Fund, Mizrahi Women chapters, etc. The above list by no means exhausts the women's groups. Farband and Talmud Torah had their PTA's. AET fraternality had its mother's club and long-lived groups like the Daughters of Israel were still operative in the mid-sixties. There were also local chapters of such agencies as the Jewish National Home for Asthmatic Children.

One of the larger women's groups of this period, the Council of Jewish Women, supported a wide range of activities both in the Jewish community and the greater Akron community. With some four hundred members by the early seventies, the group had organized summer

camps, provided lunch programs, sponsored Americanization classes for immigrants and supplied teacher aides and initiated audio and visual testing of Akron school children.²³² As in the 1930s, the Council was especially helpful in aiding new post-war immigrants. Its Americanization classes were open to all those preparing for their citizenship papers.²³³ An evening school was opened in the early fifties for the foreign born and day classes in English were also available.²³⁴ While the Council attracted members from many segments of the community, its members tended to be more prosperous than those of a group such as the Mizrahi women.

The continuing vitality of mirror-image institutions suggests that post-war Akron produced little in the way of structural assimilation. The Rosemont Country Club continued to thrive. Major changes were internal and involved the "newcomers" who were now economically able to join its ranks. As one oldtimer put it, those they had wanted to keep out were now taking over. In other words, the nouveau riche Jews were assuming leadership roles previously enjoyed by those stressing names and manners.²³⁵ While new blood did get in, the country club insured its exclusively Jewish character by continuing to insist that all members must pay at least one year's dues to Jewish Welfare each year.²³⁶ Correspondence between the Jewish Center and Rosemont Country Club in 1961 and 1962 reveals additional pressure to make Center membership another requirement for country club membership.²³⁷

Efforts to sponsor Jewish-based scouting were intensified after the war. Eventually the B'nai B'rith lodge co-sponsored a boy scout troop with the Center and Temple Israel to attract "all Jewish boys

over twelve in the Akron area."²³⁸ The following year there was an unsuccessful attempt to organize a brownie girl scout troop at the Center. The girls got their brownie troop six years later. By 1960 there was reference to a Center girl scout troop. That these scouting efforts had a Jewish connection is evident in the recommendation that all leaders participating in the scouting program be required to meet with the Center staff on the same basis as other Center club leaders.²⁴⁰ Furthermore, the local rabbis were contacted regarding scouting weekends. Rabbinical approval was granted on the condition that the Sabbath not be desecrated. The scouting weekend schedules were subsequently revised to include more Jewish content and it was recommended that rabbinical approval of these programs be secured.²⁴¹

The Jewish fraternity and sorority at the University of Akron were two of the twelve young Jewish organizations which composed the Young Adult Council in 1946. In reporting on the Greek groups' activities for that year, the Akron Jewish News commended Delta Pi Iota for topping other Greek and Independent groups in their Spring quarter grades and lauded AEF for placing second in an all campus rating.²⁴² A decade later the paper reported similar fraternity achievements. In 1962 the national Jewish sorority, Sigma Delta Tau, held formal ceremonies pledging thirteen girls to its new colony at Akron University.²⁴³

Examples of "mirror-image" behavior were not confined to the existence of such institutions as the Jewish country club, the Jewish War Veterans, etc. They were also evident in the themes of Jewish sponsored social activities. Some examples: the Center Follies "rides

again"--which played to an audience of more than 1,500 in 1945; the Council of Jewish Women's "Come one, come all . . . We're havin' another Cotillion ball!"; Temple Israel's Mr. and Mrs. Club's the "Halloween Blue Jean Bounce" and the Temple Sisterhood's Chanukah "Country Fair"; Beth El Men's Club's square dance; Anshe Sfard Sisterhood's "Sweetheart Square Dance" around Valentine's Day; the Center's scheduling of Gilbert and Sullivan's H.M.S. Pinafore to be sung in Yiddish.²⁴⁴

The importance of Israel as a rallying point for Jewish institutional life in Akron was as prevalent in Akron as it was on the national American scene. The Zionist Emergency Council which was active in Akron immediately after the war consisted of nine groups: General Zionists, Senior Hadassah, Business and Professional Women's Hadassah, Junior Hadassah, Mizrachi Men, Mizrachi Women, Poale Zion, and two groups of Pioneer Women.²⁴⁵ This Council objected strongly to a Center scheduled program in 1947 which featured three speakers on Palestine, one pro-Zionist, one representing the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism, and the third speaking for the Arabs. The Zionist Council charged that it was improper for the Center to sponsor such an activity because the pro-Zionist position was outnumbered and because the Center would thus be instrumental in aiding the American Council of Judaism. The Council was disparaged as a group "which consists of a handful of wealthy assimilated Jews . . . who are causing no end of damage [to] Zionism" Because Akron youth were regarded as "very badly informed on Zionism," the question was raised as to "Why should we then begin by informing them of the views of anti Zionists?"²⁴⁶ To

promote its side of the story, the Zionist Emergency Council asked for--and received--\$1,200 from the Jewish Welfare Fund the following year. Despite this incident, and the fact that a leading Jewish merchant belonged, there is no reason to believe that the Council of Judaism ever made any serious inroads in influencing the Akron Jewish community.²⁴⁷

Once a reality, Israel became not only a source of pride but a place to visit. Such visitation was encouraged not only by the Borowitz Travel Service but by communal institutions such as the Federation which wanted their workers to experience at first hand the cause which required their labor and money. As the director of the Federation put it, we "started to push young people to go [to see Israel]".²⁴⁸ More familiar than the opportunity of visiting the new state was the obligation to support it. The extent of United Jewish Appeal giving will be reported below. Suffice it to say at this point that it was substantial. The response to Israeli bond drives was less dramatic. In an open letter to the Jewish community in 1951 two lay community leaders acknowledged that "We Akronites have been slow in adapting ourselves to the new demands . . . for support of the Israeli bond."²⁴⁹ They acknowledged the competing demands of local Jewish capital fund drives but pressed for the reality of "Every Jew a Bondholder."

Formal Jewish education continued to be part of the experience of most Jews in the Akron community. Only 15 percent of the heads of households surveyed in the demographic study of 1975 claimed they had received no such training and 75 percent indicated their children had received Jewish education outside of the home.²⁵⁰ The most important

reason given for giving children a formal Jewish education was promoting personal Jewish identity (28 percent). This reason far exceeded other possible choices such as preservation of Jewish culture (13 percent), religious instruction (18 percent), or bar-bat mitzvah (14 percent). The national trend towards synagogue-sponsored Jewish education characterized most of the post-war period in Akron. As in the case of other movements, however, this development took hold here somewhat later than in other communities. In 1946 an article on Jewish education in Akron featured by the Akron Jewish News noted that while a "flight" to Sunday schools prevailed across the country, in Akron the weekday community schools (i.e., Talmud Torah and Farband) were holding their own and even increasing their registrations.²⁵¹ The Talmud Torah offered a traditional education to children regardless of their parents' membership in a congregation; bar mitzvahs, when the students were ready for that event, could be held in any local synagogue. The school was described as the only local institution which sufficiently prepared boys in Hebrew prayer to enable them to conduct traditional services and act as cantors for their own bar mitzvahs.²⁵² Extending its services to a younger age group, the Talmud Torah began a daily program in 1947 for preschool students as young as three and a half. Regular after-school weekday sessions for boys and girls from six to fifteen ran from four to eight while the Sunday school was open from 10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. and served those from four to fourteen. In the 1949-1950 school year, 124 students were enrolled in the afternoon program, 179 in the Sunday school.²⁵³

Knowledge was not the only goal of the Talmud Torah program. In 1952 the school claimed an "emphasis on raising good citizens and well adjusted individuals who are proud of their heritage and will become active members of the Jewish community willing to work for every noble cause."²⁵⁴ Similarly, the Farband school stressed its commitment to the "adjustment of the youngster to the American Jewish Community . . . so that he may live a healthy and normal Jewish life."²⁵⁵ This was in addition of course to long reiterated objectives in the fields of Yiddish language and literature, Jewish history, Bible, preparation for bar mitzvah, etc. In 1951, Farband too organized a daily pre-school program, thereby expanding its educational coverage from nursery age to fourteen-year-olds. A peak enrollment of some one hundred youngsters was reported in the early fifties. Tuition was arranged according to parental means and the Jewish Welfare Fund allocated additional resources.

The impact of the national trend to congregational schools could not be put off for long, however, Temple Israel's role in this field was a continuing one from the earliest history of the community but now its school experienced a dramatic surge in enrollment. More than doubling in the thirty-five years following the Depression, enrollment was reported at 435 students by 1964.²⁵⁶ Meanwhile, as indicated in the previous chapter, Beth El's instructional program (known as the Beth El Academy and consisting of Hebrew, Sunday, and pre-school programs) also expanded rapidly after their new building became available in the early fifties.²⁵⁷ The increasing educational responsibility assumed by the congregational schools contributed to the merger

in 1955 of the Talmud Torah school and the Farband school to form the United Community Talmud Torah. The official reason given for the merger was to avoid duplication and enlarge the available Jewish communal educational facilities.²⁵⁸ Interestingly, the new institution was also seen in a hyphenated context, i.e., as providing instruction in ways "for harmonizing the American and the Jewish way of life."²⁵⁹ The Israeli connection was not overlooked; the school was described as making "the land of Israel a reality in the lives of the children . . . establishing a link of brotherhood with the core of Jewish civilization."²⁶⁰ Support for the new Talmud Torah continued to come from the Jewish Welfare Fund which by 1961 provided \$23,000 of a total \$27,000 budget.²⁶¹ Philip Kolko became the first educational director of the merged school. Formerly head of the Farband school and deeply committed to the Yiddish tradition, Kolko (father of the eminent historian) developed the curriculum and prepared the texts for the elementary division of the school. Gradually, he became convinced that the new school could not withstand the competition of the congregational schools and approached the Federation for assistance. The Federation proposed to take full responsibility for the after-school programs in the community while leaving the Sabbath and Sunday school program to the religious institutions. This proposal was in effect vetoed by the congregations who wanted primacy in the educational field.²⁶² In 1962 due to declining enrollment the United Community Talmud Torah closed its doors after over half a century of service, leaving the field for the time being to the community's religious institutions.

During this final period of its existence, the Talmud Torah exhibited some interesting parallelisms and points of contact with non-Jewish, secular institutions. For example, a PTA was convened in 1945. That same year the school announced that "girls are especially welcome"--a likely response to outer society realities.²⁶³ Further evidence that the school was aware of the demands of the outer community was its statement in 1950 claiming it had a "youthful staff with understanding for the needs of the American Youth."²⁶⁴ The interplay of American and Jewish values was expressed in the school's claim that by serving all the children of the community regardless of denominational affiliation it "kept our Jewish community free of sectarianism and inspired Jewish youth with the true American spirit of fellowship which is the basic principle of our public school system."²⁶⁵ Furthermore, Talmud Torah pupils were not only seen as gaining in appreciation of Jewish holidays and traditions but as learning about Jewish contributions ". . . to the growth of the American Republic."²⁶⁶

The demise of the Talmud Torah did not close the chapter on communal efforts in the field of Jewish education. Within two years there was sufficient dissatisfaction with the congregational educational programs to set plans in motion for a parochial Hebrew day school in the city.²⁶⁷ The Hillel Academy was launched in 1965 in rented classrooms at Beth El with a kindergarten and first grade program and twenty-one students. The philosophy behind this first Jewish day school in Akron's history was spelled out in the Academy's brochure: "We believe the essence of Judaism is something which cannot be taught

on a hit or miss basis . . . it's not enough to attend Hebrew school a few afternoons or Sunday. It just isn't possible to give a child the in-depth Jewish education to which he is entitled if you try to do it on so limited a basis."²⁶⁸ The school's organizers specifically denied being religious fanatics and insisted the school was intended to appeal to Jews of all persuasions; they also claimed they were not turning their back on the greater community but rather would be developing children equally interested in their nation and religion. Responding to questions raised within the Jewish community whether such a school was "un-American," Academy supporters claimed, "We are as proud of our nation as any other group. But we see nothing contradictory about being a good Jew as well as a good American. Judaism and Americanism are not opposites. On the contrary, they complement each other. The Mosaic Code, as much as anything else has helped shape America. . . . Now it's Akron's turn to join the more than 300 other American and Canadian cities with such schools."²⁶⁹

The Hillel Academy became a highly controversial issue in a community which had an unbroken tradition of strong support for public education. Although there was rabbinical support for the school by the seventies and the Jewish Welfare Fund regularly allocated funds to the institution, the demographic study, which was conducted a decade after the school opened, showed that over 57 percent of the respondents did not believe such support should be given.²⁷⁰ That the point in dispute was not the communal nature of the school but rather its "public-school replacement" aspect was indicated by the response to the related question of whether the Akron Jewish Community should

sponsor an afternoon Community Hebrew School. In this case the answer was strongly in the affirmative (over 60 percent while only 31 percent said no).²⁷¹ Indeed, the support for a community sponsored afternoon Hebrew school was substantially higher than for synagogue sponsored schools of the same type. In the fall of 1976 a community after-school-hours high school was actually put into operation with all the synagogues participating in the program.

While attempts to achieve a central governing agency of Akron Jewish communal institutions were not immediately effective in the early post-war period, they sustained an ideal which remained alive in the community. The Bureau of Jewish Education was one such attempt whose objectives and early demise have been described above. An even more ambitious venture was the Akron Jewish Community Council. In 1946 its Constitution was revised to include the following wide ranging objectives: coordinating and facilitating all aspects of Akron Jewish communal life; conciliating and arbitrating differences between Jews and/or Jewish organizations; protecting the civil, political, economic, and religious rights of Jews in the greater community and instituting new programs and agencies as needed.²⁷² While the Council's initial charge centered on problems of community relations, by 1947 it was involved in such internal issues as establishing a Jewish Funeral Chapel and turning the Vaad Hakashruth into a Board of the Council. The Council also attempted to fill the vacuum left when the Bureau of Education closed. It had plans to offer publications for school children, provide teacher training, and establish an audio-visual aids library. Beyond this the Council hoped to provide programming guidance for

Jewish organizations, develop a community museum, and offer a leadership institute for potential leaders in the community.²⁷³

Personality differences and the lack of a clear understanding or willingness on the part of other agencies to assume the necessary relationship to the Council led to its decline as an effective unifying agency. However, the thought of a centralized body was never given up. As early as 1947, while the Jewish Community Council and Bureau of Education were both still active, recommendations were already being proposed for a single administrative body to coordinate the Federation, Jewish Welfare Fund, Jewish Community Council, Jewish Center, and Bureau of Education.²⁷⁴ The following year, the Center minutes record general agreement on the need for a central governing body but apparently no consensus developed on how this should be achieved.²⁷⁵ A decade later the executive director of the Jewish Welfare Fund and the Jewish Family Service was still talking in terms of the long overdue central Jewish agency. There was unanimous agreement by the planning committee which considered this recommendation to organize a more centralized Federation.²⁷⁶ However, efforts to implement such a plan continued to fail during the sixties because of the strong sense of autonomy which characterized the various organizations and synagogues.²⁷⁷ By 1970 such obstacles were sufficiently overcome to permit the establishment of the Akron Jewish Community Federation. Whether the new Federation could establish functional control of the various agencies and whether its role should be that of a planning, implementing, or programming institution remained ongoing concerns.

Administratively, the new Federation assumed control of the Jewish Family Service and the Jewish Welfare Fund. As the major historical institution of social and philanthropic concern in the community, its activities need to be examined in more detail. It will be recalled that the Federation of Jewish Charities which was incorporated in 1914 and which initially combined fund-raising and social service roles had evolved into the Jewish Social Service Federation and the Jewish Welfare Fund. At the close of the war the JSSF became deeply involved in problems of veteran adjustment and location services associated with the tracing of lost relatives.²⁷⁸ The extensive growth of this agency was evident in the respective budgets of 1914 (\$3,000) and 1948 (some ten times that amount) and in the increase of staff from one to five.²⁷⁹ Gradually more and more people approached the Federation for help with marital difficulties, emotional problems, and inter-personal concerns rather than with economic requests. Responding to this changing demand, JSSF underwent another name change in 1958 to the Jewish Family Service. As expressed in its new Constitution, the purposes of the agency now were to offer casework and counseling services to families, children, and individuals. This took the form of marital counseling, casework with the mentally or physically ill and delinquent children, child placement in foster homes and institutions, help for unwed mothers, adoption proceedings, etc. In this new role, the agency dealt with a wide cross section of the Jewish community and at times assisted non-Jews as well. By 1945 Jewish Family Service was a member of Summit County's Council of Social Agencies and for some time was totally funded by United Community

funds. Eventually, however, the JWF again resumed partial funding responsibility for the agency, in part to guarantee adequate services for the aged.²⁸⁰

The breakdown of referral statistics in the fiftieth anniversary year of the JSSF is fairly typical of the post-war era. Two hundred fifty-nine family units were reported as receiving help. The largest single referral category was that of individual personality problems with other areas of concern being husband-wife relationships, plans for the aging, adoption, etc. Time-worn concerns did not completely evaporate. In 1957, seventy-seven transients still needed help with overnight or Shabbos lodging.²⁸¹

Jewish Family Service was not the only welfare program receiving a new name based on changing service needs. In 1960 the Polsky Memorial Loan Fund also underwent a name change and became the Akron Jewish Student Scholarship and Loan Fund.²⁸² The change of emphasis was clear: from basic survival funds to college education loans in one generation. Another new service which became available in this period was the Jewish Vocational Service, established in 1948 under the sponsorship of the JSSF, the Jewish Center, and B'nai B'rith. JVS offered intensive professional testing and personal assistance in this specialized counseling area.²⁸³

The Jewish Welfare Fund continued to be the main fund-raising arm of Akron Jewish philanthropy. Collection tactics were powerfully influenced by relatively easy access to inside financial information about individual community members. A leading figure in local fund raising insisted he "didn't need Dunn and Bradstreet--we are our own

Reflecting the outcome of significant and recurring debates regarding communal priorities and commitments, Akron's JWF allocations were heavily weighted in these years to meet overseas needs. Typically, over half of the amount raised (and in some years as much as 70 percent) was distributed in this way.²⁹⁰ Still, local needs had to be met. In a fairly representative year, 1953, some \$80,000 of a total \$410,900 was diverted to local agencies.²⁹¹ Roughly similar amounts (c. \$30,000) were dispensed to the Center and the communal schools with small grants awarded to such efforts as the Jewish Vocational Service. In addition to the overseas agencies (UJA, HIAS, Histadruth, Hebrew University, the Technion, etc.) and the local agencies, specific allocations were also made in the following areas: community relations (American and World Jewish Congress, Jewish Labor Committee); national service agencies (Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, National Jewish Welfare Board); cultural agencies (Jewish Publication Society, YIVO); religious agencies (Yeshiva University, Hebrew Technological College).

Although these allocations generally corresponded to national philanthropic patterns, they were by no means routine or proscribed decisions. The minutes of JWF Board meetings are full of budget debates. Intricate procedures evolved to handle the annual allocation requests. For example, in 1946 eight budget sub-committees met and made studies of potential beneficiary groups. Detailed procedures did not necessarily mean undisputed decisions. Both Rabbi Hartstein and Rabbi Pelcovitz registered major complaints in the late forties about the allocations.²⁹² Internal Federation politics in the 1970s still

included considerable concern with who stood where regarding the proportion of funds leaving vs. staying in the community.²⁹³ In a move potentially useful in forestalling future recriminations, the Akron Jewish News published the procedural details of appropriate decisions. (The sub-committee system was used and all initial requests were assigned to the appropriate groups. To assist their deliberations, these committees usually had at their disposal a factual report on the requesting agency compiled and furnished by the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. Recommendations of the various sub-committees were passed on to the central budget committee which in turn made recommendations to the JWF Board of Trustees for their final disposition.)

Although the JWF and Jewish Family Service were in effect separate agencies, the fact that they had a common, and throughout this period a single, director made them a major institutional force in the community. On a par in importance throughout this period was the Akron Jewish Center. Its objectives continued to be phrased in a hyphenated context, namely "to preserve and foster the ideals of Judaism and American citizenship."²⁹⁴ According to the director, ". . . our primary function remains the same: to give an individual . . . opportunity to enrich his life . . . as a Jew and as an American."²⁹⁵

The Center was seen as promoting these dual goals by observing national holidays and special events such as Mother's Day and Brotherhood Week while simultaneously celebrating Jewish festivals and providing Jewish programming. Touching both bases, forums, lectures,

and classes were specifically designed to develop understanding and appreciation of Jewish contributions to American life. Awareness of possible conflicts in these aims seems to have surfaced in the early sixties. Thus, the thirty-second annual Center meeting addressed itself to the following question: by fostering and strengthening Jewish life in America was it promoting self segregation and setting up barriers between Jews and other Americans? The Center's answer was a rejection of this possibility. To the contrary, the Center was described as a powerful force for inter-group unity and brotherhood. Supporting arguments stressed that non-Jews were welcome--and came--to Center activities, ergo their acceptance and approval of Jewish ways increased.²⁹⁶ Furthermore, the Center made new friends for the Jewish community by participating in Akron's community life through the United Fund, United Community Council, etc. Finally, the Center claimed that its training program for young lay leaders provided valuable resources for other organizations including those in the general community.

The Center not only saw itself as a unifying institution of American and Jewish values, it also claimed a pre-eminent position as the unifying force within the Jewish community itself. The Center was ". . . the only place in the Jewish Community in which Jews of varying points of view may come together for an expression of their cultural and recreational interests."²⁹⁷ This role of a communal home for the total community was seen as a departure from the reality of early Center days when the institution was primarily oriented toward Americanizing East European Jews and housing Hebrew schools and cultural groups. The increasing Jewish homogeneity of the post-war period

and the Center's status as "the least ideologically based institution" permitted a new role which cut across religious, social, cultural, and economic lines.²⁹⁸ The Center also assumed the role of a primary social group for its members. That this was intended is evident in a Center report which claimed that it offered its members identification, belonging, status, dignity, and a sharing of values. Here too was the "warmth of home and family" for those from pre-school age to ninety.²⁹⁹ The 1975 demographic study verified that such primary group functions were indeed involved in Center participation. The most popular response to the purpose of Center attendance was "Jewish identification."³⁰⁰

Whatever the individual motivations for joining, the numbers who did so were substantial. From a low point during the Depression, membership recovered to some 1,500 by 1945 and expanded to 3,700 by 1960.³⁰¹ (According to a Center survey of 1950, membership levels that year represented the highest ratio to a total population of any Center in the country.)³⁰² The demographic study of 1975 indicated that 72 percent of the sample belonged to the Center.³⁰³ Translated into attendance figures, a similar increase in numbers is evident. Whereas some 6,000 attended in 1929, 69,000 did so in 1944, and 180,000 in 1960. Keeping pace, the budget expanded from some \$47,000 in 1929 to \$52,000 in 1944 to \$171,000 in 1960.³⁰⁴ Center funding came from the Community Chest, Jewish Welfare Fund, and dues.

Greater attendance also reflected a change in the elements of the community using the Center. As indicated above, in the early days of the Center many of the older and/or well established families supported the institution but did not themselves attend or send their

children.³⁰⁵ By 1956 there is documentation of a significant change in participation patterns. Sixty-nine percent of Temple families were now affiliated with the Center, the highest percentage of any congregation in the city. Even allowing for those who drifted to the Temple from more orthodox affiliations, this figure suggests a change in Temple members' feelings. That same year, Beth El was close behind with 61 percent of its families affiliated with the Center. (It is important to note that these statistics provide significant support for the arguments of multiple and synagogue-supplementary memberships held by Akron's Jews.) By way of contrast, the Orthodox congregations, Anshe Sfard and Ahavas Zedek had an overlap in membership of 46 percent and 40 percent respectively, about the same as that of the Barberton Shul. The New Hebrew Congregation had an overlap of only 10 percent.³⁰⁶ Turning from family affiliation to adult male members, the figures break down as follows: synagogue-unaffiliated adult males made up some 21 percent of Center membership; 35 percent belonged to Temple Israel; 31 percent to Beth El.³⁰⁷ Ten years later this general trend was still in effect with 216 Center memberships associated with Temple Israel, 191 with Beth El, 111 with Anshe Sfard, and 32 with Ahavas Zedek.³⁰⁸

While the Beth El figures reflect an ongoing Center involvement, the other statistics at first glance seem more puzzling. One Center official speculated that the Orthodox were less committed all along to secular institutions; that in the fifties many "Center people" drifted to Temple in part because they couldn't afford the building campaigns of the other congregations (at the same time the Center was

becoming more socially acceptable to older Temple members); that money may have been an issue, with the Orthodox having proportionally less. It also seems likely that young families, comprising the age groups most interested in what the Center had to offer, were underrepresented in declining Orthodox shuls such as the New Hebrew Congregation.³⁰⁹

If Center membership was not drawn equally from the various religious denominations, neither was Center leadership. The Center Constitution originally provided that 50 percent of the Board consist of Orthodox Jews (at that time this included Anshe Emeth, which became the Conservative synagogue, Beth El). Only one active leader of an Orthodox congregation ever became a Center president (Jack Saferstein was president of Anshe Sfard and became Center president in 1962). Throughout the Center's history there were repeated charges that its leadership was closed and self-perpetuating. In 1945, Sol Levinson of Levinson's Department Store in Cuyahoga Falls wrote to former Center president, H. S. Subrin, that "There is . . . a feeling among a lot of members that a certain group is running the Center and have things their own way. This is the result of the same members getting nominated and reelected repeatedly."³¹⁰ Subrin replied that he concurred with the appeal for a more democratic control but he viewed this as a gradual and evolutionary process which could be accelerated by the members themselves. He urged more to vote and once elected to remain independent from the "clique" but he also indicated the problem of small active leadership groups common to such organizations.³¹¹ In 1951, in response to a similar charge of "lets have new faces on the ballot," a study of the Board membership was made and published. Of the thirty-five sitting

Board members, four were "lifers." Seven had served over twenty consecutive years. In support of this continuity, it was claimed that this was just the right amount to help train newcomers not to mention the fact that these old leaders were the ones who had fought against great odds to overcome the Depression crises (i.e., waving the Center's bloody shirt).³¹²

Membership and leadership were united during this period in their concern with Center expansion and programming. A post-war expansion and building campaign was launched in 1945, but was delayed due to the urgent need for relief funds abroad "and especially for Israel."³¹³ The cornerstone laying of the new extension to the old building on Balch Street took place in 1953. Some four years later forty-eight acres of land were acquired on White Pond Drive. This land was seen as potentially valuable in terms of Jewish population movement further westward and the need for currently unavailable outdoor facilities. In 1960 the White Pond recreational area was put into use. Thirteen years later the Akron Jewish Center dedicated its permanent new facilities on this land.

The post-war period also included an increase in the range of age groups receiving programming attention. The Center director's report of 1953 noted, "Now we can truthfully say we have activities for all ages from 3 1/2 to 100."³¹⁴ This meant a full program of nursery activities; activities ranging from camping to clubs on the elementary level; social dancing, swimming classes, and the gym for teenagers; a lounge, discussion groups, and films for young adults; the health club, Civic Forum (until 1956, after which it became the Civic Forum

of the Air), golf, bridge, Institute of Jewish Studies, etc. for adults; a Golden-age club, hobbies, Yiddish movies, etc. for senior citizens.

The above reference to Yiddish movies is suggestive of the Center's continuing efforts to wrestle with the waning but nonetheless real demand for such events. Center programming in the late forties included Yiddish speakers, drama, and films.³¹⁵ At the Center's twentieth annual dinner, the director indicated that the Jewish Forum and the Jewish Fine Arts series had previously achieved limited results. However, marked improvement was noted due to the joint efforts of Farband, Workmen's Circle, Pioneer Women, and the Jewish People's Fraternal Order working together with the Center. Yiddish programming continued into the sixties with references to visiting Yiddish theatre groups (under the auspices of Farband) and occasional moves to establish classes in conversational Yiddish.³¹⁶ A final area of programming which deserves mention is the Center day camp. An outgrowth of the camp operated by the Council of Jewish Women, the day camp enrolled 210 youngsters in the late forties; 266 in the mid-sixties.³¹⁷

As in earlier periods of Jewish communal life, there is substantial evidence that an institutional life style existed in post-war Akron. This "style" was not uniformly expressed but it did involve extensive commitment to (Jewish) institution-centered life. One community member recalled coming to town as a teenager and joining a Center club. Later she became a club leader, worked in the Center library, taught at the Talmud Torah, became involved in Hadassah, directed Young Judean clubs--while her husband led boys' clubs--

chauffeured her own children to Center activities, became president of the Center Auxiliary, an officer of the Center Board, and eventually went to work for the Federation. She claimed that such involvement was the common experience of many community members.³¹⁸

Even when multiple memberships and total family involvement were not as extensive as suggested above, loyalty to a single institution such as the Center frequently monopolized individual schedules. Overlapping leadership roles also continued to confirm the existence of an institutional life style. Mention has already been made of Charles Schwartz, the "superstar" of Jewish organizational leadership, who served as president of eight major Jewish institutions ranging over religious, educational, Zionist, charitable, and social organizations. He was not alone. There were at least fourteen Jewish leaders by 1965 who had served as president of two or more major Jewish organizations. At least eight served in that role for three or more institutions; five were president of four or more.

Leadership overlap extended beyond individuals to families. For example, in 1951, Morris Sacks, a former president of the Center and at that time chairman of the Budget and Allocations Committee of the Jewish Welfare Fund, wrote a letter happily advising his brother, Charles Sacks, the current Center president, that the Jewish Welfare Fund had allocated \$28,656 to the Center.³¹⁹ Leadership overlap not only extended horizontally among siblings, but vertically across the generations. Two generations of Loeb women became presidents of the Council of Jewish Women while several generations of Nobils contributed a charter member and three subsequent presidents of JSSF and its

offshoot, JWF. Describing continuity within a single institution, the Center, the director referred in 1964 to a new crop of board members many of whose fathers built the Center. By the early seventies, there were fifty members who had been with the Center over forty years.³²⁰

Loyalty to Jewish institutions seemed to go beyond experience with existing organizations. The 1975 demographic study asked its sample population whether they would or would not use a Jewish home for the aged rather than one designed for the general community--or whether it would not matter, assuming equal quality services. Over 76 percent said they would use it, 17 percent said it would not matter. Only 4.5 percent indicated they would not use it. When directly queried about whether such a facility was needed in the Akron area, 81 percent said yes; 12 percent, no. The level of positive response increased even more when the question hypothetically assumed such an institution already existed and asked whether the respondents would consider it for themselves or a parent. Over 83 percent answered in the affirmative.³²¹

For the most part the post-war era continued to show institutional similarities between the Akron Jewish community and the national American Jewish community. While there may have been comparatively fewer new organizations than on the national scene, clearly on both fronts organizational life was popular and abundant. Indeed there was some internal local speculation that there were "too many Jewish organizations, possibly causing duplication of efforts."³²² However, as on the national level, support materialized, frequently from overlapping memberships.

Philanthropy can as validly be claimed the overriding institutional concern for Akron Jews as it has been for the American Jewish community. Fund-raising was a major pre-occupation throughout this period and reached significant peaks here in 1948 and 1967 much as it did on the national level. The distribution of these local funds was typically even more heavily weighted towards overseas needs, especially Israel, than was the case for other medium-sized Jewish communities.³²³ As private citizens and as communal leaders local Jews supported Israel financially, visited there, hosted Israelis here, and in general established ever firmer bonds with the new state. Liebman's contention that no Jewish organization could conceivably elect a leader opposed to Israel can be applied to Akron without reservation.

Other national patterns such as the relatively autonomous status of Jewish Centers and communal educational institutions were equally the case in Akron. Similarly, the high correlations in communities having extensive synagogue affiliation rates with Center membership figures were more than matched in Akron. Educational trends also paralleled national experiences, e.g., the move away from Talmud Torahs to synagogue-sponsored religious education and the establishment of Jewish day schools. Finally, commitment to expanding primary-group institutional care throughout the life span was evident on both local and national levels.

Just as this period confirms Akron's role within the mainstream of American Jewish communal life, so too it provides data supporting immigration adjustment theories alluded to in earlier periods. The evidence for Gordon's theory is especially strong. Not only were pri-

mary group services maintained, they actually expanded despite the disappearance of the first immigrant generation. Thus, the Center extended its coverage to include nursery school children and senior citizens. As though Gordon's spokesman, one Center president noted, "This institution truly takes care of Akron Jewry from the cradle to the grave."³²⁴ The continuing interest shown in establishing still another major communal institution, namely an old people's home, further underscores this point. While structural assimilation clearly did not take place, there were many examples of cultural assimilation in areas such as language (Yiddish declined), promotion of Americanization classes, imitative programming, and celebration of American holidays. The structural assimilation which Gordon saw as a reality within the Jewish community did occur in Akron during this period. Probably the outstanding example was the changing pattern of Center membership which now clearly cut across all socio-economic, religious, and ethnic lines. At the same time, ethclass distinctions could still be observed in various organizations and lodges (e.g., Rosemont's members were typically distinguishable from members of Workmen's Circle). Denials of any possible conflict in maintaining self-sustaining Jewish institutions and simultaneously promoting "Americanism" continued in this period, lending further substance to Liebman's theory. Two examples cited in this regard were the Center's response to a charge of self-segregation and the Hillel Academy's arguments in defense of a parochial school.

Apart from its relationship to the larger American-Jewish picture and to various immigration theories, this period of institutional

development was noteworthy in Akron Jewish history for both continuity and change. While the overall strength of organizational life was assured, the fate of individual groups was more variable. The Center and the Federation with its various offshoots grew enormously in support and influence. Fraternal groups like B'nai B'rith and Zionist groups like the ZOA also had growth spurts while such mirror-image ventures as Jewish sponsored scouting experienced new development. Other groups, however, such as Farband and Workmen's Circle, declined as the strength of Yiddish culture waned. The fate of the unifying institutions was also mixed, the Bureau of Jewish Education and the Jewish Community Council being unable to survive the early post-war years, the Jewish Community Federation formally coming into existence in the 1970s. For those institutions that survived and/or expanded, continuity involved not only the perpetuation of an organized group but the ongoing involvement of individual families across generations. Continuity was also achieved by the long periods of professional leadership provided in this period by the directors of the two major communal institutions, the Federation and the Center.

This chapter's summary account of a century of institutional development seems to support several conclusions about the overall adjustment process of the Akron Jewish community. Responding to internal desires for bonding with fellow-Jews and external pressures of exclusion (e.g., veterans' groups and country clubs), Akron's Jews chose to develop their own institutions which paralleled and/or supplemented those in the greater society. This commitment produced a Jewish organizational life which was diverse, extensive (over fifty

organizations by World War II), carefully nurtured, and increasingly designed to meet cradle-to-grave needs. There were periodic efforts to unify and centralize the direction of this large network of groups. However, such attempts, e.g., the Akron Jewish Community Council, often had only limited success given the staunchly guarded autonomy of the various organizations. It should also be noted that while organizational life as a whole seemed ever in the business of expanding and encompassing new areas of concern, the fate of individual groups was far more variable. For example, ethnically based groups (e.g., Far-band) gradually went the way of ethnic shuls and were replaced by more heterogeneous memberships in such major institutions as the Center.

While different groups obviously met different needs, a strong philanthropic commitment seemed to be an integral part of virtually all of them (even the country club). Overriding institutional significance accrued to the agency most clearly charged with philanthropic duties (in turn the Federation of Jewish Charities, Jewish Social Service Federation, Jewish Welfare Fund, and Jewish Community Federation). "Giving" probably outranked "praying" as the most essential single activity establishing firm identity credentials within the Jewish community. To the extent that continuity and familiarity are significant variables in the adjustment process, it is important that both the general membership and the leadership of the major communal institutions frequently extended across and down through families and among well-known names and faces.

The patterns of institutional adjustment which emerged over four periods of Akron's Jewish history have tended to support the con-

ceptual model which Gordon proposed as characteristic of American immigrant adjustment as a whole and Jewish adjustment in particular. Intra-Jewish community structural assimilation was gradually achieved; inter-community assimilation with Akron at the primary-group level was not--i.e., in Gordon's terms, structural pluralism prevailed. Meanwhile, cultural assimilation was evident in language adoption (English replacing first German, then Yiddish, Hungarian, etc.), commitment to American values and citizenship training, and mirror-image institutions and programming. Gordon's "ethclass" concept and Kramer and Leventman's "lodgenik-clubnik" distinctions also seem supported by the local data. Apparent indications of submerged conflicting value systems, which Liebman theorized, were also noted. So too was the importance of Israel as an overriding force in Jewish institutional life.

Finally, Akron's Jewish institutional life showed a direct link with American and Jewish history--be it the local experience of the Depression or the absorption of new Jewish immigrants. The institutional accommodations and adjustment trends of the American Jewish community were duplicated to an amazing degree in this one particular Jewish community. The names of the groups are the same as are their functions. Even when differences existed between the local and national groups--e.g., Workmen's Circle membership characteristics--their commitments and programs were surprisingly similar. Important movements and institutions did not originate here--be it the Federation, Hadassah, Farband, Jewish Community Council, Talmud Torah, etc. They were, however, adopted with considerable enthusiasm and their subsequent fate fairly closely approximated what was happening in the mainstream of the American Jewish community.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Sloan, The Jews in America, 1621-1970, p. 129.
- ²Goldstein, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile," p. 45.
- ³Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 194.
- ⁴See Chapter I above, pp. 49.
- ⁵Liebman, The Ambivalent American Jew, pp. 71, 92.
- ⁶Swichkow and Gartner, The History of the Jews of Milwaukee, p. 58; Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 66.
- ⁷Lurie, A Heritage Affirmed, p. 346.
- ⁸Swichkow and Gartner, The History of the Jews of Milwaukee, pp. 58-60.
- ⁹Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 8; Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," p. 43.
- ¹⁰Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 9.
- ¹¹Temple Israel, Minutes, 13 June 1869.
- ¹²Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," p. 43.
- ¹³Akron City Directory, 1879-80, p. 346.
- ¹⁴Young Men's Hebrew Association, "Program" (Temple Israel Archives, c. 1890).
- ¹⁵Akron Beacon Journal, 30 March 1899.
- ¹⁶Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," p. 43.
- ¹⁷Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 9; Ibid.
- ¹⁸Names associated with numerous organizations drawn from Akron City Directories of the period; Rotenberg's article, "Jews in the Making of Akron," Minutes of the Schwesterbund, passim; Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, passim; American Israelite, 28 April 1882, and the Akron Beacon Journal, 22 February 1899; 22 March 1899.

- ¹⁹ Akron Beacon Journal, 7 May 1868; 29 March 1871.
- ²⁰ Schwesterbund, Minutes, 6 January 1905; 7 January 1906; American Israelite, 28 April 1882, 17 December 1880.
- ²¹ American Israelite, 17 December 1880.
- ²² Akron Beacon Journal, 22 February 1899.
- ²³ Ibid., 14 July 1880.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 13 January 1883.
- ²⁵ Schwesterbund, Minutes, 14 September 1905-8 November, 1906, *passim*.
- ²⁶ Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1938, p. 50.
- ²⁷ Akron Jewish News, 3 April 1959.
- ²⁸ See Chapter I above, p. 22.
- ²⁹ Handlin, Adventure in Freedom, p. 150.
- ³⁰ Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, p. 282.
- ³¹ Olin, ed., A Centennial History of Akron, p. 392.
- ³² Wachner, "Progressive Jewish Organizations," Akron and Summit County, p. 535.
- ³³ Interview with Fran Baranoff.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid.; interview with Nina Pules, August 1972.
- ³⁶ Interview with Fran Baranoff; Malvyn Wachner, "Progressive Jewish Organizations," p. 535.
- ³⁷ Interview with Fran Baranoff.
- ³⁸ Interviews with Phillip Dunn; Fran Baranoff.
- ³⁹ Interview with Fran Baranoff.
- ⁴⁰ Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1935, p. 2; Akron Jewish News, 6 October 1944; interview with Nina Pules.
- ⁴¹ Interview with Nina Pules; Mrs. Max Rogovy tape.

- ⁴² Akron Jewish News, 6 October 1944.
- ⁴³ Mrs. Max Rogovy tape.
- ⁴⁴ Hartstein, "History of Ahavas Zedek Congregation."
- ⁴⁵ Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1943, p. 55.
- ⁴⁶ Anshe Sfard Congregation, Dedication Journal.
- ⁴⁷ Conversation with former Board member, Mr. Kodish, 25 September 1972.
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CHAPTER V

SOCIAL CHOICES

The previous two chapters have discussed the religious and institutional adjustments of the Akron Jewish community. This chapter will look at their social decisions. Choices had to be made about residential locations, marriage partners, child rearing practices, and care of older family members. So too did choices regarding the nature of family bonds, friendships, social activities, and obligations. For American Jewry as a whole such social choices have been described as variable depending upon the size and location of the community and the immigrant generation involved. While some loosening of exclusive in-group social bonding occurred over time, the national American-Jewish experience continued to reflect trends of residential proximity, intra-marriage, strong family ties, high friendship and association rates, and extensive in-group social responsibility.¹ To the extent that Akron's Jews can be shown to replicate these social trends over the four historical periods of this study, they are within the mainstream of American Jewish life.

The social choices of particular immigrant communities are perhaps the most critical testing ground of assimilation theories. Gordon claims that assimilation at the primary social-relationship level did not occur (although within the Jewish group itself assimilation of its various ethnic sub-groups did). If his paradigm of Jewish assimilation

is correct for Akron, there should be "no substantial" evidence of marital assimilation, family life will be ethnically enclosed, and there will be no large scale entrance into the cliques or primary groups of the greater community.² A strong sense of peoplehood separate from the host society should be evident. On the other hand, within the Jewish community itself there should be evidence of intra-marriage and increased social mixing of Jews of varying backgrounds. Furthermore, if Gordon is accurate in his contention that while structural assimilation did not occur, behavioral assimilation did take place, in-group social customs might be expected to reflect the wider social scene. Other findings, such as those of Kramer and Leventman regarding generational distinctions in residential decisions (from "ghetto" to "gilded ghetto" to suburbia) can also be tested against the realities of Akron Jewish community life.

Early Social Choices, 1865-1885

It will be recalled that Akron's Jewish settlement occurred as part of the "old" mid-nineteenth century German (Jewish) migration to America. A critical social choice of that group was geographical dispersion and an absence of massive concentration in the largest urban centers. There was relatively little development of "ghetto" neighborhoods in either towns or cities (when it did occur, separation occurred as soon as living standards improved).³ In the area of family life strong bonds were maintained as illustrated by the "pulling after" of relatives from the old country. Marriages were generally contracted within the in-group and divorce was rare. (As indicated previously, intermarriage rates were very low in the first generation, increasing

somewhat subsequently.)

There is some evidence of a declining level of active Jewish affiliation. Thus, in a community such as Sioux City, Iowa, the German Jews have been described as virtually merging with the local Unitarians.⁴ However, substantial evidence remains of extensive internal communal efforts and sustained in-group primary relationships. Indeed, Glazer claims an increasing shift from close identification and social intermingling with German gentiles to a more self-segregating identification by the 1880s.⁵ (In Milwaukee, a community which attracted both Jewish and non-Jewish German immigrants, the Jewish community has been described as looking to the gentile world for some measure of approval but essentially defining its "status walls" almost totally within its own group.)⁶ While the East European influx provoked ambivalent social feelings, extensive German-Jewish philanthropical activities leave no doubt as to a strongly felt social obligation to newly arriving fellow-Jews.

Locally, the residential patterns of Akron's early Jewish settlers seem to parallel the findings regarding German-Jewish settlement as a whole. Thus, Bloom's study claims it unlikely that the community had any "area of first settlement."⁷ The exact date when the first Jews established residence in Akron is not clear. It will be recalled that Samuel Lane's early history of Akron mentioned Jewish merchants in the city by the mid-1840s. While Koch and Levi's clothing store dates its founding in Akron to 1848, founder Cauffman Koch was still identified as a resident of Cleveland in 1859. His partner, Jacob Levi, however, appears in the 1850 Akron census, the only known early Jewish merchant

so listed.⁸ The census describes Levi as twenty-four years old, occupation tailor, a native of Germany and currently a resident of the Empire Hotel. By 1859, the earliest Akron City Directory lists the residences of two well-known Jewish merchants at fairly distant points: Herman Moss to the north on Main Street (north of Tallmadge); Jacob Koch, considerably to the south on South Howard between Market and Mill. Jacob Goldsmith, a clerk at Koch and Levi's (probably Jewish) boarded at the Empire about mid-way between them. A decade later, Moss had moved further east to 107 North Broadway while Jacob Koch now boarded at the Empire. Meanwhile, across town to the south, the Leopold family lived on Middlebury (later Buchtel) near Main while Joseph Whitelaw's residence was listed as above his store on Howard Street, then the central downtown commercial street.⁹

Throughout the seventies the early Jewish settlers lived at various points in the city. These ranged from Prospect in the northeast to Pearl and Exchange in the southeast; from Maple and Market in the northwest to Bowery and Chestnut in the southwest. Examples of diffuse residential settlement among the early German-Jewish settlers continued in the later decades of the century. The Ferbsteins moved to a more northern and western location at 115 South Maple. Rabbi Philo lived on the eastern end of town at 425 Perkins. Considerably north was the residence of David Tuholske on Cuyahoga.

While the above confirms the assertion that Akron's first Jewish settlers established no immediate or clearly circumscribed residential ghetto, there are, nevertheless, examples of residential clustering. In the early through mid-seventies, local City Directories indicate that

the Whitelaw's store-living arrangement was not unique. Marienthal, Cohen, Ettinger, Ferbstein, Frank, Hirsh, S. Joseph, I. Levi, Koch, Neuwahl--all worked and, at least for a short while, lived on Howard Street. As their stores were all located in the 100 block north or south, these settlers obviously experienced considerable physical proximity. This living-working arrangement did not last long, however. By the mid to late seventies, most of the above had established residences apart from their stores.

There were other points of residential contact. In 1868 the Empire Hotel provided lodgings to J. Levi, J. Koch, and a J. Kohen. Within five years, I. Levi, I. Cohen, and B. Desenberg boarded there. The one hundred block of north High Street attracted several early Jewish settlers. Herman Hahn and Moses Joseph lived at 108 and 112 respectively in 1868. Three years later Moses had relocated at 113 with Samuel and Simon Joseph also listed as residents at that address. (The Michael Josephs lived in the 100 block of South High Street.) By 1873 Louis Loeb and B. A. Cohen were lodging at 102; shortly thereafter I. H. Joseph resided at 111 while J. Leopold lived first at 124, then 163. The Moss family lived a block away at 107, later 116, North Broadway. Another example of clustering occurred on Middlebury. In 1868 N. L. Holstein lived at 104 while the David Leopolds lived next door at 102, a residence they maintained for some forty years.

The Leopolds' residential stability seems to have been an exception. The early Jewish settlers tended to relocate frequently even if this just meant moving a few doors down the street. Moving away from addresses of apparent concentration did not signal a desire to escape

Jewish neighbors. For example, by 1871 Herman Hahn had relocated from North High Street further west and north to 211 North Main. The new address was just a few doors from S. Hopfman on one side (205) and B. Desenberg and Louis Loeb (217) on the other. A similar moving pattern characterized B. Desenberg: from 217 N. Main to the Empire in 1873 (I. Cohen there) to 151 S. Summit by 1879, at which address he was just a few doors from the Whitelaws at 143 and S. Joseph at 147 (who in turn had moved from his Howard Street store in 1871 to North High in 1875 and on to Summit by 1879).

A final residential pattern deserving comment was the boarding arrangements among the early Jewish settlers. Thus, the "clustering" on Middlebury also included Nathan Hollstein, the Association's religious leader, and Joseph Leopold, both of whom boarded with the Leopolds during this period. S. Hyman boarded with Herman Hahn on Main Street in 1871. That same year Louis Loeb was living with the S. Josephs at 113 N. High. By 1879 he had moved on to Jacob Koch's residence at 605 E. Market. This particular address was especially significant because it was part of the most fashionable Akron residential section around the mid-seventies.¹⁰ Jews do not seem to have lived on such prestigious streets as Fir Hill, College, Forge, and Union at this time although the Sichermans, Freemans, and Rabbi Philo had Union, East Market, and Forge Street addresses before the turn of the century.

Much as was the case with residential decisions, the critical familial decisions made in Akron paralleled those on the national Jewish scene. As cited in an earlier chapter, prominent early Akron Hebrew Association members such as Jacob Koch, David Leopold, and Herman

Ferbstein are known to have come to the area because they already had relatives here. Herman Ferbstein in turn brought over his two brothers-in-law. Charter member Joseph Whitelaw brought over his cousin, Jacob P. Whitelaw, who in turn attracted his brother and other relatives.¹¹ While the precise nature of the relationship is not clear there were three mature Josephs among the first officers of the Akron Hebrew Association: Moses, secretary; Michael, treasurer; and Simon, trustee. The early minutes indicate that a fourth Joseph, Isaac, also assumed an active role in the new association.

There is every reason to believe that in-group marriages were the rule during this early period. Even social dating was monitored. A local feature story submitted to the American Israelite included social-gossip reporting about three visiting young Jewish ladies from Cleveland and Youngstown whose arrival signaled a round of social entertainment and confirmed a more than casual connection with three local young Jewish men.¹² Another visitor to a local Jewish family became the bride of Akron's religious leader, N. Hollstein.

The search for a Jewish mate could extend far beyond city limits. Herman Ferbstein returned to Hungary for a bride. Somewhat closer, the daughters of the Cohen, Myers, Rosenthal, and Moss families found marriage partners in Minerva, Chicago, Cleveland, and Johnstown, Pennsylvania.¹³ While social approval extended to spouses drawn from the Jewish community in the largest sense, local social choices were far from uncommon. In 1874, George Marienthal (charter member) married Ida Joseph (daughter of another charter member). Eight years later another set of prominent Akron Jewish names were linked when Louis Loeb,

then a junior partner in J. Koch & Co., married Alice Moss, daughter of prominent merchant, Herman Moss. Other marriage bonds among the "German-Jewish" settlers were established between Whitelaws and Greenbergers, Whitelaws and Berks, Hermans and Fuersts, Hopfmans and Blochs, Leopolds and Hollanders.¹⁴ As to the stability of such marriages during this period, it is perhaps instructive that in 1888, Rabbi Rabino included the following comment in a public letter challenging a local clergyman's remarks about Jews: "I would finally call (his) attention . . . the Jews have less divorces in proportion to their numbers than any other confession."¹⁵

A few scattered examples provide provocative insights into the marital decisions of the descendants of these early settlers. Inter-marriage could occur in the next generation. For example, one of Herman Ferbstein's sons did so but, nevertheless, retained a very active role in the Jewish community. Similarly, Abram Polsky's son, Bert, married outside the faith but remained a very important figure in local Jewish affairs. His children, however, strayed so far from their father's communal identifications that they would not allow his obituary to include references to his Jewish organizational activities. The persistence of in-group marriage commitments can be traced for several generations in the Moss family. Using the married names of female offspring as clues, a continuing Jewish identification is evident over a century (e.g., Loeb, Goldsmith, Morris, and Hirsch in the second generation; Wolen, Shapiro, Rabb, and Abt in the third; Levine in the fourth).¹⁶ Descendants of both charter member Joseph Whitelaw and his cousin Jacob P. Whitelaw stayed in the community, married Jews, and

remained active in Jewish community life through the period of this study. So did descendants of Moses Fuerst.

Much that is known about the child-rearing practices of these early settlers relates to the preservation and transmission of the parental cultural-religious values and has been discussed in the section on religious education in an earlier chapter. The importance assigned to such learning is clear in the daily schedule initially allotted to it, the strictness of school rules, and a rigorous course of study. The *Association found such education sufficiently important to totally subsidize the child of an indigent family until such time as the father could afford to pay schooling costs.*¹⁷ Daughters received the same instructional benefits as sons and participated in the culminating "graduation" experience known as confirmation. Such Jewish education, however, was supplementary to a regular public school education. That higher education was valued was suggested in an earlier section discussing the upward mobility of the early settlers. (For a few, such education would reach even to Harvard and Wellesley and some half a dozen children became lawyers.)

Beyond the family, primary social relationships include the individual's intimate friends and his/her social circle. Akron's Jews typically cultivated such social relations within their own group (their relationships with others such as German gentiles will be examined in a later chapter). The various Jewish lodges, clubs, and sisterhoods described earlier guaranteed that such social contacts would occur. An interesting appendix to the Temple minutes (included after material relating to the 1870s) suggests that social concerns at times seemed

paramount to religious needs in justifying even that institution's reason for being. The document, basically a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws, contains a different "version" of the original preamble: "On the second day of April, 1865, the Israelites of the city for the purpose of organizing an association whose aim should be to establish Harmony among the Israelites of this city and vicinity"18 It will be recalled that the original version stressed a different priority, namely "to organize a Society for the Propagation of the ancient and revered doctrines"19

The question of harmony among the early settlers is complex. On the personal friendship level, there is evidence that it was substantial. For example, all the bridesmaids at the wedding of Dora Cohen were Jewish. Similarly, Louis Loeb and Alice Moss were the main attendants at the Marienthal-Joseph wedding while George Hirsch and Lou Desenberg served as ushers.²⁰ Ruth Leopold remembers the close family relations between her own and another early Jewish family which produced "Aunt Harriet" ties. Extending that closeness to the community as a whole the daughter of David Leopold recalled that Germans and those from Austria-Hungary "got along very well."²¹ She recalled no significant conflicts within the Association and noted, "Everybody was everybody's friend in those days."²² An American Israelite story in 1887 painted a similar picture when it boasted that, "There never existed more or better harmony among our Jewish brethren and sisters than at present. Each week most of them meet at someone's house and enjoy themselves."²³ Enjoyment apparently included such activities as card playing, for specific mention is made of a card game called "31" which

was "innocent and amusing" and enjoyed by the older ladies while "Hearts" was preferred by the younger generation.

If another American Israelite story is any indication, then the earliest Russian-Jewish arrivals were seen reasonably positively although patronizingly. In 1882 this journal included an Akron story describing a Russian family of ten which had arrived from New York and was doing nicely, with the boys ("all of them splendid fellows") working diligently and the little girls attending public schools. The children were described as having quickly gained facility with English songs, "flavored with a Russian accent."²⁴ Still another Russian family which had come directly to Akron because their relatives were already here was similarly described as "industrious and respectable."²⁵

Yet even in this fairly homogeneous settlement period there are indications that communal harmony may have been more tenuous than the above suggests. The religious "push and pull" described in an earlier chapter probably had socially divisive effects. An 1871 motion to censure the Association's Board of Trustees for neglect of their duties suggests less than complete social harmony.²⁶ At the very least, feelings of ethnic differentiation prompted the organization by Austro-Hungarian women of the Society of Francis Joseph. Less in the realm of speculation are accounts of direct confrontation involving Jews which made the papers: a court case involving Desenberg vs. Marienthal (July 1880) and a physical assault incident involving L. Schloss and O. Jacobs (February 1889).²⁷

Feelings of social obligation and acts of social assistance also serve to define the parameters of a primary group. Even in its

earliest days, the Akron Jewish community offered help to less fortunate brethren in the immediate area as well as to those far away. In its founding year, the Akron Hebrew Association minutes record extensive direct assistance to fellow member Louis Cohen who had experienced considerable personal loss from fire. That same year, the Association donated twenty-five dollars to the Jewish congregation in St. Joseph, Missouri, for the rebuilding of their synagogue.²⁸ (As this donation was in response to a direct request for aid, it suggests that in-group connections existed between western Jewish communities.) Five years later, fifty dollars was allocated for Jewish victims of the Chicago fire and an additional two hundred dollars raised for this cause through subscriptions.²⁹ Funds were also raised for such Jewish institutions as the Jewish Asylum in Cleveland. The 1882 minutes record that S. B. Hopfman accepted a guardianship role for the new child of a poor family already in the charge of the Association. Others who assumed helping roles vis-a-vis indigent children (most likely new immigrants) were B. Desenberg, G. Marienthal, N. Holstein, D. Tuholkske, and H. W. Moss.³⁰ Responding to a wider, nationally based appeal for the new immigrants, the Akron Jewish community was reported as virtually unanimous in its support of the Hebrew Union Agricultural Society in 1883.³¹

Social Choices in the Period of Influx (1885-1929)

It was the recipients of this aid, the East European immigrants, whose social adjustment patterns would rapidly become the norm of the local and national Jewish experience. During this critical influx period, the new immigrants both duplicated and deviated from their

Jewish predecessors' social choices. A significant contrast already mentioned was the narrower range of national geographic distribution. The new immigrants settled primarily in the major cities and within them in readily identifiable "ghetto" areas. (By the twenties, the move up to second settlement areas was already well underway.)³² The "World of our Fathers" which Howe describes pinpoints the archetypical experience even more precisely: life on New York's Lower East Side. Another distinctive feature of this massive new migration was its participants' essential separateness from fellow East European gentile immigrants. Although officially labeled solely by country of origin, the new arrivals were clearly identified as Jews, to themselves and to others. The great number of newcomers and their socio-cultural differences (from the German Jews and among their own ethnic sub-groupings) produced unprecedented internal turmoil within the Jewish community.³³ Yet even during this first interaction period, there were signs of a coming together within the Yiddish speaking community and the stretching of hands across the German-Yiddish divide. This process was undoubtedly facilitated by the common social elements of the new and old Jewish migration experience: strong family attachments, support of endogamous marriage, cultivation of in-group associations, and commitment to in-group social obligations.

The social choices of Akron's Jews during this period probably had more far-reaching consequences for the future of the local Jewish community than any previously made. Especially noteworthy were the decisions made about residential locations. By 1910 the trend was evident, by 1920 the pattern complete: Jews would live primarily on the

west side of town--the West Market Street area for the more prosperous, "establishment" and/or "Germans," and the Wooster Avenue area or Balch Street pocket for the newer and Yiddish-speaking immigrants.

According to the first Federation director, by 1910 "migration of residents (Jewish) from various sections of the city to West Hill was assured fact."³⁴ This move to West Hill by many of the old guard settlers was an especially interesting phenomenon. On one level it merely confirmed the increasing wealth of these Jewish citizens who could now afford to move into the newer and more prosperous end of town. However, the extent of the relocation and its drawing power from virtually all parts of the city simultaneously suggests the presence of strongly felt in-group needs. (There is no evidence of any external pressures influencing either the move out of or into any residential location.)

Several examples of residential choices illustrate the overall move.³⁵ At the turn of the century, despite instances of residential clustering, prominent Jewish settlers lived widely dispersed throughout the city. The Leopolds remained at their long established residence in the central area (Buchtel, formerly Middlebury) while David Tuholske was still on Cuyahoga Street to the north. J. P. Whitelaw lived on Jackson Street (south) near the Goodrich plant. The Greenwoods lived further to the east on Adolph. (A popular "cluster" area, the 100 block, included J. H. Greenwood, B. Greenwood, I. J. Frank, Jacob Koch, and Louis Loeb. Very nearby lived M. G. Greenwood, S. Freeman, S. Wachner, S. Goldsmith, and Rabbi Philo.) Meanwhile, some Jews had already acquired West Market and near-west addresses. In 1890, Henry

Kraus was located at 550 West Market with Simon Katz next door at 552 and Ike Reder down the block at 595. There were Jews on near-west streets like Valley (Winer), Maple (Holdstein), and Walnut (H. Schwartz and M. Price).

Between 1901 and 1905, the Berks, Freemans, and Ferbsteins, each representing a different section of the city, relocated on West Hill. The next half a dozen years produced similar moves by the Greenbergers, Leopolds, Philos, Sichermans, Beins, Whitelaws, Tuholskes, the Hirsch brothers and the Greenwood brothers. By 1915 the Fuersts, Goldsmiths, and Loeb had followed suit. The 1920 City Directory listed the following Jewish residents in the 500, 700, and 900 blocks of West Market:

507 Kramer	789 Freeman and Kraus
530 Krohngold	792 Worms
540 Rosenman	919 Kazan
714 Berk	920 Vineberg
783 Whitelaw and Klausner	968 Freeman
788 Jacobs	

During these years one could also find Jews fairly well represented on nearby West Hill streets such as Conger (L. Freiberg, S. J. Havre, I. Birnbaum, L. Loeb, and E. Wiener). Similarly, Beck Street would house the Neumans, Wahans, Weinstein, Beins, Federmans, and M. G. and B. Greenwoods.

It would be inaccurate to conclude that all the major Jewish establishment figures moved west during this period. Some of the old names such as Joseph(s), Desenberg, Marienthal, Hollander, and Holdstein would no longer be in Arkon by the time the shift was completed. Other prominent names such as Dauby, Freiberg, and Federman were just

arriving on the scene and began their residential lives on the west side. Some, like the Wachners, remained on the east side. However, by the late 1920s all of Temple Israel's officers and trustees (Louis Loeb, J. H. Vineberg, Henry Fuerst, H. Polsky, I. Birnbaum, S. H. Havre, L. D. Freiberg, Henry Schwartz, M. M. Saslaw, M. Weil) lived on West Hill.³⁶

It will be recalled that the East European Jewish influx became evident in Akron during the 1880s and 1890s. It is difficult to pinpoint the earliest addresses of these immigrants but no single "Lower East Side" is immediately apparent. The religious prohibition against Sabbath travel suggests that worshippers at the second Akron Hebrew congregation (listed as meeting in the Pflueger building in the 1885 City Directory) lived within walking distance of that south central address. That there were Jews in that general vicinity between 1885 and 1895 is basically confirmed by the City Directories of those years. B. Hershkowitz (variously spelled as Hershkuwitz and Hirschkowitz), an early president of the *Orthodox Sons of Peace*, lived on Center Street. So did Alex Cohen. Harry Sarobensky was on nearby Huron, Samuel Luntz on Water, Jacob Greenfield on St. Clair, David Arenson on W. Exchange. Interestingly, early "establishment" Jewish leaders like David and Herman Ferbstein, George Marienthal, and A. Polsky also all lived in the same block of Center Street at some point between 1885 and 1895. That new immigrant Jews could also be found considerably further east is suggested by the early 1890s meeting room of the Sons of Peace in the 200 block of East Market. Newspaper references to Russian Jews, such as Louis Kopesky and Martin Mosky, also give East Akron addresses

in 1894.³⁷ By way of contrast, the paper only three years earlier had mentioned the South Akron housing prepared for six new Russian immigrant arrivals (Kotlarsky, Mariashen, Ravensky, Rosenfield, Brantes, and Rovkin--probably Rivkin).³⁸

Around this time the Wooster Avenue area in southwest Akron was just beginning to be developed. Modeled on some of the displays at the Columbia Exposition of 1893, the houses were all painted white as an anticipated selling feature.³⁹ Because the housing was relatively inexpensive and within walking distance of rubber plants, the area proved attractive to middle and lower-middle income buyers. While the area gradually became identified as "Jewish" in character (most prominently in the twenties and thirties), the majority of its inhabitants remained a polyglot of workers unidentified with any particular ethnic enclave.⁴⁰ Those streets which were destined to be the heart of the Wooster Avenue Jewish neighborhood (e.g., Rhodes, formerly known as Wolf, and Edgewood, originally Baer), only gradually increased their Jewish populations. Thus, the Rhodes Avenue of 1889-90 included only two Jewish residents, Sigmund Rosenblum at 117 and Bernard Wise at 106. Born at the Wolf Street address in 1892, Meyer Wise recalled that the neighborhood during his growing up years became heavily Russian-Jewish (he himself was of Hungarian-Jewish descent).⁴¹ Supporting his recollections are the increasing number of Jewish names which soon appeared in City Directory listings on Rhodes and Edgewood and such adjacent streets as Euclid, Moon, Raymond, Bell, etc. In 1895 the 100 block of Edgewood (Baer) included such identified Jews as Kotlarsky (moved from Grant Street) and Wilkofsky and such likely Jewish

names as Ackerman and Klein. The 200 block of Rhodes (Wolf) now listed such family names as Schwartz, Rosenfelt, Rivkin, Block, Rosenblum, and Dossman.

Between 1905 and 1910 Jewish residential clustering in this area became unmistakable. The 600 and 700 blocks of Edgewood now included the following names: Mirman (three separate listings), Green, Cohen, Messner, Klein, Morrison. Rhodes duplicated this pattern between the 600 block and 800 block (Rivkin, Ackerman, Sarvinsky, Holub, Mirman--two separate listings--Huber, Fisher, Rosenblum, etc.). By 1910, the 800 block of Rhodes alone included

816 Holub
 846 Meltzer
 849 Miltchman
 850 Morris
 852 Mirman
 857 Sarbinsky and Kodish
 889 Miltchman

Not only were Jews next door neighbors; many of them shared the same address. Thus, in 1910, S. Saltzman, P. Abramson, B. Perl, S. Wolock, and J. Levinson all resided at 385 Euclid.

Examples of residential proximity in the Wooster Avenue neighborhood continued to multiply in the decade between 1910 and 1920, and there were increasing numbers of Jewish institutions housed in the area as well (Congregational Anshe Sfard on Raymond and Euclid identified itself as "in the very heart of the Jewish area"; the Talmud Torah on Wabash and Euclid was described by the Federation as drawing the majority of its students from the immediate vicinity; the New Hebrew Congregation was located at 706 Edgewood; shelter facilities were located at various times on Raymond, Rhodes, and Warner Street).⁴² Federation records from

1914 on repeatedly reveal the addresses of those receiving aid as being on these streets. By 1920 a street such as Euclid Court could make a strong case for the existence of "ghetto" streets in the city. Of the almost two dozen names listed for this one block long street, it seems highly likely that a large majority, if not virtually all of them, were Jewish. Consider the west side of the street:

674	Epstein	684	Kuhn	694	Munitz
676	Leiderman	686	Smalowitz	696	Wansky
678	Dvoskin	688	Orlinsky		
680	Mirman	690	Bell		
682	Vacant	692	Pollock		

Such concentration, however, was atypical and confined to just a very few blocks. A fifty-fifty mixture was considered very "comfortable."⁴³ Even such figures are misleading, however, given the small proportion of Jewish residents in the city. If elementary schools are used as a convenient definition of what constitutes a city neighborhood, a more accurate picture emerges of the extent of Jewish numerical influence. In the 1930s, for example, Rankin, Schumacher, Portage Path, and Krause were the schools with the highest concentration of Jewish students. In any of them, having five students in a class (of around thirty) was considered a substantial number.⁴⁴ Thus, the Jewish community never comprised even one quarter of any school neighborhood area.

Despite such paucity in numbers, the Jewish cultural influence was widely recognized. The twenties and the thirties were the hey-day of the Wooster area. Late in the week the Jewish shoppers filled Wooster Avenue doing their Sabbath shopping at a Jewish grocery store or at Morris Munitz's Kosher Meat Market. Chickens were killed outdoors and sometimes could be seen running away headless.⁴⁵ A nearby

mikvah (ritual bath) and Turkish bath added additional ethnic flavor. Indeed, walking along Edgewood Avenue was remembered by some as being in "Little Jerusalem."⁴⁶

Much as in the first settlement period, there were those who lived and worked at the same address. Downtown stores which performed double duty in this way included those of B. Shechter, S. Schwartz, I. Sokol, H. Gordon, S. Cohn, M. Borovitz. One "store dweller" recalled such a store on Main Street which was leased for thirty-five dollars a month.⁴⁷ The upstairs was in turn rented out for twelve dollars. The downstairs front housed the family's jewelry and loan store while the rear served as living quarters. Grocery stores also frequently housed their owners. In this category were the stores of Morris Zellinger, Max Roseman, Simon Katz, Julius Portman, Samuel Kreiselman, and Simon Bear (before he entered the furniture business). Such early residential dwellings often left much to be desired. A Jewish community leader remembered arriving in Akron in 1912 from Urbana, Illinois, and going to his sister Annie's. She and her husband, Morris Sarbinsky, were then operating a small store at 428 Wooster. "The residence, if it can be called that, was in the rear of the so-called store."⁴⁸ Another repeated residential pattern was frequent relocation. Often the move was within the same neighborhood (e.g., Wooster to Euclid to Raymond or Rhodes to Edgewood to Euclid) but it might also reflect a jump up to the "established" Jewish West Hill area (e.g., I. Sokol from his downtown store to 21 Casterton or Simon Bear from his store on W. Exchange to 188 Highland or one of the Holubs who bought the Polsky house on Oakdale).

In addition to the Wooster Avenue and West Market Street areas, Jewish families also congregated in the Balch Street "pocket," an area somewhat north of Wooster Avenue. It was in this section that the Jewish Center was built. A relatively small number of Jews lived outside any of the above areas and recall "being the only Jew on the street."⁴⁹ Some of them eventually relocated closer to the center of Jewish life.⁵⁰ Even those maintaining a more isolated address often came into the Jewish neighborhood to visit friends, participate in group activities, obtain kosher meat, etc.⁵¹

The question remains as to whether the Akron Jewish community actually established a residential "ghetto" which in effect merely duplicated the housing patterns of New York or Cleveland on a smaller scale. Arguments denying it are the absence of a clearly defined first settlement area, the lack of Jewish majorities in any school at any time, and the fact that there are those who contend it never existed. Bloom described the neighborhood where many Jews lived as one of "infiltration rather than one of invasion."⁵² Claims on the other side stress that during this period most Jews came to live on the west side of town. (A social gossip column in the Akron Jewish News was called "West of Main.") Clearly the Wooster Avenue area was perceived by many as "Jewish" and housed the largest number of Jewish residents as well as many Jewish institutions.

The ranks of the Wooster area Jewish population swelled in major part due to the "pulling after" of relatives, an immigration pattern characteristic of the earlier German-Jewish settlement as well. Such a relative chain could involve the sudden mass relocation of large

numbers of people. Consider two cases in point. In 1920, Rose and Harry Belenky (in Akron since 1906 and making their living from a tailor shop) arranged for and paid the expenses of some seventeen of their relatives to come to this country from a single "stetl" in Russia.⁵³ A nephew, Louis Marks, was dispatched to Rumania to organize the exodus. It took nine months and by the time the new immigrants arrived the Belenkys had run up a \$17,000 debt. The benefactors were willing to provide shelter for the new arrivals and give other assistance such as jobs in the family tailor shop. In difficult times, they would discreetly slip envelopes under the door to help the newcomers make ends meet.

The Rumanian border was the scene of yet another dramatic family exodus to Akron. In this case the Nobil and Ostrov families were involved.⁵⁴ The Akron end of the chain provided the inevitably required bribe money and sent attorney Sam Sokol to Rumania to arrange the family's escape. Two hundred fifty miles away, in Kiev, Abraham Ostrov, his father, two sisters, and a brother were part of a group of twenty-eight family members who set out for the border by cart. The flight involved travel by night and hiding in peasant homes by day. There was a final waiting period in an abandoned hut on the river bank separating Russia from Rumania. The river itself was crossed in a hollowed out log which carried two at a time closer to safety. Despite the fact that they had been bribed, the Rumanian soldiers meeting the escapees still subjected them to a forced march inland. Fortunately, Ostrov's story had a Horatio Algier ending as mentioned in the next chapter describing the economic adjustment of the Russian

immigrants.

While such mass family relocations were especially dramatic, the more typical migration pattern occurred in stages. A brother would come to join a sister (or uncle or cousin) already here and then proceed to bring over one or a few more relatives.⁵⁵ Help could well extend beyond the mere bringing over of family members to Akron and might include "sharing every bite with our relatives."⁵⁶ The relatives in turn typically sought to establish their own niche in the Wooster area.

This social decision to settle in relatively close proximity was probably not unrelated to the traditional Jewish commitment to endogamy. For old and new Akron Jewish settlers alike, the emphasis on in-group matrimonial choices remained firm during this period. Rabbi Philo's 1902 report on the "spiritual" condition of Akron's oldest congregation included an account of its recent marriages: Helen Leopold and Harry Wiener; two Fuerst daughters to Messieurs Greenbaum and H. Herman.⁵⁷ While such marriages were still confined to in-group bonding of "Germans" or old-time settlers, liaisons with "newcomers" and across ethnic lines were soon established. Thus, early settler Henry Kraus, himself linked by marriage to such other "establishment" families as the Berks and Whitelaws, saw one of his daughters marry within the German cultural sub-group while another daughter married a Jew of East European origins.⁵⁸ Members of prominent German families at this stage could display both negative feelings about "the first Russian in the family" and support for the young man in question.⁵⁹ The level of awareness of ethnic distinctions between marriage partners is further illustrated by the Hungarian-Jewish bride who arrived in

Akron and was something of a local curiosity as "that girl who married a Russian Jew."⁶⁰ Such marriage patterns are critical not only as evidence of the initial distance among Jewish ethnic sub-groups, especially German and East European, but also as corroboration of Gordon's observations regarding the gradual breakdown of these barriers and the internal structural assimilation within the Jewish community.

The many organizations and clubs described in an earlier chapter directly or indirectly helped promote Jewish marriages. For example, the Junior Council, formed at the end of World War I, primarily served the social needs of young people affiliated with Temple Israel. The main committee assignments were apparently related to securing escorts for those attending Council social functions.⁶¹ Significantly, the organization is remembered primarily for the number of marriages it fostered and the group disbanded once its single population declined.⁶²

Local in-group marriages directly affected the community's leadership in this and subsequent periods. For example, Charles Schwartz, previously identified as perhaps the most active Jewish leader of the century, married Rae Nobil in 1917. The Nobils in turn were an especially active and prosperous local Jewish family. Leading names in the Yiddish-speaking community, such as Schneier and Mirman, were joined through marriage. There was an inter-connection of the Ben Marks family with Beyers, Kodishes, and Sholitons.⁶³ Such links had fairly obvious implication for the level of stability and familiarity present in Akron community social life. This stability was accentuated by the social choice of these new young couples and their children

after them to settle permanently in Akron.

The extent of intermarriage during this period is not clear but can reasonably be assumed to be very low. As mentioned earlier, prominent community leaders such as Bert Polsky and Lee Ferbstein did so while retaining their interest and influence in the Jewish community. For the new immigrant, even social inter-dating could be a grave matter. A family could become so alarmed at their daughter's inter-dating that they would leave their home in an outlying community such as Barberton and relocate in Akron. One of the problems presented to a Federation case worker by a concerned father related to his daughter who had been obedient until the previous summer when she began socializing with a group of which he disapproved. The father reported following the girl several times at night and discovered that she was keeping company with a non-Jewish boy. He was greatly agitated about this and the daughter was soon shipped off to New York to stay with relatives.⁶⁴ (Although this daughter's romance apparently faded, a son of the same family subsequently married a non-Jew--who, however, converted to Judaism.)

Concern about Jewish children was a natural sequel to concern about Jewish marriage. The major influx of Jews into Akron in the first two decades of the century produced the first known records of preoccupation with juvenile delinquency. In 1920, Maurice Krohngold, president of JSSF, reported an "undue amount" of Juvenile Court work among Jewish boys and asked that men on the Board interest themselves in court sessions on Tuesday and Friday mornings.⁶⁵ Rabbi Alexander was assigned to oversee this work. Direct contact with the courts

was apparently established and maintained for the Federation minutes of 1924 record that Misters Freiberg and Birnbaum called on Judge Spicer who promised to cooperate with their committee whenever Jewish cases were brought before him (twelve such cases were reported that year).⁶⁶

There were also moves toward internal policing of parents. In a child-care case involving the boarding-out of a family's sons, it was decided to have the father brought before a Federation committee if he failed to make regular payments toward his children's support.⁶⁷ When indicated, children were referred by the Federation to the appropriate Jewish or non-Jewish institution. Thus, records of a typical year in the twenties show ten children placed in the Jewish Orphan's Home in Cleveland, eleven referred to the Jewish Infant's Home in Columbus, two sent to the National (Jewish) Farm School in Pennsylvania, two placed in Children's Hospital in Columbus, and three in Akron's Children's Hospital.

Communal concern extended beyond contact with the courts, parental supervision, and institutional placement. Thus, the seventh annual report of the Federation included the following presidential warning:

To bring up children in thickly populated sections of our . . . community without supplying them with adequate recreation or educational facilities . . . permitting them . . . to roam the streets after school hours with no supervision of any kind . . . allow the unattached young man to find his own recreation or amusement in pool rooms of the city or in other places of low moral tone; to permit our young Jewish girls to seek amusement or entertainment in the public dance halls of our community . . . are shortcomings of ours to which our attention needs to be forcibly directed. These conditions cannot help but may do much to harm the moral character of the Jewish community of Akron. If we want to save our Jewish boys and girls from reform school and our Jewish young men and young women from following the easiest way, we must provide

them with a place where they can obtain among their own kind clean, wholesome recreation and amusement, and when desired, such educational facilities as will aid them to become better equipped to fight the battles of life.⁶⁹

The Council of Jewish Women moved to act on just such concerns. That same year it rented facilities which served as a virtual settlement house. Located first on Rhodes Avenue and later housed in the Talmud Torah building, the CJW house was run by a paid part-time worker and volunteers. It sponsored such youth activities as arts and crafts, free piano lessons for those unable to afford them, and a home economics program for girls. While this *Community House* was open to all Jews, it was only used by the Wooster Avenue youngsters.⁷⁰ (Interestingly, however, both "West Side" and "Wooster" children attended the summer overnight camp which the Council initiated in 1924.)

The CJW program was apparently insufficient to stem the tide of delinquency. Half a dozen years later another Federation annual report deplored "an appalling increase in (Jewish) juvenile delinquency" and speculated that adequate facilities might have averted such behavior disorders.⁷¹ The facility which eventually materialized in response to such concerns was of course the Center and that institution in turn was quickly credited by community leaders for keeping youths "off the streets," preventing "associations with undesirable individuals," and lessening juvenile delinquency.⁷²

Jewish social values traditionally placed great emphasis not only on the importance of the Jewish marriage and the upbringing of children but on the care of the aged. While the Federation from its earliest days supported homes for the aged in Cleveland and used these facilities

as needed, no local institution was established to meet such needs. In this period it was fairly generally accepted that "old people lived with you."⁷³ While old age undoubtedly contributed indirectly to Federation relief expenditures, the specific cases so labeled were initially few. Thus, in 1916 only one couple was listed as receiving assistance due to old age. Ten years later this figure remained unchanged with a designated expenditure of eighty dollars out of a total relief expenditure of \$11,889.⁷⁴ However, the largest single relief item was for widows (\$5,688) and this undoubtedly included large numbers of older women. That same year (1926) one couple was placed at the Montefiore home for the aged while two were placed in the Orthodox old home (both Cleveland institutions).⁷⁵

Jewish bonds were not only central to the familial structure of the Akron Jewish community but to friendship networks as well. As reported in the previous chapter, this was a boom period for organizational life and both old and new groups nurtured such social contacts. Thus, Schwesterbund offered card parties twice a month at members' homes and held regular sewing circles, picnics, and luncheons.⁷⁶ (Whether to control ostentatious display or calorie consumption, it was formally decided that only three articles could be served for lunch or the hostess would be fined fifty cents.)⁷⁷ Establishment of such parallel institutions as the Jewish country club (1921) meant that this level of sport and socializing would remain confined to the in-group. Meanwhile, the new immigrant societies provided plenty of opportunities to enjoy Saturday night pinochle games, bingo, bridge, folk singing, etc. All of these activities reflect the co-option

(behavioral assimilation in Gordon's scheme) of leisure-time activities prevalent in the greater society. Meanwhile, individual social calendars were predominantly filled with other Jews. As one community member remembered, one might have gentile friends outside, but in the privacy of one's home, it just didn't feel "comfortable."⁷⁸

While there is general agreement that Akron Jews typically selected other local Jews to be their close friends (confirming Liebman's contentions about the national scene), there is far less agreement about the level of harmony in the Jewish community as a whole. Inevitably, the arrival of the East Europeans introduced enormous ethnic and social differences. Yet social reflections about this period can be quite sanguine. An immigrant who arrived shortly after the turn of the century claimed the relationship between "old" and "new" Jews was that of "one family."⁷⁹ Another old-timer supports this view, remembering good relations among the various ethnic groups because it was "too small a community for it to be otherwise."⁸⁰ In the same vein, long-time Federation director, Nathan Pinsky, felt that Akron never experienced the intense ethnic division which developed in such cities as Cincinnati.⁸¹ There is corroborating evidence for such conclusions. It will be recalled that the Reform congregation provided tangible support for its Orthodox counterpart (Joseph Whitelaw was the first president of the Sons of Peace, Rabbi Philo preached at its dedication, leading Temple members contributed to its fundraising drives). Other more secular concerns could also produce joint efforts across ethnic lines. Thus, old and new immigrants worked together to raise money for those still victimized in Russia and shared in the development of

the Jewish Center.⁸² In addition to the old-new immigrant dichotomy, the various sub-groupings within the East European community had internal differences of their own to overcome. An interesting example of their coming together occurred in a resolution sent to President Harding regarding the immigration bill then before him. It was sent in the name of ". . . the members of (the) six Hebrew Orthodox congregations of Akron."⁸³

Despite all these indications of positive social interaction, there is still considerable basis for disputing the fundamental harmony within the community. Thus, Bloom claimed that there was an early and sharp dividing line between the Orthodox and Reform congregations which was reinforced by differences in national origins.⁸⁴ Recollections of social divisiveness, however, differ in their contentions of which groups did or did not get along, who was or was not clannish, and the extent of hostility that accompanied social separation. A Temple member's admission that the "only Jews he knew were Temple Jews" supports the claim that major social exclusiveness prevailed and yet, interestingly, this same individual paid dues to the Hungarian shul, "to get strudel there."⁸⁵ A similar stomach connection was reported by another establishment family member who described going to Wooster Avenue to buy her chicken although she "certainly knew no one there."⁸⁶ In this particular case, a clearly defined sense of social identity kept the lady involved with such older groups as the Daughters of Israel (formerly Daughters of Francis Joseph) but no additional associations were developed with the newer Hungarian immigrants. Not atypically for this family's social position, the children did not

attend the new Center.

Another Jew of Hungarian descent who was native to Akron acknowledged a "distinct religious group separation" involving the "German" group but saw no particular difficulty arising from such separation.⁸⁷ There is evidence, however, that antagonisms could arise from such ethnic differences as language. Thus, a special meeting of the Federation Board and representatives of the Balch, Bowery, and Edgewood Avenue synagogues was called in January, 1919. One of the items under heated discussion was whether the Board had or had not promised to provide a Yiddish-speaking person to sit in the office and act as interpreter for the executive secretary.⁸⁸ The lack of such assistance undoubtedly contributed to the social discomfort which in turn led to such self-help organizations as the Anshe Sfard Free Loan Society. The patronizing attitudes alluded to earlier could assume unsavory aspects such as the suggestion to a potential community worker that the first thing required was a bar of soap to clean up all the newcomers.⁸⁹ While their elevated social position gave German exclusiveness special significance, charges of clannishness were not limited to the Temple crowd. One Hungarian immigrant saw her own group in these terms. Although she noted that the new arrivals generally didn't know each other till they got here, they quickly banded together, spoke Hungarian among themselves, and formed a self-segregating congregation.⁹⁰ In this case, as in the others described so far, the basis for social separation was attributed to ethnic or denominational differences. One Russian immigrant, however, claimed that the major social dichotomy he experienced resulted from the stand-off between

the traditional Orthodox viewpoint and a secular, social-cause orientation.⁹¹

Difficulties in "getting along" were not confined to cross-cultural dealings. Thus, Temple Israel had its internal difficulties during this period. The congregation was racked by a series of resignations of prominent members such as Harry Polsky, J. H. Wiener, Dr. Sicherman, and Edward Hirsh, and the minutes of 1909 contain the expressed hope of the Board that each and every member of the congregation, "forgetting personal and social differences, will unite for the greater cause of our religion . . ."⁹² It will be recalled that in order to achieve the desired unity it became necessary by the summer of 1909 to strip the rabbi of all significant connections with that institution for the following decade.⁹³ Rabbi Cronbach's tenure during World War I aroused its own divisions among his supporters and opponents. New rabbis, however, did not guarantee congregational harmony. The 1924 minutes expressed displeasure with the low level of membership involvement in Jewish affairs which, nevertheless, was accompanied by "everlastingly finding fault with the actions of the Board and those of the Rabbi."⁹⁴ That social squabbles occurred in the women's domain as well is evident in the Schwesterbund minutes which record the concern of that group in 1912 with those it saw as speaking out of turn. "Hereafter anything transpiring in this society that is told outside" would lead to the appointment of an investigating committee which "will be appointed to find (the) guilty party who is responsible."⁹⁵

The internal affairs of individual Orthodox congregations and the *Orthodox community as a whole* were especially tumultuous during this

period. It will be recalled that this was the period of controversies over kosher meat and the "riot" associated with the Sons of Peace. Not only did the congregants fight among themselves but in 1919 their cantor, Abraham Rosenbloom, filed suit in the Court of Common Pleas on grounds of breach of contract.⁹⁶

Cantor Rosenbloom was not the only Jew to become involved with other Jews in matters of law and order. In 1893, Morris Price got a judgment against Samuel Wilkofsky. The following year the press reported "a little difficulty" between Joseph Hollander and Harry Greenberger during which the former struck the latter. Greenberger in turn had his assailant arrested for assault and battery.⁹⁷ That same year, the press reported a poignant episode involving several new Russian-Jewish immigrants.⁹⁸ Martin Mosky was described as running "hatless and coatless" from his home on Furance Street at two o'clock in the morning and summoning local police officers. He was "greatly troubled" and said that Civil War had broken out in the house where he and his wife lived along with Louis Kopesky. Kopesky was found in the cellar where a "couple of his countrymen" were keeping guard over him. He was arrested and so was Mrs. Mosky on charges of disorderly conduct. The confusion surrounding the incident was enhanced by the fact that "The people are Russins [sic] and it was hard to understand their testimony even with the aid of an interpreter." The disputants also had their babies with them and "their yells added to the confusion." The city's Poor Director identified the people as regular customers of his.

Scanning the papers for the next several years yields additional "headlines" of social incidents among Jews: Harry Greenberger assessed costs for profane language toward Mr. Whitelaw; huckster, Jacob Greenfield, escapes being swindled by two fellow-countrymen; Emmerman Bros. bring suit against Wilkofsky Bros. (the following year, the Wilkofsky Bros. brought suit against the Emmerman Bros.); Harry Gordon arrested on embezzlement charge sworn out by Wilkofsky; Jacob Freeman connected with burglaries of Grossman's and Rosenfeld's shops; A. Rosenfelt arrested at instigation of milk peddler Jacob Lovinsky (Ruvinsky?) for trouble with the accused's wife; counter-affidavit of slander filed.⁹⁹

It is obviously difficult to determine the final tilt of the scales on this question of social harmony and fellowship. It seems reasonable to conclude, however, that it was more tenuous during these years of influx than it had been in the earlier settlement period. Gaps in communal affection, however, must be considered separately from acts of social responsibility. Locally, this meant support for the major Jewish institutions which emerged during this period, particularly the Federation and the Center. Preparing for the reception of new immigrants was an often repeated community activity. In 1901, in response to the request from a New York Relief committee that Akron accept a few of the many Rumanian refugees then arriving, I. Reder and H. Wiener indicated their willingness to provide employment for two such refugees.¹⁰⁰ Later that same year, twenty-six "of the most influential Hebrews of the city" signed the constitution of the Akron Hebrew Alliance which was formed as a branch of the Jewish Alliance

of America.¹⁰¹ Committees were established for investigating cases requiring assistance, arranging temporary homes, and supplying basic necessities for refugees. The group was committed to accepting a certain number of immigrants, offering them some choices of trades, and training and helping them to become self-sustaining.

Some twenty years later when Ellis Island was swamped with immigrants, including a large number of destitute Jews, the Akron Federation president responded: "As Jews and as Americans . . . our bounden duty . . . to have regard for these co-religionists of ours and to make some preparation for thier reception."¹⁰² The type of aid he had in mind was not limited to the material assistance provided by such facilities as a local sheltering house, but included a duty to "furnish them with that instruction and education which will teach them our American ideas and ideals, so that they may quickly become acceptable American citizens of whom we may be proud."¹⁰³ Here, then, was the acceptance of social responsibility--but clearly with social strings attached.

Local obligations did not limit the Akron Jewish community's commitments to city limits. From its inception, the Federation appropriated funds for state and national institutions. Thus, in 1914, five hundred dollars was allocated to such institutions as the Hebrew Shelter and Immigrant Aid Society, National Jewish Hospital, Jewish Consumptive's Relief Society, etc.¹⁰⁴ Proportionally, however, allocations for national needs were only about half the amount reserved for local expenses. For example, in 1921, \$4,250 went to national institutions compared to \$9,905 for local relief.¹⁰⁵ The international crises

of this period also received attention. Rabbi Philo denounced the Kishinev massacre in a sermon and was active in collecting contributions for the benefit of the victims.¹⁰⁶ Two years later a meeting for all the community's Jews was held at the High Street temple to help raise additional funds. Contributions of some two hundred dollars were raised.¹⁰⁷ Following the war, emergency solicitations were again undertaken to meet the needs of Jewish war sufferers in European countries.¹⁰⁸

Any discussion of Akron Jewish social commitments is incomplete without specific mention of their involvement with Palestine. It will be recalled that the first local Zionist group was organized shortly after the Balfour declaration was signed (1917) and that two years later JSSF received the first recommendations from its Committee on Palestinian Institutions that a fixed proportion of Federation income be set aside for Palestinian charities. Furthermore, by the early twenties, Hadassah had become active in Akron. When the 1929 uprising in Palestine occurred, Akron Jewry responded with a mass protest meeting and an appeal for funds.¹⁰⁹ The following year memorial services for those killed during the uprisings were held under the joint auspices of all the Zionist groups of Akron.¹¹⁰ The first Center annual report addressed the nature of the Jewish connection to Palestine: ". . . Jewish education entwines our ideas and spiritual ideals with Palestine, and Palestine ties us to all our people wherever they may be."¹¹¹

Social Choices During Depression and War (1929-1945)

The virtual end of mass Jewish immigration to this country by 1929 meant that the critical social choices of this period were in-

creasingly in the hands of a second generation community. (An important exception, of course, was the relatively small influx of German-Jewish refugees during the 1930s.) According to Kramer and Leventman, this meant that the social tensions associated with mere survival essentially gave way to those which accompanied strident upward mobility.¹¹² Such mobility often led to head-on competition with other social groups. As this occurred in a historical period not known for its tolerance, there was little primary social acceptance by the greater society. Thus, national Jewish social adjustment reflected a high value and familiarity with things perceived to be "American" (acculturation) typically expressed within the social confines of an ethnic enclave (structural pluralism). For the second generation this enclave tended to be a "gilded ghetto" where money was the major source of status.¹¹³ Vis-a-vis the greater society, life was characterized by marginality and pressures for improvement of social position. The practical social implications of such an adjustment pattern were continued selection of homes, friends, spouses, organizational affiliations, and philanthropic activities within the Jewish nexus.

For the most part, Akron Jews tended to mirror the national experience. In the area of residential choice, however, there were both similarities and differences. Prior to World War II, the Wooster Avenue neighborhood remained the central Jewish area but the Copley Road section, about a mile further west, was experiencing major development as the new--and more "gilded"--settlement area. This residential trend is reflected in the locations of vital Jewish stores. In the 1930s, the 400 block of Wooster was the sole center of such

"institutions" as M. Munitz' and H. Daly's meat markets, Roseman's delicatessen (featuring the Roseman special sandwich for thirty-five cents), and D. Polstein's kosher poultry store (whose advertisements claiming specialization in fat Thanksgiving hens and young Thanksgiving turkeys provide an interesting example of the adoption--and adaptation--of American social customs).¹¹⁴ By the mid-forties, a kosher meat market and delicatessen were already operating on Copley and another delicatessen was planning to move into the area.¹¹⁵

This gradual move is confirmed by an examination of the more than 1,200 family Rosh Hashonah (Jewish New Year) greeting ads included in the 1944 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook.¹¹⁶ While such old familiar streets as Moon, Raymond, Bell, Mallison, Rhodes, Wooster, and Euclid are still evident, the multiple Edgewood Avenue or Euclid Court listings are missing. Instead, there are frequent references to such "new" streets as Delia, Orlando, Roslyn, Mineola, etc. For example, New Year good wishes came from nineteen Jewish households along just four blocks of Delia. Jewish children now attended such schools as Grace, Crosby, and Perkins; as before they comprised well under 25 percent of the student body. Meanwhile, the most prosperous and well-known "establishment" Jewish families continued to live on West Hill, on such prestigious streets as Oakdale, Westwood, Woodland, N. Portage Path, and Diagonal Road.¹¹⁷

Surveying Akron's Jewish residential patterns in his 1939 study, Bloom identified one section of the city which "expressly and explicitly" kept Jews out [generally acknowledged as Fairlawn Heights].¹¹⁸ Except for this area, Jewish residence apparently was mainly determined

by social choice and financial resources. Bloom specifically addressed the question of how ghettoized Akron was in the late thirties. He concluded that there were some Jewish streets but he did not find ghetto developments equivalent to those of the larger cities.¹¹⁹ For example, there was no evidence of any discontinuous series of settlements such as those of Chicago which reflected major flight from a heavily concentrated first settlement area. It would seem, then, that the Jewish residential pattern in Akron was a modified version of the ethnic enclave experience.

Akron's Jewish community retained a very clear sense of the importance of Jewish marriage during this period and took deliberate institutional efforts to encourage it. Thus, the Center specifically acknowledged its role as a dating bureau and saw its function in part as providing an atmosphere which would nurture romantic contacts and marriage.¹²⁰ A rather remarkable document written by the adult activities director to the Center Board in 1945 reveals how detailed the pre-occupation with Jewish girl-boy relationships could become.

The Jewish girl must have activities so designed as to give her status and dignity. Most of us must face the fact that many Jewish boys share their dating time with the non-Jewish girl. The shortage of men makes the Jewish boy even more independent. Thus, activities must be set up in such a way that the Jewish girl is not made to appear to be patiently standing . . . waiting for a dance or a date. She must have the glamour and charm of the non-Jewish girl with whom she is competing.

The Jewish boy must be brought to a keener understanding of the psychology of women. . . . He must learn that Jewish girls are good company and that he is escaping from himself by going out exclusively with non-Jewish girls. Sometimes he uses this escape because he doesn't have the social ease to win girls who have the charm to attract him. Instead of improving himself, he goes to the field where he has a different sort of competition . . . *men and women must be educated along the lines of what marriage means to*

themselves, to the community and to their children . . . [the] approach must be a very subtle one.¹²¹

The report went on to note additional impediments to Jewish marriage. The Depression was blamed for making marriage seem too big a risk and economic realities were further distorted into excuses for "ultra-particularism."¹²² Potential dates could be rejected because they were not college graduates, lacked the proper address, or were affiliated with the wrong group. Decisions to marry across ethnic sub-groupings could still raise eyebrows (e.g., when a Jew of proud Sephardic background chose to marry a "Galicianer").¹²³ Despite such obstacles Jewish marriages occurred and the attachments made among young community members led to more intertwining of Akron families. Perelmans and Bears, Millers and Berks, Hahns and Mirmans, Arensons and Wollins, Holubs and Schulmans, Holubs and Buxbaums, Leveys and Isroffs eventually--in this or subsequent periods--were linked through marriage bonds.

The realities of Jewish married life could be harsh during this difficult social period. Federation files contain references to difficulties in supporting families, eviction, desertion, unstable parents, school drop-outs, and institutional placement. They mention such individual diagnoses as "criminal tendencies," gonorrhea, neurosis, mental breakdowns, etc. Despite such indications of social trauma within families, the Jewish divorce rate was "exceedingly low" as compared to the general divorce rate.¹²⁴ Rabbi Applebaum confirmed this finding when he recalled that Jewish divorce was virtually unheard of in the pre-war decades.¹²⁵

What was coming to be heard of, however, was intermarriage. In 1930 a free forum meeting was held on the subject which was presented as "one of the most pertinent questions with which modern Jews must contend."¹²⁶ Fourteen years later the local Bureau of Jewish Education sponsored a course on the American Jewish community which included the specific topic of the advisability of intermarriage. Bloom in effect analyzed the intermarriage situation when he used Ruppin's scale in his study (mentioned earlier in connection with the religious categorization of the community). Bloom assigned 10 percent of Akron's Jews to Class I (the most traditional group, characterized in 1929 as comprising one half of all the world's Jews and having less than 2 percent intermarriage). Forty percent were put in Class II (more liberal religious outlook, higher economic level, 2-10 percent intermarriage). Class III was seen as descriptive of 30 percent of Akron's Jews (less observant free thinkers with a 10-30 percent intermarriage rate). Finally, Bloom viewed 20 percent of the community's Jews as falling in Class IV (complete break with tradition and 33 percent rate of intermarriage).¹²⁷

In a later study of the Akron Jewish Center, Hurvitz took issue with these findings, especially the numbers assigned to Class IV-- implying a high rate of out-marriage. Citing a preliminary report of the Jewish Community Council based on a survey conducted in 1948, Hurvitz noted the still large percentage of Akron's Jews who were born in Eastern Europe (intermarriage rates would predictably be negligible here) and claimed "the number of intermarriages is so small that the figure . . . in class IV is considered a gross exaggeration."¹²⁸ Fur-

thermore, by tabulating the local subscribers of a selected list of national publications, the estimates of Classes I and II were regarded as too low whereas the estimate for Class III was too high.

Bloom's analysis went beyond fitting Akron's Jews into an existing classification scheme. He alleged that Jewish males were more likely to intermarry than Jewish females. Among women, those from the higher economic levels who were Reform Jews were more likely to marry outside the group than lower economic or Orthodox women. Furthermore, he knew of no instance where the children of mixed marriages later sought out Jewish partners for themselves. While intermarriage was more common among the wealthier Reform Jews, Bloom claimed that 5 percent of the active cases on the roles of the Jewish relief agency involved mixed marriages--despite the fact that these same families were from the most recent immigration and had strong Orthodox ties.¹²⁹ The study also went into details regarding specific instances of intermarriage. A case history was given of a young Jewish resident in a Protestant white-collar suburb of Akron. In the early 1930s, this young man married a Christian and joined the Presbyterian church in the face of parental opposition but not total rejection. Upon his wife's sudden death he experienced severe grief and his solidarity with his parents was restored. He eventually married a girl to their liking, returned to Judaism and became more observant than he had ever been, obeying the rules of kashrut, attending Sabbath services, and saying Kaddish (prayer of mourning) for his Christian wife. Bloom found this particular episode supportive of his conclusion that the Akron Jewish community provided a psychological ghetto or reservation offering a place

of retreat in times of stress.¹³⁰

Based on the fact that court officials couldn't find a single case of intermarriage resulting in divorce, Bloom also concluded these marriages were reasonably stable. This was explained in terms of the social response they elicited. Although the outside community opposed and the Jewish community condemned such marriages, opposition was largely verbal, thereby keeping the situation socially tolerable. There were, of course, social hurdles to be overcome such as the marriage ceremony itself. None of the local rabbis, apparently including the Reform rabbi, would officiate at such a service.¹³¹ Intermarriage, whether accompanied by conversion to Judaism by the non-Jewish partner or not, did not necessarily mean withdrawal from active Jewish community participation. Outstanding examples of this are evident in the Polsky, Nobil, and Ferbstein families. Intermarriage could take a toll, however, in successive generations. As indicated above, Bert Polsky was one of the best known Jews in the city in this period but his descendants in turn intermarried and became disassociated from Jewish community life.

Communal concern with Jewish marriage extended to preoccupation with the total Jewish family. An editorial in the Akron Center News in 1938 noted that the Center existed to help strengthen family ties and enrich family life. The Center was seen as "the one type of cultural, recreational and educational institution that the family can belong to as a . . . unit."¹³² This was viewed as especially significant "in these days of loose family ties. . . ." Such concern was most directly expressed in matters involving the children of the community.

Thus, there was considerable approval and communal self-congratulation when the juvenile delinquency of the previous period declined. Center president H. S. Subrin attributed incoming Akron Community Chest allocations to the fact that "They seem to know, even better than you and I, that Jewish juvenile delinquencies in this city have become a rarity indeed . . ." ¹³³ (the assumption being that the Center was responsible). The Federation reported a total of nine Jewish cases out of an overall Juvenile Court load of 1,542 in 1934. Two years later the figures given were six of 1,237, or four tenths of one percent of the juvenile cases that year. An Akron Center News editorial expressed great satisfaction that Judge Hunsicker had reported no instance of Jewish delinquency in 1940. ¹³⁴

A reversal occurred, however, and the Center's director was invited into court a few years later to attend a hearing involving three fifteen-year-olds being tried for purse snatching and burglary. The director deplored the fact that "our six year record [sic] of no Jewish delinquency had been broken." ¹³⁵ In this particular case the director personally assumed the role of custodian for the boys involved. The cause for such transgression was attributed to the war and the accompanying lack of child supervision. The director's report on the incident urged renewed proper guidance for the "citizens of tomorrow."

The war years produced concern not only with renewed local delinquency but with the meaningful integration of youth into the Jewish community. Federation leaders began discussing plans for the selection of young people to sit and meet with them. One such plan proposed rotating promising youths in apprenticeship programs with several insti-

tutions, culminating in the selection of representatives to serve on the Federation Board.¹³⁶ The Center also placed heavy emphasis on the participation of youth and young adults in program planning and consideration of social issues. By 1940 there was an intermediate council (with representatives from nine clubs whose members were twelve to sixteen) and a senior council (representing thirteen clubs, ages sixteen to twenty-one). Youth representatives also sat in on all Center Board meetings. Approximately two hundred youths attended a local conference in the early forties which had as its theme the place of Jewish youth in organized Jewish community life.¹³⁷

In an earlier chapter, reference was made to the "extension ladder" theory of Jewish family life.¹³⁸ This concept was related to the contention that Jewish parents showered their children with extraordinary advantages. There is evidence that such social patterns occurred in Akron Jewish families even during this difficult economic period. One woman recalled that although the Depression forced them to live on under ten dollars a week, there was always fifty cents for music lessons for the children.¹³⁹ Another insisted her children were always given everything.¹⁴⁰ They were the "best dressed" in school and even though the family was far from wealthy each child at the appropriate time got a new car and, "of course," went to college. This emphasis on sending the children to college was especially widespread. One senior citizen claimed that it had meant giving up all luxuries but all of his and his brother's children were sent to college.¹⁴¹ The son of the immigrant furniture store owner went to Harvard. Others took advantage of institutions closer to home. In any event, it was

generally accepted that the children should and would "have what we didn't."¹⁴² Such a commitment was a prime motivating factor in the building of the Center. As the first Center president expressed it, "We desired these things (referring to the Center's resources) for ourselves, but more especially for our children."¹⁴³

Intimate friendships during this period continued to be drawn primarily from within the Jewish community. An earlier chapter described the introduction of one community leader to local organizational life shortly after she moved to town. The result of such affiliation in terms of friendship patterns is indicated in the following recollection: "I went that Sunday (to the Center) and for all the Sundays thereafter. . . . I met a lot of girls and I was asked to join a club; and I met a lot of boys and I was asked to their club parties, and I met my husband I had a ball."¹⁴⁴ Another community member admitted to some perplexity about her own similar friendship patterns. Even though she grew up in a non-Jewish Akron neighborhood and later fairly readily accepted a non-Jewish sister-in-law, she realized that throughout her childhood and adulthood and without conscious intent on her part, her intimate friends had consistently been Jewish.¹⁴⁵ In this case, the friendships made also illustrated the increasing assimilation within the community, for this daughter of a Hungarian family established close ties with the children of Polish and Russian immigrants.

Such crossing of ethnic lines did not signal any massive social leveling within the community. Feelings on the one hand that the "old guard" ran the Jewish country club in its early days and on the other

that all the "wrong people" were gradually taking over club leadership indicated a continuing awareness of social distinctions essentially between Germans and East Europeans, even among economic peers.¹⁴⁶ The statement that "there were lots of Jews you knew but wouldn't be friendly with" suggests that categories such as "ethclass" and "lodgeniks vs. clubniks" are still appropriate to Akron's social situation during this period.¹⁴⁷

The above comment regarding selective friendship reopens the question of whether social harmony prevailed in the community. As before, there is evidence both pro and con. On the positive side one can point to the joint communal efforts to save the Center. The Akron Jewish Community Council of the late 1930s was specifically predicated on the increased stability and homogeneity of the community which made closer union possible where it had not been possible before.¹⁴⁸ Women's groups such as Temple Sisterhood, Council of Jewish Women, and Hadassah jointly sponsored activities such as a thrift shop. The Orthodox members of the community shared the services of a rabbi (his stationery was headed the United Jewish Orthodox Community). They also maintained the Vaad Hoir, a single organization representing all Jewish Orthodox groups. On the personal level there was a prevailing familiarity with the latest social gossip within the community as well as shared awareness of external Jewish crises. This communal social sensitivity, especially intense during this period, was illustrated by comments that "Everyone really knew each other then," "Akron Jews took care of their own," "If there was a divorce--everyone knew it," etc.¹⁴⁹ There was little question that community members could name all the Jewish busi-

nesses in town and identify the Jewish professionals. The war intensified the drive to unity. The Center now felt itself in a position to "unite the interests and activities of all groups and individuals towards the achievement of our common goal."¹⁵⁰ Fifty-six local Jewish groups actually shared in the activities of the Army and Navy Committee.

On the other hand, documentation of the divisiveness in the community during this period appears in Bloom's 1939 study. He attributed the "sharp cleavage" which "still survives" to theological differences plus the social characteristics of Yiddish-speaking "greenhorns," whose ghetto habits kept them "highly visible."¹⁵¹ Such perceived differences undoubtedly contributed to the scarcity of Temple members at early Center functions even though they financially supported or served on early Center Boards. As one citizen expressed it more vividly, there were those in the thirties who "would not be seen dead there."¹⁵² Corroborating this view, a woman who grew up in this period identified a distinct group known as the "Temple crowd" and claimed that her social world involved no contact with them.¹⁵³ A Center staff person charged cliques with dominating most interorganizational events. "Snobbishness was prevalent. People from various cliques were intolerant of one another Projects involving several groups were organized but usually failed"¹⁵⁴

Recognition of the problem as well as efforts to eradicate it are evident in remarks of the Center's director in the late 1930s. On one occasion he described the Center as the only place in the city where the children of various Jewish groups who hold different philosophies can mingle "at a time when they do not have strong prejudices against

each other Perhaps each will hold the same basic philosophy as his parents but perhaps he will hold them with a little less prejudice and a little more appreciation of what someone else holds to be equally true."¹⁵⁵ The following year the director spoke in terms of an analogy to men in a sinking boat arguing about how to bail it out until the boat sank:

Let us recognize that opinion of individuals and groups differ greatly But let us keep in mind our ultimate objectives and allow for the existence as well as the need of diversity of opinion. Then perhaps we will not be so impatient with people whose ideas annoy us. . . . No individual or group has a monopoly on right thinking . . . though many think they do . . . beyond the conflict of methods, we all desire the same general end . . . happy, healthful and prosperous community.¹⁵⁶

As in the preceding period, problems of getting along were not confined to interactions across denominational, ethnic, or organizational lines. Temple Israel again experienced troubled internal relationships with its rabbi. This time the rabbi's politics were not the issue but rather his personal morality. Lesser social irritants were sometimes reflected in the Temple minutes. Thus, the 1935 minutes noted that it was unfortunate that all Temple seats were not in the rear, because everyone was requesting those High Holiday seats. It was further stated for the record that the woman in charge of seat assignments "has no favorites to reward or no enemies to punish as some . . . try to believe."¹⁵⁷

Meanwhile the Orthodox community had its own internal disagreements. That these could become quite vociferous is evident in a letter from the director of the Center to the president of the Vaad Hakashruth (the organization concerned with issues regarding kosher observances in

the community). The director described ". . . how shocked I was with the disgraceful behavior of (the organization's) members."¹⁵⁸ He went on to declare that even though the members may not respect each other, they should respect the holy symbols in the room where they met. The letter expressed dismay that the young people then in the building witnessed "some spectacle . . . from their elders. The tumult inside the room attracted much attention and it was with difficulty that we were able to keep spectators and eavesdroppers away." There was additional consternation expressed over the fact that even when the meeting was ended, the arguments continued in the hallway.

The Center had its own problems of achieving cooperation with the Conservative synagogue with which it originally shared facilities. As the Center director in the early thirties noted, the presence of such a religious body should make religious programming easy, but ". . . cooperation between these groups and the Center seems impossible . . ."¹⁵⁹ Partly at issue in this case was maintaining the delicate line separating a non-synagogue from a synagogue Center. Disputes were not limited to denominational in-fighting. It will be recalled that this was the period when the IWO separated itself from the Workmen's Circle.

While disputes between individuals, organizations, and factions existed during this period as they had in earlier periods, special note should be taken of the fact that the Jewish Community Council was specifically assigned the task of resolving major internal differences and keeping any potential dirty linen out of the public arena. By the mid-forties, the Council was credited with providing the means for conciliation and arbitration of just such internal disagreements.

That dimension of primary-group life which centers around social obligations to other group members was strongly accented during this period. On the local level, immigration problems were still receiving attention. An ongoing concern was Americanization, especially in regard to citizenship. The Center, Council of Jewish Women, and B'nai B'rith were all involved in sponsoring citizenship classes for Jewish aliens during the thirties. The general community was asked to support this project: "Anyone who knows of any Jewish adult who is not a citizen will help this person by turning in his or her name to the committee" ¹⁶⁰ The campaign was apparently not totally successful because in 1940 the Center's adult education committee still expressed concern about "the large number of Jews in Akron who are not citizens and who are doing nothing about becoming citizens." ¹⁶¹ It was felt that these Jews failed to join available classes because "they were ashamed to identify themselves as non-citizens. . . ."

The new and pressing immigration concern of this period was the settlement of refugees from Hitler Germany. A Refugee Resettlement Committee operated as part of the Jewish Social Service Federation and along with the Council of Jewish Women worked to meet the needs of Akron's newest arrivals. Assistance was offered to those needing help in registering as aliens and the B'nai B'rith legal aid committee provided free legal services. That the social needs of the newcomers were not overlooked is evident in the 1938 Akron Jewish News request for information regarding any known new refugee arrivals so that cross contacts could be facilitated. It was hoped that such connections would "help make their social life in Akron more pleasant." ¹⁶² As mentioned

earlier, the paper also provided an updated account of a local German refugee, detailing her experiences with the Nazis, her move into an uncle's home (pull of relatives yet once again), her subsequent enrollment in a local business college (mobility) with a final piece on her wedding shower (social adjustment). The new arrival was described in terms not unlike those initially conferred on the earliest Russian immigrants, i.e., "Unusually adaptable, talented and charming," and she was complimented on her "fine adjustment to the American way of life."¹⁶³

The economic pressures of the Depression initially kept a high percentage of Federation funds within the community. (In 1930, \$18,235 was allocated for local relief as compared to \$8,300 leaving the community.) Indeed, in 1931, the community was unable to meet all its financial commitments to the national institutions. By 1935, however, due to federal intervention in the relief field, there was actually a reversal in the local vs. national funding balance. That year \$5,100 was made available for national groups in contrast to \$4,646 for local relief.¹⁶⁴ It will be recalled that Akron's Jewish Welfare Fund was activated in 1935. That the orientation of this foremost communal philanthropic institution clearly extended beyond local and national needs is evident in the insistence of the 1937 campaign chairman that "Pity is not enough. The alleviation of wretched conditions of the Jews in Central Europe and the wholesome reconstruction work in Palestine . . . cannot be carried through . . . by pity or sympathy. It requires money. . . ."¹⁶⁵ The need to exceed prior levels of giving was stressed. As Jerome Dauby, honorary chairman of the campaign,

declared, "Everyone must increase his contribution by at least 25 percent over last year."¹⁶⁶ The reason for giving was clearly tied to the call of duty and obligation. Thus, the Akron Jewish News editorialized, "You cannot just give a little of what you can spare . . . you must give more than you can spare" ¹⁶⁷

Raising increasingly more money for Jewish world-wide needs from a numerically stable population became the community's annual challenge. Changing budget priorities meant that international needs received the greatest attention followed by local needs with national and regional institutions in third place (e.g., for each dollar spent, sixty cents went for international causes, twenty-two cents for local needs, and twelve and a half cents for national and regional programs such as the Jewish Defense Appeal, Jewish Labor Committee, Jewish Welfare Board, Hebrew Theological College, Jewish Chautaugua Society, the non-sectarian Anti-Nazi League, and even the American Friends Service Committee). ¹⁶⁸

Responsibility went beyond giving money. In 1939, Akron played host to some three hundred lay leaders from six states for the East Central States Regional Conference of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. The president of the Federation reported that the result of such a role was to give Akron a "commanding position among the nation's leading cities. We have arrived. We are frequently referred to . . . as a splendid example of achieving community objectives."¹⁶⁹ This period also saw Akron play host to district conferences of the Jewish National Workers Alliance (Farband), and B'nai B'rith. At the same time that Akron hosted Jewish groups from outside the community, it sent its own community members to serve on the boards of

state and national organizations. In the 1920s and 1930s Akronites served as directors of the Jewish Orphan Home of Cleveland and the Jewish Infants' Home in Columbus. In the early forties, local residents were elected presidents of National Junior Hadassah and the Mid-West Jewish Welfare Board while numerous key citizens served on the national councils of Jewish welfare organizations.¹⁷⁰ The international crises of the 1930s provoked special actions on the local scene. For example, in the early thirties, a call against the Hitler uprising filled the Center to capacity. In addition to such mass meetings and massive fund raising efforts, individual groups such as the Association of Hungarian Jews organized such activities as an anti-Nazi chain letter.¹⁷¹

The special link between Akron and Palestine was strengthened during this period as the community's preoccupation with Zionist activities intensified during the thirties. There were Zionist plays, annual National Fund dinners, benefit bazaars to raise money for such special causes as the Boy Scout Fund in Palestine and duly celebrated anniversaries of the Balfour Declaration. It will be recalled that Bloom identified some dozen groups in Akron as "Zionist societies."¹⁷² The umbrella organization for these groups (e.g., Pioneer Women, Mizrachi, Farband) was the *Jewish National Fund*. Membership in Zionist organizations and fund-raising efforts increased substantially as Zionism became accepted as the "sole effective instrumentality to solve the age-old Jewish problem."¹⁷³ Potential threats to the Zionist position did not go unnoticed. As early as 1931 Rabbi Stampfer warned his congregants that there could be no compromise in the Zionist movement.¹⁷⁴

When Great Britain's White Paper imperiled Jewish interests in Palestine, the Akron Jewish Community Council urged Akron's Jews not to fail their people and to contact their representatives in Washington to urge passage of an open-door resolution. A large number of Akron Jews attended the protest meeting held at the Cleveland Jewish Center protesting the issuance of this document.¹⁷⁵

Social Choices in the Post World War II Era (1945-1975)

The American Jewish community experienced significant social changes in the post-war period. Increasingly distant from immigrant origins, a third generation community emerged which was prosperous, demographically "WASP," and increasingly suburban. Kramer and Leventman have suggested that as the social tensions of the first generation centered on survival and those of the second generation related to the push for economic success, so the third generation was preoccupied with the tensions accompanying societal status needs.¹⁷⁶ Despite its overwhelmingly native American composition (in the 80 percent range), extensive economic, educational and occupational mobility, massive residential relocation and increasing interaction with the non-Jewish community, the third generation still basically persisted in the social pattern of structural separation and maintained a recognizable Jewish social identity.¹⁷⁷ Thus, certain suburbs were more "Jewish" than others, endogamy was the norm rather than the exception, close friendship ties were typically reserved for the in-group, and primary group philanthropic obligations were met at higher levels than ever before. Such philanthropy occurred in the context of American Jewry's new posi-

tion as the leading Jewish community in the world and in response to the emerging state of Israel.

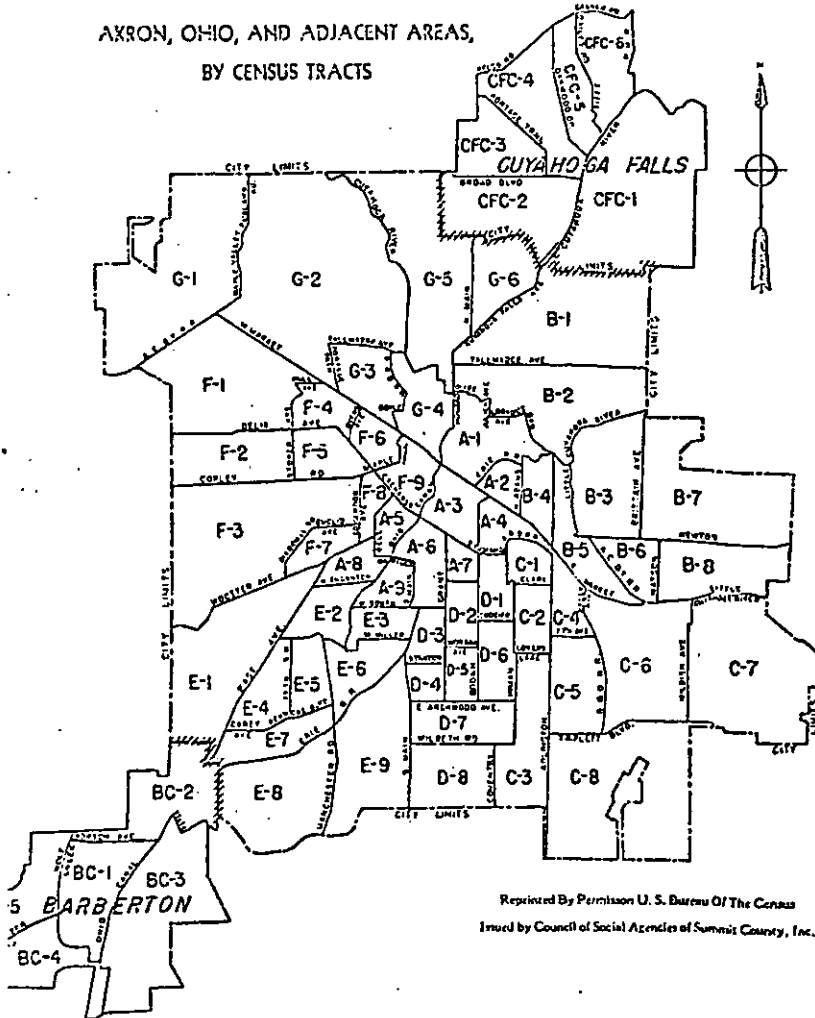
Continuing the trend of earlier periods, the Akron Jewish community essentially duplicated the overall social adjustment patterns which characterized the national experience. Residential patterns, however, once again reflected some modifications. Thus, the mass exodus outside of city limits which became so common for cities like Cleveland, Chicago, and New York did not occur here. Although moves to the suburbs did increase, some 70 percent of Akron's Jews still lived within city limits by 1975 (Cincinnati experienced a similar housing pattern).¹⁷⁸ The Akron postmark may have remained the same but individual changes of address document dramatic residential movement within the city. During the 1950s the Jewish population was plotted several times on the city's seven census tracts (A-G with numbered sub-sections from one to nine). A survey done for the Center in 1950 found that over 85 percent of the Jewish population lived in three of these tracts (F, G, and A) in a total of thirteen sub-sections.¹⁷⁹ Some 1,152 families, or 62 percent, lived in just five subsections (F-1, F-2, F-3, G-1, and G-2). An additional 18 percent lived in three other subsections (F-4, F-5, G-3). Only 7 percent were identified in the heart of the old Wooster Avenue area (F-7, F-8, F-9).¹⁸⁰ Thus, it was clear that by 1950 the Wooster Avenue area had been largely deserted and the Jewish population was now heavily clustered around Copley Road. Such institutions as the Orthodox synagogue, Anshe Sfard, punctuated their clientele's residential decisions by building a new synagogue on Copley in 1950, declaring that the "soul must follow the heart" (of the

Jewish population).¹⁸¹

The new Jewish "neighborhood" was part of the northwest section of the city, an area generally given the highest socio-economic rating and described as consisting of highly desirable areas with mostly single family dwellings. Following the war, many new houses had been built in the area between Copley and Wooster Avenue (F-3) and these became especially popular with the young adult Jewish population. Meanwhile, Fairlawn Heights, formerly off-limits to Jewish residents, now became the fashionable place for the wealthy to build (Jewish builders had procured land in this section).¹⁸² Other Jews in this well-heeled category continued to live north of Market on such streets as Portage Path, Merriman, and Delaware.

In 1955, the above residential picture was on the verge of a dramatic change. The "pull" of better housing which could now be afforded and the "push" of black communal expansion had succeeded in bringing the Copley Road area to its peak of Jewish residential concentration. That year, of 1,856 Jewish families, 1,217 or 65 percent lived in Census tract F (see accompanying map).¹⁸³ The largest number of families lived in one section, F-3 (18 percent of the total Jewish community). This was the area from Wooster north to Copley and from Edgewood west to city limits. Census tract G had the second heaviest concentration of Jews, amounting to 23 percent (including suburban Copley, Fairlawn, and Bath), divided mainly between G-1 (14 percent) and G-2 (11 percent).¹⁸⁴ Within a decade these F and G census figures would be reversed.

AXRON, OHIO, AND ADJACENT AREAS,
BY CENSUS TRACTS



Reprinted By Permission U. S. Bureau Of The Census
Issued By Council of Social Agencies of Summit County, Inc.

F-3	18.1	F-4	4.4	Barb.	1.7
F-2	11.9	G-3	3.0	F-9	1.2
F-1	11.6	F-8	3.0	A-3	0.7
F-5	11.0	Guy. F.	2.6	C-8	0.5
G-2	10.7	F-7	2.3	A-5	0.5
G-1	9.4	F-6	1.7		

By 1957, Census tract G was up to 29 percent of the Jewish population; by 1960 up to 37 percent; by 1963, almost 50 percent; and by 1965, it was over 50 percent.¹⁸⁵ F-3, the most heavily concentrated district in 1955, declined from 338 Jewish families in 1955 to 104 in 1963 or from 18 percent of the total to 5.5 percent. In the same period, G-1 went from 176 families (9 percent) to 428 (23 percent), while G-2 went from 199 families (11 percent) to 327 (17 percent). The newest area to attract Jewish residents was to the north of Market and was known as Park Heights. It ran off North Hawkins, east to Portage Path, and west to Sand Run. Not only were Jewish residents leaving Census tract F for G, they were becoming even less widely distributed throughout the city as a whole. Thus, the combined total of Jewish families in census tracts A, B, C, D, and E equalled 114 in 1955. By 1963, it totaled only 77 and this at a time when the total number of families surveyed had increased from 1,856 to 1,891.¹⁸⁶

The above relocation was probably most strongly propelled by the further expansion of the black community and the tension which accompanied it. More specifically, Jewish perceptions of changing school environments and fear of possible violence and property destruction are cited by those who moved as factors hastening Jewish residential withdrawal.¹⁸⁷ Such perceptions coincided with the opening of new Akron residential areas further north and west and with the increasing overall prosperity of the Jewish community.

Jewish residential mobility was not limited to those leaving changing neighborhoods. There was also considerable movement in unaffected areas by the more affluent and well-known community leaders.

For example, in comparing the addresses of some eighty Temple families in 1955 and 1962, about 25 percent of them had moved.¹⁸⁸ In this seven year interval, twelve of these families had moved to a single prestigious high rise address: 275 N. Portage Path. If the wealthy Jews were assimilating, they were clearly doing so together.

The distribution of Jews between census tracts F and G was not completely random. Recalling that the overall movement was from F to G, 65 percent of Temple's members were in G by 1965 and 29 percent lived in F.¹⁸⁹ For conservative Beth El, the figures were 56 percent in G, 39 percent in F. The Orthodox synagogues reversed these proportions with Anshe Sfard having 43 percent in G and 52 percent in F. The Hungarian congregation, Ahavas Zedek, in its closing years only reported 18 percent in G and a full 78 percent in F. These figures undoubtedly reflected not only denominational leanings but the relative age and economic distribution of the various congregational memberships.

The 1975 demographic study of the Akron Jewish community updated residential information on the city's Jewish population. Using postal zones for identification purposes (see accompanying map) the survey concluded that almost all Akron Jews lived in zones 13, 03, and 20 (essentially corresponding to G-1 and 2, F-3, and G-3) with a few beginning to move into zone 21.¹⁹⁰ A number of families in the seventies also began moving into suburban Bath (still part of zone 13). Differentiated more finely, 1,283 identified Jewish families out of a total of some 1,989 (64 percent) lived in zone 13; 10 percent in 03; and 10 percent in 20.¹⁹¹ Thus, concentration in tract G increased by some 14 percent over the decade.

AKRON POSTAL ZONES

AKRON ZIP CODE PREFIX IS 443

Area	Prefix	Area	Prefix
1	1000	10	1000
2	1000	11	1000
3	1000	12	1000
4	1000	13	1000
5	1000	14	1000
6	1000	15	1000
7	1000	16	1000
8	1000	17	1000
9	1000	18	1000
10	1000	19	1000
11	1000	20	1000
12	1000	21	1000

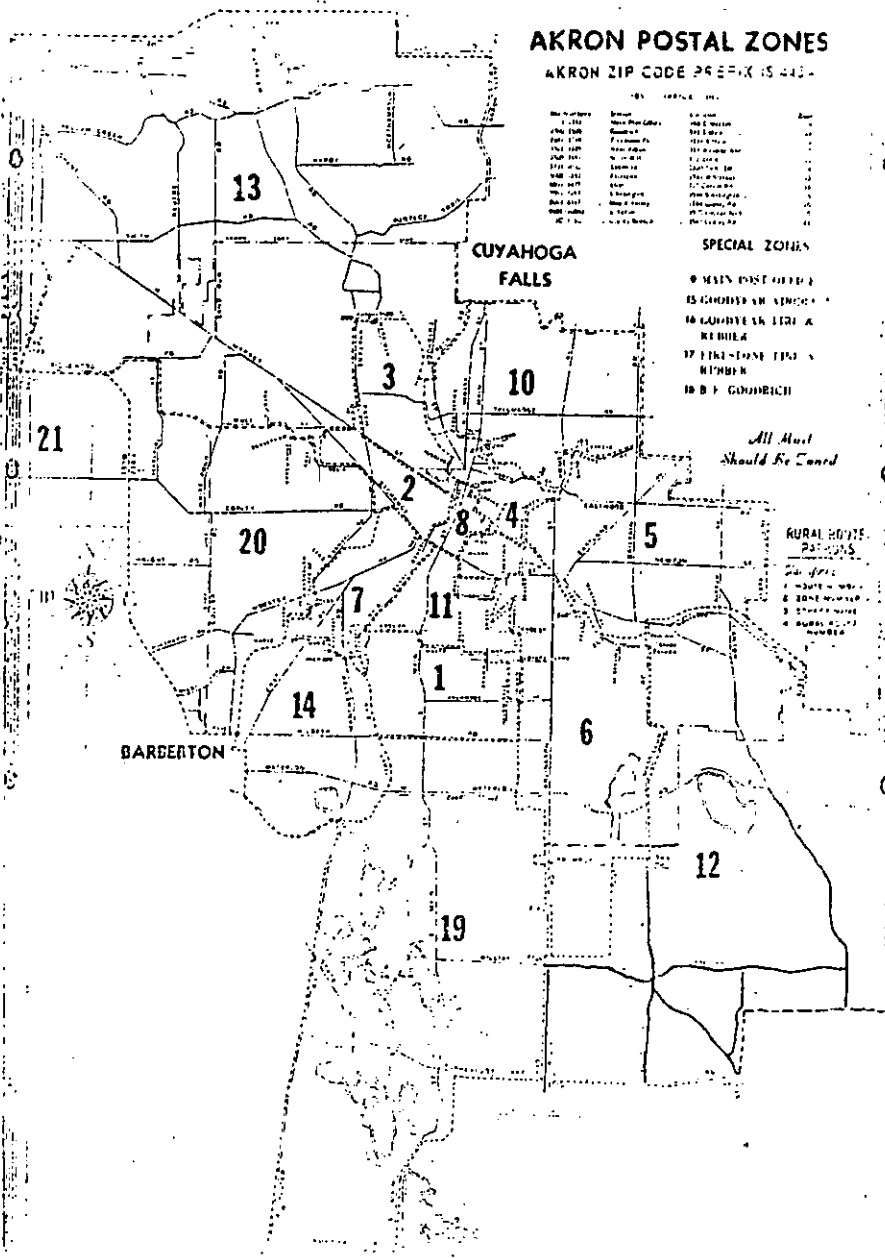
SPECIAL ZONES

- 9 MEN-POST OFFICE
- 15 GOODBYE AM SERVICE
- 16 GOODBYE AM LETTER
- 17 TIME-TO-GET-TOGETHER
- 18 D. F. GOODRICH

*All Must
Should Be Cared*

RURAL ROUTE POST OFFICES

- 1 ROUTE NO.
- 2 ZONE NUMBER
- 3 STREET NUMBER
- 4 RURAL ROUTE NUMBER



The Copley Road area had become as abandoned by the Jewish community as the Wooster Avenue area before it. Only a few staunch liberals committed to making integration work remained, along with a few senior citizens who chose to stay in their old homes or in two special housing developments.¹⁹² The Park Heights area continued to be especially attractive to Jewish homeowners with new interest developing even further westward, specifically in the area beyond Smith Road (Hills & Dales). A new complex being built near Rosemont Country Club on West Market was also attracting many middle-aged and retiring residents. Meanwhile the children of wealthy settlers in section 03 tended to make their homes in the same area which housed their parents.¹⁹³

As in the preceding decade there were demographic distinctions among the Jewish residents in the three zones referred to above. Of the demographic survey respondents, the greatest percentage in the highest economic bracket (over \$24,000) lived in zone 03.¹⁹⁴ Those in this area were predominantly Reform and had the highest level of formal education (30 percent receiving graduate education). Zone 13 had more younger residents and was second to 03 in the percentage of high incomes and high education levels (25 percent graduate education).¹⁹⁵ As suggested above, zone 20 was the most different of the three due to its older and retired residents. One third of the household heads were women and the overall level of education, employment, and income compared unfavorably to the other zones. For example, 9 percent had incomes of \$24,000 or better compared with 30 percent for all the zones taken together.¹⁹⁶ Still reflecting the old East European

dichotomy of Orthodox vs. free thinker, this area had both the greatest number of Orthodox residents and the largest number with no designated preferred branch of Judaism.

The residential relocation process of the sixties and seventies differed from the moves which preceded it in the absence of an identifiable neighborhood focal point such as Wooster Street or Copley Road. The Jewish butcher shops stayed behind in the older areas and the major delicatessen, now on West Market Street, was fairly distant from other stores carrying Jewish products or from the major Jewish institutions. In the early seventies, Anshe Sfard moved once again but its new location on Revere Road (northwest) was similarly geographically isolated from the other Jewish communal institutions. The new site of the Jewish Center on White Pond Drive while on the west side was considerably south of where most of Akron's Jews lived. This fairly wide scattering of institutions was hardly a major obstacle for a community which had so many multiple car families and so little commitment to strict religious observances regarding kashrut and travel prohibitions. (Special cases primarily involving senior citizens became matters of ongoing concern.)

The increasing geographical spread of stores and institutions suggests that a ghetto neighborhood was even less a reality than before. Yet, clearly a fairly defined general area remained congenial to Jewish residential selection. By the early seventies Jewish children were most likely to be enrolled in King or Cass elementary, Litchfield Junior High, and Firestone High School, with about the same proportional representation.

Preoccupation with Jewish marriage and the Jewish family unit remained a constant in the post war era. The Center continually used its matchmaking potential as a strong selling point. In 1948, the director's annual report claimed documentation for twenty-eight marriages and seventeen additional engagements over the past year which could be directly traced to Center contacts. "Economic and social barriers were overcome and they met and married as young healthy Jewish couples. That is quite a contribution to the perpetuation of our Jewish community life."¹⁹⁷ Five years later a similar message appeared in an Akron Jewish News feature story which boasted that ". . . many have met and married, through participation in . . . activities in my [the Center's] halls and chambers."¹⁹⁸ A skit presented at the thirty-second annual Center meeting (1962) stressed this same theme when it dealt with the money raised at the Purim Ball. "Forget about the money. Look at all the boys our daughters get to meet."¹⁹⁹

Whether to the credit of institutional efforts or not, most Jews in Akron were married and a large majority continued to be married to other Jews. Thus, only 5 percent of the respondents of the 1975 demographic survey had never been married (79 percent were currently married, a figure even higher than the national Jewish norm of 75 percent). Ninety-seven percent of the sample were Jewish by birth with close to an additional 2 percent converted to Judaism. (One percent indicated they were not Jewish.) The figures given for spouses were somewhat different, with fewer (78 percent) born Jewish, more converted to it (4 percent), and more not identifying themselves as Jewish (2 percent).²⁰⁰ A personal observation suggests that while the majority of Jewish marri-

ages was still endogamous, such marriages were more frequently being contracted with Jews from outside of Akron.²⁰¹

That Jewish marriages were prone to some of the same pressures affecting American marriages generally is evident in a critical assessment made by Jewish Community Council director, Rabbi Efraim Rosenzweig, in 1948. He claimed that the mere absence of equivalent divorce rates did not ". . . give the true picture" because "the actual experience of Rabbis and others in Akron has given clear evidence of the fact that traditional Jewish home values have not been able to withstand the disintegrating forces which abound in today's society."²⁰² Reaching a different conclusion at the same point in time, Nathan Hurvitz concluded that the approximately fifty divorces and separations he identified out of a total of 2,000 families (i.e., 2.5 percent) indicated that Jewish family units were very stable.²⁰³ Comparative data derived from the 1975 demographic survey showed that 3.2 percent of the respondents were currently divorced or separated (another 2.4 percent indicated they were divorced from a first spouse and had remarried).²⁰⁴ These figures seem to reflect an increasing but still relatively low divorce rate. However, there were strong feelings that divorce among Jews was increasing and doing so all too rapidly. Thus, in the 1970s a feature story in the local press noted that "Jewish divorce, virtually unheard of in past decades, has climbed . . ." and a high holiday sermon in the Reform temple expounded on this same particular issue.²⁰⁵

It is difficult to determine the rate of increase of inter-marriage after the war, but there seems little doubt that the numbers did accelerate. Sitting "shiva" (ritual mourning practice) for a child

who had married a gentile was not an unknown phenomenon in earlier periods.²⁰⁶ By the seventies such a practice was virtually inconceivable. In several conversations with Conservative Jews who were prominent communal leaders, casual mention (without apparent animosity) would be made of one or another of their children who had married non-Jews. This apparent change in attitude was confirmed in the 1975 demographic survey. Forty-nine percent of the respondents believed that intermarriage was acceptable if the two partners "want to."²⁰⁷ Twenty-eight percent felt they should not marry "under any circumstances" and 20 percent believed they should marry only if the non-Jew converts. It is significant that the highest percentage of disapproval came in zone 320 where residents were closest to the initial immigrant generation.²⁰⁸ While the overall social climate made intermarriage increasingly more thinkable, outmarriage remained a very personal familial problem. For example, there was the case Mr. B brought to Jewish Family Service. His concern was about his younger daughter who was dating a gentile boy of "poor background" and who was also resisting all parental control. He feared the daughter would marry this "good for nothing." The case was diagnosed in the context of rebellion against domineering parents and counseling sessions began. Gradually, the girl's behavior was reported as changing and a year following Mr. B's first appointment, it was duly noted that the daughter "married a fine young Jewish man."²⁰⁹

Rabbi Rosenzweig's critical comments about the state of Jewish marriage in Akron in 1948 extended into a critique of the family as a whole. He questioned whether the local Jewish family was any "better" (in terms of harmony and strength) than the average non-Jewish family

family and if "our parent-child relationship was more likely to develop strong and resourceful children and adults than are those of non-Jewish families" ²¹⁰ (Note the implied expectation that Jewish families should be different from those in the gentile society.) The rabbi's solution involved total Jewish communal participation in helping to preserve the individual Jewish family. This meant going beyond psychiatric casework and using specifically Jewish resources to assure Jewish input into family treatment. Echoing Rosenzweig's sentiment, the 1972 article about the Jewish community in the local paper claimed that the Jewish family unit was "under more stress than ever." ²¹¹ As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the Jewish Social Service Federation assumed the name Jewish Family Service in the early 1950s to indicate more precisely its preoccupation with just such family stress. Reports of the agency indicated that the upper economic sections of the community were now using its services for the first time to obtain marital counseling and help with problems regarding parents, children, etc. ²¹² Instead of dispensing relief, Jewish Family Service from now on was primarily committed to marital therapy, casework with personality difficulties, treatment of behavior problems of children, placement of children in foster homes and institutions, work with unmarried mothers, and adoption-related activities.

Attention to child-related matters remained central to communal concerns in the post-war era. More data are available as to how many children there actually were in the community. A 1966 study based on an analysis of 1,769 Jewish households (of a total of 1,988) found an average of 2.1 children per household. ²¹³ For those having children,

the most popular number to have was two (342 households) with 225 having one and 205 having three. Only sixty-two families had four or more. Divided into age groupings, the largest number fell into the 16-18 age group (297) with steadily declining numbers for each of the younger groups.²¹⁴ Thus, there were only 135 youngsters in the 4-6 year old range. The demographic study done a decade later essentially verified the above figures. Families of the respondents were generally small and the children grown. Thus, most children were nineteen or older (52 percent of the first born were over nineteen). Thirty-seven percent of the families in the sample had two children (again the most popular number), with 27 percent having three; 16 percent having one; and 8 percent having four or more.²¹⁵

Despite this apparent decline in the number of children in the community, institutional coverage for them expanded. Thus, considerable attention was focused on the nursery school which was added to the Center program in the mid-fifties. This institution was seen as valuable because it provided an opportunity to meet potential friends.²¹⁶ (Note the self-evident implications for a continuing adjustment pattern of structural pluralism.) The level of continuing support for such programs was investigated in the 1975 demographic survey. Of those responding to a question about whether they would or would not use the Center nursery rather than one oriented toward the general community, only 11 percent said they wouldn't use it or it wouldn't matter.²¹⁷

The deviant child remained an important issue. Attempting to gain perspective on Jewish juvenile delinquency, Charles Sacks, chairman of the Center community relations committee in 1953, conferred with

the county's chief probation officer. The records reviewed showed that over the previous twenty years the percentage of Jewish juvenile delinquency had decreased to "practically nil."²¹⁸ In 1962 the Jewish Family Service reported no casework with children in conflict with the law or on probation and only one case of after-care service related to a delinquent institutional placement.²¹⁹ In 1972, however, there was reference once again to concern about an increasing delinquency record.²²⁰

Concern with juvenile social adjustment was not limited to public delinquency. For example, the Center youth committee as well as the total Board paid attention to that institution's "problem children" and discussions of the definition of maladjustment, parent interviews, and possible referrals to social agencies appear in the minutes.²²¹ In individual cases, school and synagogue behavior were also investigated and files on particular children compiled. Meanwhile, Jewish Family Service was actively involved with child adoptions, boarding arrangements, and emotionally disturbed children. The general trend was away from placement in institutions and towards local treatment.²²² An annual report on child welfare services in the mid-sixties showed no placements in institutions for dependent and neglected children, maternity and infant homes for unmarried mothers, or state schools for delinquents, and only one placement respectively in institutions for the retarded, handicapped, and emotionally disturbed.²²³

While the relative number of young children in the community failed to increase, the number of older Jewish community members grew. Of the respondents to the 1975 demographic study, 42 percent were

fifty-five years or older.²²⁴ Indeed, the median respondent age was fifty-four.²²⁵ Generalizations from this sample to the total community can be disputed but there is no doubt that concern with senior citizens became a key social issue in the Jewish community in the post war era. It will be recalled that relatively few Federation clients had been identified as specifically "old age" cases. By 1957, forty-five of the 252 families served by Jewish Family Service were so designated.²²⁶ The minutes of the Board specifically acknowledge an "unusual number of people coming in with problems related to the aged."²²⁷

Debates about local Jewish facilities for this age group were frequent and heated. The following appeal for such services is quoted at length not only because it documents such a request but because it illustrates the continuing demands for increased cradle to grave primary group institutional coverage. It also dramatically portrays the grounds on which such appeals were based (special Jewish needs and special Jewish social obligations) and reflects Jewish generational interactions and the changing nature of the Jewish family.

To be concerned for the welfare of others is something which we Jews have been taught since our earliest days. We who are members of the Friendship Club (a senior citizen's group organized in 1949) have worked hard for the young people of our community, helping to build schools, centers and other institutions needed to bring them close to the Jewish way of life. We are also concerned with helping the needy to the limit of our ability But now that we have raised the issue of the need for a convalescent home under Jewish auspices, we are told to wait.

How long shall we wait? Generations have grown up, and many older people have spent their declining years in non-Jewish convalescent homes. Shall we wait until the present generation also grows old . . . and are placed in non-Jewish homes Now a word to the Children of the community. There are no bad children or bad parents; but often the circumstances which change during the generations force people to behave in certain ways.

One of the most terrible situations which can develop is when parents in their middle or older years become crippled or disabled and cannot help themselves. Then, out of a feeling of duty and respect . . . the children try to keep their parents in their own homes until this is no longer possible. Then the question arises: What to do with people who have suffered such a fate.

Those parents who have been raised according to the Jewish way of life do not want to go to non-Jewish convalescent homes and this brings terrible hardships upon the children."

Dear children: This situation which can bring so much misery to you and your parent must be remedied. Do everything . . . to help the Friendship Club achieve its aim . . . a convalescent home in Akron. Then you will be free people with clear consciences regarding the welfare of your parents when you cannot care for them.²²⁸

Many additional and equally strong appeals were made as the Friendship Club rapidly expanded from eight members to a group of 250 in a few short years.²²⁹ Responding to the demand, the director of the Federation in 1952 acknowledged recent changes in family life patterns which produced less acceptance of old parents in nuclear families. The 1975 demographic survey confirmed that most aged respondents lived by themselves in their own homes. When parents were taken in, guilt and feelings of rejection often accompanied clashing views produced by "old-country customs" and different ideas about child-rearing. When parents weren't taken in, socially isolated Jews in local boarding facilities could result.²³⁰ Jewish Family Service was prepared to give special attention to strained family relationships. However, the matter of a special home for the aged or chronically ill was not seen as a feasible solution. In the early fifties, the number of Jewish persons over sixty was estimated at some eight hundred, those over sixty-five at over five hundred. Annual operating expenses for an adequate facility for them was estimated to be at least \$50,000, an amount seen as excessive in light of the "excellent contacts" with similar homes in Cleve-

land.²³¹ The community was assured, however, that the possible future need for such a facility would be carefully monitored. The issue of the Home remained simmering on the back burner with reference in the sixties to dissatisfaction with Cleveland services because "our people do not want to leave Akron."²³² In 1975, 81 percent of the respondents to the demographic survey felt a Jewish home for the aged was needed in the Akron area and 83 percent said they would consider such a home for their parents or themselves.²³³

In addition to the general problems of aging ("Do you know anyone who doesn't have a pill box?"), some Jewish senior citizens faced unique problems.²³⁴ For example, of the first generation immigrants (20 percent of the heads of households surveyed in the 1975 study) there were some who had never mastered English. This, plus the fact of irregular reporting on their earnings during their working years, now meant considerable difficulties with both social security forms and benefits.²³⁵

The Friendship Club, newly organized after the war and mentioned above in the context of communal concern with various aspects of family life, is also significant--as its very name indicates--in illustrating the continuing Akron Jewish emphasis on in-group intimacy. The 1975 survey showed that "companionship" was the most sought after advantage of a Jewish home (83 percent), far outdistancing other potential services such as entertainment or recreation.²³⁶ At the opposite end of the age spectrum, the Center nursery also dealt in implied expectations of in-group friendships. ("Friendships are often started which are retained throughout life.")²³⁷ To the extent that teen-age organizational

affiliations are linked with friendship patterns, the 1975 demographic survey suggests continuing primary group ties. Only 2 percent of the respondents indicated they had teenage children who participated extensively in non-Jewish organizations as compared to 26 percent who indicated their children either didn't participate at all or only somewhat participated in non-Jewish organizations (the remainder did not respond to this question, probably because they had no children in this age-group). Probing the reverse side of this question, 20 percent of the respondents indicated they had teenage children who belonged to Jewish youth organizations (how many had teenagers who did not belong was not established).²³⁸ As for the adults, 13 percent of the respondents in the above survey listed "socializing" as the major reason for going to the Center (almost twice as many as marked cultural programming) and interest in the social committee exceeded interest in all other named committees (recreational, cultural, and educational).²³⁹

Evaluating the extent of communal harmony and egalitarianism remains as difficult in the post-war era as it was in earlier periods. Divisiveness based on national origins gradually subsided as later generations increasingly ignored such distinctions. Meanwhile, specific efforts were made after the war to include more East Europeans on influential boards such as the JSSF Board. And yet, even in the late sixties, ethnic overtones could negatively influence the possible merger of the Hungarian synagogue, Ahavas Zedek, with the more Polish congregation, Anshe Sfard.²⁴⁰ Remains of the still sharper old German-East European differences sometimes surfaced as well, for example, in the

above mentioned comment that the "wrong" people were taking over the country club, i.e., those who valued money above name and manner.²⁴¹ Even though Jewish groups were theoretically open to all segments of the community, when ethnicity, economic status, and religious affiliation were taken into account, it still remained possible to make better than chance predictions regarding individual associations (e.g., likely members of Pioneer Women vs. Council of Jewish Women).

There were other sources of social friction.²⁴² An individual's length of residence in the community could present social obstacles. Thus, one community member remembered experiencing difficulty as a newcomer in breaking into the social circles of a leading Jewish group. Another described feeling like a newcomer after living in the community for a dozen years and expressed disappointment with the level of Jewish communal support for an active political venture in the greater community. Religious status could also affect social acceptability. A prominent community member reported a lack of social tolerance for those who wanted to be observant Orthodox Jews. In addition to the status of particular individuals, numerous issues had consequences for social harmony within the community. The religious controversies presented in an earlier chapter provoked contention, confrontations, and resignations (e.g., the dispute about kashrut accreditation between a local store and the Vaad Hakashruth Board, Center Sabbath programming, etc.).

Such discord seems to conform to Rabbi Hartstein's 1945 assessment of the community as "broken into segments pulling in all directions"²⁴³ There is considerable contrary evidence, however, which documents a community characterized by cohesiveness and continuity.

For example, in 1951 the Center president specifically commented on the "remarkable" relationship between the Center and the synagogues and claimed that "there are less factions in Akron than any city of comparative size."²⁴⁴ There is also evidence of a surprising lack of animosity toward the country club set. Indeed, many of them were highly acclaimed as "patron angels" for their active role in Jewish philanthropic activities.²⁴⁵ Although the community was more transient than it had been, the 1975 survey showed that 52 percent had lived in the area at least 20 years and 25 percent of the heads of households had been born in Akron (23 percent of the respondents' parents were living in Akron and 59 percent of the respondents' oldest children lived in the area with 18 percent of them no longer living at home). Eighty-eight percent of the respondents claimed they did not plan to move from the Akron area.²⁴⁶

There was still widespread internal awareness of the Jewish businesses in town as well as the Jewish physicians, lawyers, etc. Community leaders in general felt they knew a lot about their community and the most common responses to the findings of the 1975 demographic study were either, "I could have told you that," or "I know that just can't be the case."²⁴⁷ As for internal communications, it was apparently not unusual for the Jewish editor, later publisher, of the local paper to notify the Federation director when something of critical Jewish concern was coming in on the wires.²⁴⁸ The grapevine worked and so did more formal communication channels such as congregation bulletins and the Akron Jewish News.

The community was most strongly united in its commitment to the social obligations of Jewish philanthropy, a commitment which reached its zenith during the post-war era. Immigrant needs had to be met once again. The Council of Jewish Women provided a reception center and temporary quarters for the newly arriving DP's. Whenever possible, efforts were made to obtain more permanent housing even before the "new Americans" arrived.²⁴⁹ Jewish Family Service and the Jewish Vocational Service assisted with counseling, financial support, and job placement, and Americanization classes were available at the Center. A new DP arriving in Akron could expect to be met at the station by Council of Jewish Women volunteers. After a few days rest, a Jewish Family Service caseworker would discuss family needs and plans with the new arrival and urge attendance at English and Americanization classes. In Welcome-Wagon style, the new family could expect to be visited and presented with gifts and a booklet listing Jewish organizations, places to shop, and the Center's schedule of activities.²⁵⁰

The heart of the philanthropic effort in these years, however, was the Jewish Welfare Fund. It will be recalled that in the century's banner collection year (1948), they raised over \$680,000.²⁵¹ Of this, \$525,625 was allocated to overseas agencies with an additional \$16,250 specifically ear-marked to Palestine-related agencies. In significant contrast, local agencies received \$83,912. While the amounts collected in the fifties and early sixties fell below this peak year and this level of giving was not reached again until the crisis year of 1967, Akron was described by its Federation director as being in the forefront in fund-raising capacity for intermediate-sized cities.

It will also be recalled that a local Zionist Emergency Council was established immediately after the war. Over the next three decades Israel emerged as a key issue and concern for the whole local Jewish community. It became *not only a cause to support but a source of pride and a place to visit*. The support for the "dream" was dramatic--reaching a million dollars a year. As for pride, the view was expressed that "Nothing in the last two thousand years has given the Jews more prestige, more pride. . . ." ²⁵² Many went to visit, encouraged by the Federation, youth programs, etc. The first Jewish Akron bank vice-president recalled traveling to Israel as a teenager and working on a kibbutz. "It was a very important experience in my life It is the land which embodies the hopes and aspirations of the Jew." ²⁵³ Nothing could bring the Akron Jewish community out the way the Israeli issue could. The largest communal meeting ever held involved two thousand people, or about *one-third of Akron Jewry*, who attended a rally on June 7, 1967, and launched the Israel Emergency Fund campaign. ²⁵⁴

This chapter has looked at some of the social realities which characterized the Akron Jewish community over a century. Some half a dozen areas of social adjustment were considered for each of the four periods of this study: residential selection; marriage and the family; youth and the aged; friendships; communal bonding; social responsibilities. These categories in turn were further divided into smaller units of social decision-making. For example, marriage and the family in each of the periods involved choices regarding dating, intra-marriage, intermarriage, divorce, familial obligations, etc. The local adjustment

patterns which emerged for each period tended to coincide with Jewish experience elsewhere for that same period (e.g., German-Jewish settlement locally and nationally was characterized by the "pulling after" of relatives, in-group marriages, little divorce, and the absence of "ghetto" neighborhoods). Some modifications and variation did occur. Thus, the original ghetto settlement area which engulfed most East European immigrants in the period of influx did not become established in the same way or form here. In this instance, Akron's experience was probably more reflective of Jewish communities of its own size than of the experience of the typical Jewish immigrant. Parenthetically, it was local residential selection which exhibited the most intriguing patterns of social change over the century (moving from relative dispersal to identifiable concentration in two successive areas and finally to a modified proximity in still a third area--all essentially within city limits).

Taken as a whole, the Akron Jewish social experience involved an overall affinity for endogamy, familial connectedness, in-group friendships, and residential proximity. It included extensive in-group communal awareness (if not overriding communal affection) and extensive in-group concern and action in social matters ranging from delinquency control to Israel. These social trends basically coincided with the national Jewish experience, thereby once again placing Akron Jewry within the mainstream of American Jewish life.

This chapter has also attempted to relate the Akron Jewish social experience to assimilation theory. Substantial indications of continuing in-group marriage as well as the breakdown of internal sub-groupings

through marriage support Gordon's contentions about structural assimilation in general and internal Jewish assimilation in particular. The continuing commitment to in-group social contacts and if anything the increasing desire for opportunities for such contacts (i.e., nursery and old-age facilities) also supports Gordon's claim that entry into the greater community's cliques did not occur. From Thanksgiving turkeys (kosher) to golf at the country club (with the "patron angels"), behavioral assimilation occurred, but, as suggested above, frequently with distinctively Jewish overtones. Repeated references throughout the chapter to the prevalence of kinship connections and in-group associational patterns as well as the emphasis on marriage, marital stability, and a strong nuclear family lend considerable support to the views and theories of Jewish social life expressed by Sklare, Liebman, and Glazer and Moynihan.²⁵⁵ Similarly, Kramer and Leventman's conclusions are supported by examples of generational changes in social adjustment and the centrality of philanthropy ("potlatch") in Jewish communal life.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹See Chapter I above, pp. 10-39, passim.
- ²Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, p. 76.
- ³Handlin, Adventures in Freedom, p. 59.
- ⁴Bernard Shuman, "A History of the Sioux City Jewish Community, 1869-1969," American Jewish Historical Quarterly 60 (1971):309.
- ⁵Glazer, American Judaism, pp. 44-45; Handlin, Adventures in Freedom, p. 64.
- ⁶Swichkow and Gartner, The History of the Jews of Milwaukee, p. 159.
- ⁷Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," pp. 183-84.
- ⁸Akron Census of 1850, alphabetized index, Akron Public Library catalogs.
- ⁹Early residences taken from the Akron City Directories of 1859-60; 1868-69. Subsequent addresses derived from later City Directories.
- ¹⁰Akron Beacon Journal, Special edition, 1 July 1975.
- ¹¹Interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.
- ¹²American Israelite, 17 December 1880.
- ¹³Akron Beacon Journal, 30 January 1874; 28 February 1881; 11 January 1886.
- ¹⁴*Ibid.*, 4 December 1874; 11 January 1882; Ruth Leopold tape; interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.
- ¹⁵Akron Beacon Journal, 1 August 1888.
- ¹⁶Temple Israel, Archives, 20 November 1964.
- ¹⁷Temple Israel, Minutes, 27 January 1867.
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, appears at end of minutes section covering 2 April 1865-26 September 1875.

- 19 Temple Israel, Constitution and By-laws.
- 20 Akron Beacon Journal, 4 December 1874.
- 21 Ruth Leopold tape.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 American Israelite, 28 January 1887.
- 24 Ibid., 28 April 1882.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Temple Israel, Minutes, 10 September 1871.
- 27 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 July 1880; 28 February 1889.
- 28 Temple Israel, Minutes, 9 July 1865.
- 29 Paul Menitoff, "The Akron Jewish Community, 1865-1965, as Reflected in the Records in the American Jewish Archives," paper submitted to Hebrew Union College, 1968, p. 17.
- 30 American Israelite, 28 April 1882.
- 31 Akron Beacon Journal, 13 January 1883.
- 32 Glazer, American Judaism, p. 81.
- 33 An interesting descriptive study of a single urban setting displaying such turmoil is Robert Rockaway, "Ethnic Conflict in an Urban Environment: The German and Russian Jew in Detroit, 1881-1914," American Jewish Historical Quarterly 60 (December 1920):130-150.
- 34 Wachner, "Progressive Jewish Organizations," p. 534.
- 35 Unless otherwise indicated, the documentation of these and other residential addresses during this period is taken from the Akron City Directories of the particular year indicated.
- 36 Akron Times Press, 23 June 1930.
- 37 Akron Beacon Journal, 2 July 1894.
- 38 Ibid., 21 December 1891.
- 39 Telephone conversation with Ken Nichols, 17 February 1978.
- 40 Ibid.

- ⁴¹Meyer Wise tape.
- ⁴²Anshe Sfard Congregation, Dedication Journal; Committee Report on Talmud Torah, 7th Annual Report of Jewish Social Service Federation, 1921; Wachner, "Progressive Jewish Organizations," p. 539.
- ⁴³Telephone conversation with Gloria Reich, 17 February 1978.
- ⁴⁴Ibid.
- ⁴⁵Interview with Ben Hahn.
- ⁴⁶Ibid.
- ⁴⁷Taped interview with Maurice Reichenstein, 1972.
- ⁴⁸Ben Marks letter.
- ⁴⁹Rose Belenky tape; conversation with Mr. & Mrs. Kodish, 25 September 1972; conversation with Ruth Cooper, Fall 1972.
- ⁵⁰Conversation with Mr. Kodish; Max Schneier tape.
- ⁵¹Interviews with Jack Reich; Ruth Cooper.
- ⁵²Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," pp. 183-84.
- ⁵³"Biographies in Profile," Akron Beacon Journal, 27 September 1970; Rose Belenky tape.
- ⁵⁴Awareness of this particular rescue mission is surprisingly widespread among long-time community residents. The specific details presented here are primarily drawn from Abe Ostrov's account, Akron Beacon Journal, 2 November 1958.
- ⁵⁵Philip Dunn and Max Schneier tapes; "Biographies in Brief" of Albert Backer and Ralph Leeper, Akron Beacon Journal, 4 July 1941; 11 May 1969.
- ⁵⁶Mrs. Max Rogovy tape.
- ⁵⁷Temple Israel, Minutes, 5 January 1902.
- ⁵⁸S. Freeman tape; Akron Beacon Journal, 12 July 1892.
- ⁵⁹Interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.
- ⁶⁰Interview with Belle Segel.
- ⁶¹Hurvitz, The History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, pp. 35-36.

- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Ben Marks letter.
- 64 Jewish Social Service Federation Files, 1926.
- 65 Ibid., Minutes, 30 April 1920.
- 66 Ibid., 8 May 1924.
- 67 Ibid., 10 March 1922.
- 68 Ibid., Annual Report for 1926.
- 69 President's Report, 7th Annual Meeting, JSSF, 1921.
- 70 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, pp. 39-42.
- 71 Jewish Social Service Federation, Annual Meeting, 10 January 1927.
- 72 Akron Jewish Center, 5th Annual Meeting, June 1934.
- 73 Interviews with Nathan Pinsky; Anna Friedman.
- 74 Jewish Social Service Federation, Annual Reports for 1916, 1926.
- 75 Ibid., 1926.
- 76 Schwesterbund, Minutes, 7 June 1906; 1904-1912, passim.
- 77 Ibid., 14 September 1904.
- 78 Conversation with Mr. Sabetay, 20 June 1975.
- 79 Rose Belenky tape.
- 80 Conversation with Mr. Kodish.
- 81 Interview with Nathan Pinsky.
- 82 Akron Beacon Journal, 13 November 1905.
- 83 Ibid., 11 May 1921.
- 84 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 184.
- 85 Sidney Havre tape.
- 86 Interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.

- ⁸⁷ Meyer Wise tape.
- ⁸⁸ Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 21 January 1919.
- ⁸⁹ Conversation with Mrs. Friedlander, 15 May 1976.
- ⁹⁰ Interview with Anna Friedman.
- ⁹¹ Interview with Philip Dunn.
- ⁹² Temple Israel, Minutes, 4 April 1909.
- ⁹³ Ibid., 4 July 1909.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid., 14 December 1924.
- ⁹⁵ Schwesterbund, Minutes, 14 March 1912.
- ⁹⁶ Akron Beacon Journal, 22 February 1919.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid., 12 December 1893; 9 April 1894.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., 2 July 1894.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., 18 September 1895; 13 March 1896; 4 March 1896; 16 January 1897; 14 August 1896; 30 September 1897; 26 September 1898; 14 October 1898.
- ¹⁰⁰ Temple Israel, Minutes, 6 January 1901.
- ¹⁰¹ Akron Beacon Journal, 7 September 1891.
- ¹⁰² Jewish Social Service Federation Files, 1921.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁴ Federation of Jewish Charities, Meeting of National Institution Committee, 2 May 1914.
- ¹⁰⁵ Secretary's Report for 1921; 1925, Jewish Social Service Federation.
- ¹⁰⁶ Akron Beacon Journal, 23 May 1903; 27 May 1903.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 13 November 1905.
- ¹⁰⁸ Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 9 November 1919.
- ¹⁰⁹ Akron Jewish Center, 4th Annual Meeting, 14 May 1933.
- ¹¹⁰ Akron Beacon Journal, 23 August 1930.

- ¹¹¹ Akron Jewish Center, 1st Annual Meeting, March 1930.
- ¹¹² Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, p. 8.
- ¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 11, 13.
- ¹¹⁴ Akron Jewish News, 1937-38, passim.
- ¹¹⁵ Akron Jewish News, 7 April 1944.
- ¹¹⁶ Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1944.
- ¹¹⁷ Conversation with staff at Akron Jewish Federation, Summer 1972; Akron City Directories.
- ¹¹⁸ Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 195.
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid.
- ¹²⁰ Adult Activities Director, "Report on Adult Activities to the Akron Center Board," 15 April 1945; Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 67.
- ¹²¹ Adult Activities Director, "Report to the Akron Center Board."
- ¹²² Ibid.
- ¹²³ Interview with Gloria Reich.
- ¹²⁴ Bloo , "The Jews of Buna," p. 192.
- ¹²⁵ Conversation with Rabbi Appiebaum, April 1972.
- ¹²⁶ Akron Center News, 4 April 1930.
- ¹²⁷ Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," pp. 189-90.
- ¹²⁸ Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 26.
- ¹²⁹ Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 190.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 191.
- ¹³¹ Conversation with Peggy Havre, 15 July 1977.
- ¹³² Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 79.

133 President's Report, 5th Annual Meeting, Akron Jewish Center, June 1934.

134 Executive Secretary's Report, Jewish Social Service Federation, 30 January 1935; 8th Annual Meeting, Akron Jewish Center, 1937; Akron Jewish News, 24 January 1941.

135 Executive Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, 13th Annual Meeting, 6 December 1942.

136 Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 12 March 1940.

137 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 115.

138 See Chapter I above, p. 48.

139 Interview with Anna Friedman.

140 Interview with Belle Weiss.

141 Interview with Philip Dunn.

142 Ibid.

143 President's Report, Akron Jewish Center, Spring 1930.

144 Akron Jewish News, 6 August 1971.

145 Interview with Ruth Cooper.

146 Interviews with two senior community members.

147 Ibid.

148 Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 15 February 1938.

149 Interview with Gloria Reich, 28 June 1972.

150 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 83.

151 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 183.

152 Interview with Belle Segal.

153 Interview with Ida Sigalow.

154 Adult Activities Director, "Report to the Akron Center Board."

155 Executive Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, 29 April 1937.

- 156 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1938, p. 7.
- 157 Temple Israel, Minutes, 8 December 1935.
- 158 Letter from Executive Director, Akron Jewish Center to President, Vaad Hakashruth, 4 December 1944, Akron Jewish Center Files.
- 159 Akron Jewish Center, Quarterly Report, 1 October 1933.
- 160 Akron Center News, 29 October 1937.
- 161 Adult Education Committee, Akron Jewish Center, 27 February 1940.
- 162 Akron Jewish News, 16 December 1937.
- 163 Ibid., 2 August 1946; 2 May 1947; 25 June 1948.
- 164 Jewish Social Service Federation allocation figures for 1930, 1931, 1935.
- 165 Akron Center News, 24 April 1937.
- 166 Ibid. 7 May 1937.
- 167 Ibid.
- 168 Dollar distribution figures based on Federation figures of 1942.
- 169 President's Annual Report, Jewish Social Service Federation, 12 May 1940.
- 170 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1935, p. 57; Akron Jewish News, 30 August 1940; 30 November 1942; 5 November 1943.
- 171 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 74; Akron Center News, 19 October 1937.
- 172 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 268.
- 173 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1944, p. 54.
- 174 Akron Beacon Journal, 14 November 1931.
- 175 Akron Jewish News, 18 February 1944; 24 May 1939.
- 176 Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, pp. 18-20, 25.

- 177 Ronald M. Goldstein, "American Jewish Population Studies since World War II," American Jewish Archives 22 (April 1970):41; Goldstein, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile," p. 86.
- 178 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 50, 101; David Varady, "Recent Changes in the Settlement Patterns of the Jewish Population of Cincinnati," Report to Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, August 1973, p. 5.
- 179 Leslie Flaksman, "Social Factors Affecting Membership in the Akron Jewish Center," manuscript, Univ. of Akron archives, 1955, pp. 27-29, 32.
- 180 Ibid.
- 181 Akron Beacon Journal, 1 October 1950.
- 182 Interview with Ida Sigalow.
- 183 Leslie Flaksman, "Growth and Mobility of Jewish Population in Akron from July, 1955 to July, 1963," Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1963.
- 184 Ibid.
- 185 Ibid.
- 186 Ibid.
- 187 Conversations with staff members at Akron Jewish Center and Akron Jewish Federation, Summer 1972.
- 188 Temple Israel, Year Books, 1955 and 1962, passim.
- 189 National Jewish Welfare Board, Community Planning Services, "Akron Jewish Population, Census Tract Data," 1966, Akron Jewish Center Files.
- 190 Gloria Reich, "A Brief Demographic History of the Akron Jewish Population," A Demographic Survey, p. 128.
- 191 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 7.
- 192 Reich, "A Brief Demographic History of the Akron Jewish Population," p. 128.
- 193 Ibid.
- 194 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 68. It should be noted that the percentage of respondents from each major zone varied somewhat from the original identified population. Thus 72 percent were from 313; 11 percent from 03; 9 percent from 20; and 8 percent from all

other zones.

- 195 Ibid., p. 70.
- 196 Ibid., p. 73.
- 197 Executive Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, 1 February 1948.
- 198 Akron Jewish News, 4 March 1953.
- 199 Akron Jewish Center, 32nd Annual Meeting. 28 January 1962.
- 200 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 25, 98.
- 201 Conversation with Edith Weinstein, 9 December 1972.
- 202 Akron Jewish News, 15 March 1948.
- 203 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 30.
- 204 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 98.
- 205 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972; Rabbi Morton Applebaum, sermon, Fall 1976.
- 206 Interview with Gloria Reich.
- 207 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 116.
- 208 Ibid., p. 73.
- 209 Jewish Family Service, Annual Report, 3 March 1950.
- 210 Akron Jewish News, 15 March 1948.
- 211 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.
- 212 Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 9 October 1951; Executive Director's Report, 14 February 1962.
- 213 National Jewish Welfare Board, "Akron Jewish Population, Census Tract Data."
- 214 Ibid.
- 215 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 27, 29, 92, 102.
- 216 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1955.

- 217 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 112.
- 218 Akron Jewish News, 4 March 1953.
- 219 Jewish Family Service, "Supplemental Reports on Child Welfare to Dept. of Public Welfare," 1962.
- 220 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.
- 221 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 7 April 1957; 9 June 1957.
- 222 Interview with Nathan Pinsky.
- 223 Jewish Family Service, Annual Report, 31 March 1965.
- 224 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 98.
- 225 Ibid., p. 126.
- 226 Goldstein, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile,"
p. 86.
- 227 Jewish Family Service, Minutes, 13 June 1961.
- 228 Akron Jewish News, 8 April 1949.
- 229 Akron Jewish Center, 20th Annual Meeting, 5 February 1950.
- 230 Akron Jewish News, 2 May 1952.
- 231 Ibid.
- 232 Jewish Family Service, Minutes, 14 February 1961.
- 233 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 35.
- 234 Conversation with Mrs. Kaye, Fall 1972.
- 235 Ibid.
- 236 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 122.
- 237 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1955.
- 238 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 108.
- 239 Ibid., pp. 109, 111.
- 240 Interview with Belle Weiss.
- 241 Conversation with long-time resident, 1975.

²⁴²The following examples are based on conversations with three different community members reporting on what they or members of their family directly experienced.

²⁴³Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1945, p. 6.

²⁴⁴President's Report, 21st Annual Meeting, Akron Jewish Center, 4 February 1951.

²⁴⁵Interview with Ida Sigalow.

²⁴⁶Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, pp. 100; 101-03; 120.

²⁴⁷Writer's observation at demographic advisory committee meeting, 30 September 1975.

²⁴⁸Writer's observation, 18 July 1972.

²⁴⁹Akron Jewish News, 1 July 1949; 3 March 1940; 25 April 1952.

²⁵⁰Ibid., 4 September 1956.

²⁵¹Akron Jewish News, 28 May 1948.

²⁵²Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.

²⁵³Ibid.

²⁵⁴Akron Jewish News, 19 June 1967.

²⁵⁵See Chapter I above, pp. 47-50.

CHAPTER VI

COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS

The story of the Akron Jewish community to this point has concentrated on its religious, institutional, and social adjustment patterns primarily within a Jewish context. Thus, while the external world was periodically introduced as an influential factor in shaping decisions, for the most part Jewish adjustment patterns were seen as self-determined choices in an essentially Jewish world. There were, however, major areas of life in which Akron's Jews mainly functioned within the greater community--for example, in making a living and getting an education. They also participated in varying degrees in the gentile community's civic and cultural affairs and in its political and legal processes. There were some interactions in matters social and religious. Such contacts could occur on a strictly individual and private basis (the Jewish merchant and his customers), assume a quasi-representative character (a rabbi's position on community boards), or reflect active Jewish communal outreach (the Center's Civic Forum; the Jewish Community Council). The partner to these interactions, the gentile community, also responded on private and public levels, the latter exemplified by news coverage and editorial commentary on matters specifically and generally related to Akron Jewish interests. It is possible to evaluate these highly varied interactions along a continuum from positive to neutral to negative (with a special category of non-existent). Negative

gentile responses inevitably touched on the perennial Jewish concern, anti-semitism. This chapter, then, will focus on the arenas where Akron's Jewish-gentile interactions occurred (economic, civic and cultural, political, social, religious) and probe the quality of those interactions. Special attention will then be directed to general responses to the Jewish community and, finally to the critical issue of anti-semitism. Such inquiry will inevitably overlap earlier discussions of Akron Jewry's economic profile (Chapter II) or its religious adjustment (Chapter III), etc. However, the interactional focus intended here seems to warrant the occasional repetition of particular incidents.

Interactional adjustment patterns of the national American-Jewish experience have been discussed in an earlier chapter.¹ In summary, Jews participated in the general economy with heavy concentration in trade and commerce and an increasing presence in the professions. (Combined with extensive economic mobility, such occupational placement had obvious implications for Jewish perception of their societal peer reference groups and for general public images of the Jewish community.) In the civic arena, participation in community causes and services became increasingly common, although at times *mainly involving token "ambassadors to the gentiles."*² Politically, the American Jewish community displayed a strong patriotic commitment and participated wholeheartedly in the electoral process, although such activity was not matched by comparable visibility in either appointive or elective office. The community's political orientation reflected strong allegiance to both liberalism and internationalism.³ Identifiable Jewish voting patterns existed, especially in presidential politics, and

ethnic voting could influence Jewish voters to cross party lines for or against particular ethnic candidates. Anti-semitism and Zionism were the two critical issues which brought Jews out in force into the public arena. Social mixing when it occurred ranged from the meetings of the early German glee clubs to various fraternal, business, and professional group events. (Jewish sentiments could be ambivalent in this area, with strong preferences for in-group connections--see previous chapter--co-existing with satisfaction in being mistakenly identified as non-Jewish.)⁴ As alluded to earlier, in religious matters there were continuing examples of interfaith contacts (especially evident between Reform Jews and liberal Christians in the late nineteenth century). Finally, the American-Jewish experience with anti-semitism was complex and open to varying interpretations.⁵ However, the record suggests that this problem escalated during the periods prior to World War II and declined thereafter.

To the extent that the Akron Jewish community shared in the above general trends and duplicated the more specific interaction patterns associated with the individual periods of this study, to that extent it was in the mainstream of the American Jewish experience. The attempt to relate Akron Jews to the gentile world is connected not only to the narrative of American-Jewish history, but, as in earlier chapters, to theories of assimilation. Thus, Gordon claimed that political, economic, and educational institutions were far more likely to be mixed than religious, family, and recreational institutions. Applying his assimilation paradigm to selected groups, Gordon found the Jews "substantially" assimilated culturally, "mostly" assimilated

civically, and "partly" assimilated as measured by existing discrimination.⁶

Other observations and reflections on Jewish adjustment provide comparative yardsticks for Akron's interactional experiences. For example, in his study of Baltimore Jewry, Fein found that Jews who were active in the Jewish community were also involved in affairs of the general community.⁷ Seemingly related to this observation is Kramer and Leventman's hypothesis that participation in the general community and acceptance of general community values correlates with status in the Jewish community.⁸ Internal rewards for acceptance by the greater society may well be premised on the theory of interdependence of fate (i.e., individuals so recognized had a special obligation to reflect credit on the total community).⁹ Finally, there is the notion of "clear boundaries," namely, the assertion that to insure group survival a distinct line of demarcation had to be maintained between Jews and non-Jews.¹⁰

Early Interactions (1865-1885)

German-Jewish settlement in this country was characterized by the ubiquitous merchant, erstwhile peddler, on main streets across the continent. These early merchants generally participated in such already existing organizations as the Masons and developed early, if not long lasting, connections with German-gentile groups. For the most part, Jews experienced general societal toleration.

It will be recalled that Akron's early Jewish settlers repeated the classic economic route from farm peddling to downtown merchandising, especially in clothing.¹¹ With a virtual monopoly in this area

(by 1871, five of the city's six listed clothing stores), the Jewish merchants inevitably made significant contacts with the Christian business community. A story told about cereal millionaire, Ferdinand Schumacher, supports this contention.¹² It seems that Schumacher's sons wanted their father to wear a new overcoat instead of his old shawl. Aware of his legendary tight-fistedness, they approached Jacob Koch and made a deal. Koch was to invite Schumacher into his store, inform him that another customer had ordered a fine coat and then left town without completing payment, thereby enabling the merchant to offer the coat at a low price. The sons meanwhile promised to make up the difference. Although the point of this particular story was Schumacher's resale of the coat for a profit, its relevance here relates to Koch's evident familiarity with leading figures in Akron's economic life. Jewish merchants also catered to their clients' holiday needs. An 1868 ad reveals Jacob Whitelaw's awareness of such needs and, incidentally, his willingness to capitalize on a stereotyped dialect: "Vat's you talking? I am receiving Daily, until after the Holidays all kinds of fancy articles for Christmas and New Years Presents."¹³

Early Jewish merchants were included in local trade associations. Jacob Koch was the first treasurer of the Akron Mercantile Association and George Hirsch, Jacob Koch, and David Ferbstein were charter members of the Board of Trade organized in 1889.¹⁴ Louis Loeb was an early treasurer of the Akron Dry Goods Salesmen's Association. Loeb personified Jewish participation in the clerk-to-store-president promise of American business life as well as exemplifying assimilation of Carnegie values. As he later recalled, "When I was a clerk . . . we never

watched the clock. The stores were opened very early in the morning and remained open until late at night. Often I have slept on the counter or under the counter. Sweeping out the store and cleaning the windows were as much a part of the young clerk's work as waiting on customers. Every clerk was willing to do most anything. All the merchants had a friendly interest in one another. If at any time misfortune came to any merchant and he needed help, he got it."¹⁵

Akron's Jewish settlers established early civic and cultural connections with the greater community. Jacob Koch was a trustee of the local hospital fund and some time later Alice Loeb also undertook hospital volunteer work. Such lay leaders as S. B. Hopfman, A. Katzenberg, and Louis Loeb accompanied Rabbi Rabino on his visits to the county infirmary to represent the congregation in the greater community. Leopold and Company donated meat to the city's needy while Herman Moss was appointed to a committee seeking aid for flood victims in Germany.¹⁶ The German cultural tie was often evident. Thus, Rev. Aaron Suhler combined his role as religious leader of the Jewish congregation with the job of editor of the local German newspaper, the "Germania," and Rabbi Fleischman added the role of German teacher in the Akron public schools to his more traditional Jewish teaching responsibilities.¹⁷ As early as 1859, the German singing society, the Akron Liedertafel, listed Jacob Goldsmith (connected with Koch's) as its vice-president. Akron Hebrew Association charter member, George Marientahl, was treasurer of that same singing group in 1870; Louis Loeb assumed the same position a decade later.¹⁸ (While the factors altering this special connection are not precisely recorded, it is clear that by the close

of this period Akron's Jews no longer held such leadership roles, in effect duplicating national trends in relations between the two German immigrant sub-groups.)

There are indications that American patriotism and interest in German national concerns were components of the political adjustment pattern of Akron's early Jewish settlers. Jacob Koch, for one, was a member of the fifty-fourth battalion of the Ohio National Guard and served with the military in Washington in 1864.¹⁹ A later editorial credited the city's Jews with being "loyal Republicans" during the war " . . . cheerfully contributing of their means to facilitate recruiting and the raising of sanitary stores. . . ."²⁰ It will be recalled that at the 1874 dedication of the Akron Hebrew Association's new facilities, lay leader George Marientahl expressed the hope that the membership and the upcoming generation would be ". . . good citizens worthy of this free and great country."²¹ Also mentioned earlier was Rabbi A. Burgheim's role as featured speaker at a July 4th celebration sponsored by the Liedertafel Society. The rabbi began his oration with an "eloquent and highly political tribute to American liberty" and proceeded to elaborate on the role America's German-speaking population had played in the struggle for freedom and to inventory their contributions to society.²² The extent of German-Jewish involvement with German national concerns was suggested by Herman Hahn's election as vice-president by a meeting of German Akronites whose main concern was the emerging independence movement in the fatherland. A committee appointed to raise funds for the soldiers engaged in that struggle included Isaac Levi and George Marientahl.²³

In the social arena, early members of the Akron Hebrew Association reflected the national trend of German-Jewish affiliation with such fraternal orders as the Masons. As early as 1859 the press reported on Herman Moss's interviews with distinguished officers of "the Order" during his trip to Europe.²⁴ Reference has already been made to the fact that many Akron Hebrew Association charter members were Masons and that Michael Joseph became master of his lodge in 1871.²⁵ While the Masons seem to have been the most popular order for Akron Jews to join, merchant G. Rosenthal was elected delegate of the Grand Lodge of the Knights of Pythias in 1874 and Abram Polsky eventually joined the I.O.O.F. as well as the Masons.²⁶ As for German social contacts, it should be noted that the Akron Liedertafel, mentioned above in a cultural context, also had its social aspects. For example, this group was present at the wedding of Dora Cohn and Julius Green and sang at Mrs. Louis Cohn's funeral.²⁷

The points at which Jewish religious life intersected with the Akron gentile community were mentioned in the above chapter on religious adjustment. It bears repeating that Christian laity and clergy attended Jewish services from the earliest days. Thus, at the Torah dedication services in 1868, "Many of our prominent citizens and ladies, also the clergy of Akron were invited, and were present."²⁸ Similarly, a "large number of Christians" were in the audience for the confirmation services of 1870.²⁹ When the new facilities of 1874 were dedicated, the rabbi specifically included followers of the Christian religion in his blessing and extended an invitation to "everyone of whatever religious creed" to this "house for all people."³⁰ In 1885, when the former Episcopal

church became yet another home for the Association, local citizens contributed some \$2,500 to its refurbishment.³¹ On at least a few occasions, Rabbi Rabino engaged in religious disputation in the press. In a letter to the editor he protested a Christian minister's charge of Jewish corruption. He also participated in a series of letter exchanges with a Rev. Noah regarding doctrinal questions on atonement, Jesus, resurrection, and the Old Testament.³²

The local press is probably the best available barometer of general public response to the Jewish community, to individual Jews, and to matters of Jewish concern. Coverage of Jewish religious and communal events was frequent, often incorporating subjective commentary. For example, the news report on Jewish cemetery improvements in 1867 stated, "We are glad to learn that the Congregation is in a prosperous condition."³³ The following year the article describing the Torah dedication services acknowledged that the reporters ". . . were agreeably entertained" and expressed appreciation "to our Jewish friends for the opportunity . . . of witnessing the novel exercises in question."³⁴ The prayers of the confirmants were described as "truly sublime" and a local Jewish wedding lauded as "the grandest party and the only one of its kind that has ever taken place in this city."³⁵ Included in the story on the congregation's new facilities in 1885 was the opinion that the Association's request for assistance from the *general community* would "undoubtedly" be met "in a very liberal manner."³⁶

The newspapers also contained laudatory references to the Jewish community's rabbis. Thus, Rabbi Fleischman was described as "a man of large heart," and when he left the community after six years, he was

praised as having "worked wonderful changes in Hebrew circles, increasing church membership and enlisting a deep interest in social matters. . . . He has a warm, sympathetic, generous nature. . . ."37

When an incident between Rabbi Rabino and the city librarian provoked a public exchange of letters, the paper's editor came to the defense of the rabbi: ". . . some unfortunate expressions . . . make it the duty as it is the pleasure of the Beacon . . . to state for those that do not know him . . . that he [rabbi] is held in highest esteem not only by every member of his congregation but by such men as the U.S. minister to Venezuela, ex-U.S. Minister to Spain, ex-member of the Illinois state Board of Education, etc."38 Similar praise was bestowed on individuals who were prominent lay leaders in the Jewish community. For example, Isaac Levi was described as "A gentleman whom all Akronians know as an enterprising and trustworthy citizen . . ."39 and the Leopolds who donated food to the city poor were seen as deserving "a great deal of praise for their good work."40

Press coverage of Jewish-related topics went beyond events and people of immediate local interest. Even before the Jewish community was formally organized, the paper featured one article on the Rothschilds entitled "The Reward of Integrity," and another on the possibilities of Jewish repossession of Palestine.⁴¹ Both were sympathetic to the Jewish point of view. Closer to home there were also stories about such institutions as the Cleveland Jewish Orphan Asylum and when the local rabbi addressed the Cleveland YMHA, a whole column was devoted to reporting it.⁴²

The newspapers were not the only source of official or quasi-official public recognition of the local Jewish community. Although appearing considerably later than might be expected, the church directory section of the *City Directory* did provide regular listings under the heading "Hebrew," beginning in 1873-74. Still another significant source of public recognition came in Lane's early history of Akron. His perception of the early members of the Akron Hebrew Association was expressed in the remark that "generally, the members of this society . . . ever doing their full share in the business and benevolent enterprises of the day."⁴³

Much as in the country at large, there is no evidence of blatant anti-semitism in Akron during these early years. Although Jewish economic activity was confined to an extremely narrow band of the economy, there is no reason to conclude that this reflected deliberate exclusion. More subtle negative attitudes and behaviors are of course difficult to ascertain. In this connection, however, a local editorial is of some interest. Entitled "The Jews and the Copperheads," the article accused the latter of misusing Grant's alleged anti-semitic order against Jewish traders during the war, to "prejudice the minds of the loyal Israelites among us." Although the editorial admitted that "we know not whether this claim [i.e., repudiation of the Republican nominees] is well founded or not," it went on to denounce the injustice of the charge against Grant and to point the finger at negative treatment of Jews in the South. The editorial concluded, "There is not a Jew in this city who could safely do business in that . . . region of the country, and how it is possible that those who have a just

appreciation of the freedom of thought and conscience, and the protection of person and property, can affiliate with the enemies of the country, men who would curtail these rights, and on the merest pretext, despoil them of both property and life . . . surpasses our comprehension."⁴⁴

Interactions During the Period of Influx (1885-1929)

The large numbers of East European Jews who entered this country first met their fellow-Americans on city streets where they hawked their wares or, especially in the largest cities, in factories. Fairly quickly their work-life contacts reflected their emerging roles as businessmen heavily concentrated in dry goods and clothing, groceries, and other petty retailing. American Jews also increasingly met the public as professionals. There is reason to believe that active general civic involvement supplemented rather than substituted for active internal Jewish participation. While the above mentioned social links between the early German Jews and German gentiles rapidly disappeared, they never appeared in the first place among the East European Jewish and gentile immigrants with the possible exceptions of the Hungarians. More prevalent, especially around the turn of the century, were inter-faith interactions between Reform Judaism and liberal Christianity. As the sons of Jewish immigrants entered into general societal competition, anti-semitism became more evident. While primarily anti-Catholic, anti-semitic sentiments were far from uncongenial to the Klan of the twenties.

Many national interaction patterns hold true for the Akron Jewish community. Beginning with the economic arena, it bears repeating that Jewish economic adjustment in Akron was also achieved primarily in the commercial sector. A wider span of job options now prevailed, however, ranging from peddling, assorted menial positions and the trades to a new presence in the professions.⁴⁵ For the most part, though, gentile still met Jew in Akron across the counter in transactions typically involving clothes, dry goods, shoes, furniture, groceries, jewelry, etc. That Jews were accepted by their business and professional peers seems confirmed by the fact that Bert Polsky and Jerome Dauby were presidents of the Chamber of Commerce by the late twenties while Harry Polsky became president of the Akron Merchant's Association and Dr. Tuholske became chief of staff at People's Hospital.⁴⁶

As indicated earlier, Jewish participation at varying levels of Akron's emerging rubber industry was minimal to non-existent. Federation records and old-timer recollections do mention Jewish blue collar workers who spent at least some time at companies such as Firestone or Goodrich and apparently became involved in labor organizational activities.⁴⁷ (It will be recalled that Rabbi Philo spoke out publicly on labor problems, in one instance asserting, "It is my firm conviction that organized labor has done more to better the condition of the laborer than any other agency, the sweetest theology not excepted.")⁴⁸ As for rubber management, Charles Schwartz briefly served as assistant sales director for Goodrich's rubber footwear department, beginning in 1915. He recalled being the only Jew in the four major rubber works at even this middle-management level.⁴⁹ Schwartz did capitalize, how-

ever, on his experiences with Goodrich and established his own rubber related firm, the Summit Rubber Company. Similarly, Alex Shulman, after an even briefer stint with Goodyear, left to join a scrap rubber dealer and eventually set up his own rubber and plastics business, A. Shulman, Inc.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, Jewish professional staff in rubber was also virtually non-existent. A prominent exception was Goodyear airship designer, Dr. Karl Arnstein, who arrived in 1925.⁵¹

With Akron's Jews so heavily represented in merchandising, it is not surprising that some of them wound up with problems related to business failure, licensing, adulterated products, etc. Thus, Hennie Israel's merchandise was attached by the sheriff when the Globe Clothing store failed, and the insolvent clothiers, Roth and Block, were similarly closed down.⁵² Licensing problems were especially endemic in the 1890s. Local press reports on such charges included many Jewish defendants' names: Golub, the Rotstein brothers, Morris Wiener, Samuel Emerman. At times the ethnic identification in these cases was specifically noted: Samuel Solomon, "A Hebrew residing with the Wilkofsky brothers"; Harry Friedman and Ben Teitelbaum, "two Hebrews" arrested for selling without a license.⁵³ This latter case was compared to numerous recent others in which the same charge was made. The peddlers were described as deliberately chancing arrest and only proceeding to acquire a license if this eventuality actually arose. As for problems of impure goods involving Jews, there were charges ranging from good peaches covering up poor ones to adulterated coffee, and adulterated milk--the forty milkmen subsequently arrested included such Jewish names as Solomon Swartz, J. Gross, Samuel Getz, Joseph Lehmann.⁵⁴ (There is no

reason to believe that any undue element of harassment was involved in these cases although the few instances of specific ethnic labeling obviously did little to enhance a positive group image.)

There was one notorious court case involving a Jew who was intimately tied in with the established Jewish leadership. Related by blood to the Krause family and by betrothal to the Whitelaws, Nathan M. Berk's case was in and out of the courts and newspapers between 1891 and 1894. One report claimed that this case had been "one of the most hotly contested ever tried in Summit County. While the criminal himself had very little money, friends and relatives supplied the funds and all that money and ingenuity could do has been done to secure his acquittal."⁵⁵ The details of the case involved the failure of a shoe store and a subsequent indictment of perjury against Berk regarding the removal of goods claimed by creditors. Berk, who was described as "wily" and a "sweet scented rascal," received a three-year sentence.⁵⁶ Many leading business men reportedly signed a petition recommending his pardon on grounds that he was young and the victim of circumstances. (Berk later became a well respected member of both the Jewish and greater communities.)

The adoption of prohibition produced special external pressures on Akron Jews connected with the liquor industry, ranging from the new immigrant who cleaned beer vats to established Jewish leaders long active as prominent liquor businessmen. There are stories that in one case at least, the switch to another line of work was not made and a link with bootlegging operations established instead.⁵⁷

While the difficulties related above would undoubtedly have applied to any merchant group, problems relating to Sunday work had a unique relevance to Jewish tradesmen. When an issue arose at the turn of the century over barbers working on Sundays and arrests followed, one defendant's lawyer based his client's case precisely on his Jewishness and contended this gave him the right to work on that day.⁵⁸ Some two decades later the issue of Sunday closing was again current and before City Council. This time the Jewish merchants in the Wooster Avenue organized to fight any attempt to pass legislation which might close their businesses.⁵⁹ The matter was fought out in Council over the next few months and the enforcement of blue laws was narrowly avoided by only one vote.⁶⁰

Collectively, as well as individually, Akron's Jews were directly involved in the civic life of the greater community. The communal connection was cemented when the Jewish Social Service Federation became part of the Better Akron Federation (1919) and had representation on that agency's General Board. (Again, this was to be in the mainstream of Jewish experience as all but two of forty-five intermediate cities with Jewish populations of five thousand to forty thousand had Jewish agencies and federations which received funds from local community chests.)⁶¹ This particular connection was significant not only because it illustrates Jewish willingness to accept financial aid as one among many city agencies meriting support but because it also illustrates Jewish sensitivity to external attitudes and the related determination to meet communal obligations and prove Jewish worthiness. Thus, a Jewish Federation president commented that the

agency ". . . enjoys to a very high degree the good opinion of the Better Akron Federation. If we want this to continue, if we wish to retain the good opinion of our fellows . . . must put forth every effort . . . every Jew must contribute [to the Community Chest] . . . to raise the amount [involved in Jewish allocations] . . . also support the other institutions of the city which we as citizens of Akron are morally obligated to aid."⁶² Support for community projects was not left to moral exhortation alone. For example, the Jewish Social Service Federation Board moved to endorse a building campaign for Children's Hospital and appointed a team to help implement such support. That not only social service institutions were concerned with supporting civic projects is shown by remarks included in the corner-stone laying ceremonies of the Orthodox Hungarian synagogue, Ahavas Zedek, i.e., "From now on Ahavas Zedek . . . taking an active part in city affairs and contributing generously to its funds. . . ."⁶³

Jews who were involved in civic life as individuals included rabbis, social agency leaders, businessmen and professionals. Rabbi Isidore Philo has already been described as promoting Christmas time public library donations and gifts to street-car conductors.⁶⁴ Rabbi David Alexander became president of the War Sufferer's Relief Fund, a member of the Akron Scout Council, and made booster-style speeches to such groups as the city's Realty Board urging support of the city's industries, praising the school system as a community selling point, and promoting civic "spirit."⁶⁵ One of the best examples supporting the hypothesis that those active in general civic life were simultaneously active in Jewish affairs was Malvyn "Molly" Wachner. In

the larger arena she served as president of the Girl Scout Council, was a leader in the World War I War Chest, helped organize the United Fund, and received special recognition by the Summit County Council of Social Agencies as "Woman of the Year." Within the Jewish community she was well known as the executive director of the Federation, president of the Council of Jewish Women, and she received a Joint Distribution leadership award for assisting the distressed Jews of Europe.⁶⁶ While Miss Wachner had ties to the established German-Jewish group, a business man such as Nate Wollins was connected to the more recent East European immigration. His civic commitment was expressed as follows: "Akron owes me nothing. Everything I have I owe to Akron, so I shouldn't shirk any responsibility."⁶⁷ Examples of his assuming such obligations included work for Community Chest, Red Cross, Children's Hospital, and University of Akron drives. Professionals who were prominent in the Jewish community like Armen Sicherman (physician) and Lee Ferbstein (lawyer) were also involved in the founding of such prominent civic institutions as People's Hospital and the Council of Social Agencies. Even a recipient of Jewish Federation welfare aid gave portions of her time to both Pioneer Women and the Red Cross.⁶⁸

Although never reaching significant numbers, Jews first appeared in local political positions during this period. The first elected Jewish official in Akron was Nicholas Greenberger who served as city solicitor between 1908 and 1912.⁶⁹ The extent of his winning majority set a long-standing record for Republican candidates for that office. Greenberger was recognized for significant work regarding procurement of the water work's site and a successful legal contest with a paving

company which resulted in the return of \$14,000 to the public treasury.⁷⁰ Other lawyers who achieved political office, in this case appointed positions, were Lee Ferbstein and Merryl Sicherman who both served as assistant prosecuting attorneys. In the latter case, the appointment was apparently acquired over the objection of the prosecutor through the influence of local newspaper magnate, C. L. Knight.⁷¹ Knight has also been credited with getting Merryl's father, Dr. Armin Sicherman, on the Health Board and offering to put the paper behind Julius Whitelaw if he would run for mayor.⁷² In 1907, the press focused on another reputed candidate for mayor, Rabbi Philo, assigning considerable political significance to his unequivocal support of the eight hour day and his self-proclamation as the laboring man's minister.⁷³

On occasion Jews also participated in the political party process. Alex Sicherman (Dr. Armin's brother) was treasurer of the local Republican party. Known as the "sage of Main Street," apparently both Republicans and Democrats solicited his opinions and advice.⁷⁴ There is even reference to a Jewish Political Club in the mid 1920s. Under the leadership of attorney Charles Sacks, the club had approximately 170 members in 1926 and was launching a drive for new members to bring that figure to a thousand.⁷⁵

There are some indications of issues which drew a public response from the Jewish community and its leaders. Around the turn of the century, Rabbi Philo was especially exorcised over corruption in politics (e.g., stuffed ballot boxes) and prophesized a "bloody revolution" if the country's "religion of politics" did not improve.⁷⁶ Closer to home, Rabbi Cronbach urged an increase of tax valuation to promote

civic efficiency and eliminate slums. He also deplored women labor, feared the disregard of child labor laws under the pressures of war, and expressed great concern over the amount of drunkenness in the city.⁷⁷ His most controversial stands involved the national issues of pacifism and Bolshevism. In both cases he was far to the left of his own congregation, not to mention the community as a whole. The strongest joint communal stand on an issue involved a resolution on pending immigration legislation which was adopted by a mass protest meeting of Akron Jews. Sent to President Harding, the resolution stated, "We, the members of six Hebrew Orthodox congregations of Akron earnestly beg that you veto the immigration bill . . . contrary to American traditions and practices . . . would prevent the uniting of families of American citizens and residents separated by the war."⁷⁸

Examples of patriotic fervor abounded in the Akron Jewish community. Mention has already been made of prayers offered for Spanish-American servicemen and the use of military companies to commemorate President McKinley's birthday.⁷⁹ It should also be noted that the local paper cited the Akron Hebrew Reformed Temple as "the first to hold services in commemoration of the death of President McKinley. At the services Friday evening, the congregation arose and repeated the memorial prayer. The sermon was very impressive."⁸⁰ World War I patriotism also infected the Jewish community. Many served and there was little support for Rabbi Cronbach's pacifist position. The local Jewish leadership also subscribed to the virtues of "Americanization." Thus, the president of the Federation put the obligation of welcoming the new Jewish immigrants in the context of providing them "with that instruction

and education which will teach them our [italics added] American ideas and ideals, so that they may quickly become acceptable American citizens of whom we may be proud."⁸¹

While social bonding remained heavily concentrated within the Jewish community, there were numerous instances of Jewish participation in non-Jewish social groups, especially on the part of the older or "establishment" Jewish residents. Links with the Masons remained strong. It will be recalled that in 1911 a local lodge was involved in the cornerstone-laying ceremonies of Temple Israel. While most Jewish involvement centered in the Adoniram lodge, other Masonic groups such as the Henry Perkins Lodge #611 and the Blue Lodge also had Jewish members.⁸² Well known Jewish lay leaders acquired leadership positions in the Masons (e.g., Moses Joseph who became grand chaplain). Even a newer immigrant, Nate Wollins, could choose to join and move up the Masonic ranks, becoming a 32nd-degree Mason and a member of the Yusef-Khan Grotto.⁸³ Another fraternal order which attracted Jewish membership was the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. Its membership included such names as Loeb, Tuholske, Fuerst, Whitelaw, Greenberger, and Ferbstein, and Rabbi Philo, who served as lodge chaplain. Prominent Jews like Herry Polsky, Simon Morgenroth, and Jerome Dauby were members of one of the city's two main clubs, the Akron City Club, and, as suggested earlier, a local history even identifies one or two as connected with Fairlawn, one of the city's two country clubs.⁸⁴

The multiple Jewish organizational membership pattern described in an earlier chapter could extend into the greater community. Louis

Loeb, president of Temple Israel and a director of the Jewish Social Service Federation, was also grand treasurer of a Masonic lodge, and a member of BPOE and the Akron City Club. His wife, an honorary president of the Council of Jewish Women, was also an active member of the Women's City Club. Similarly, Dr. Morris Tuholske, active in Temple Israel, Rosemont Country Club, and a president of B'nai B'rith, belonged to the local Washington Chapter Royal Arch Masons and the Elks. Nicholas Greenberger, connected with Temple and Rosemont Country Club, belonged to the Elks, Modern Woodsmen of America, and was president of the local Civitan Club.⁸⁵

While membership in non-Jewish groups such as those mentioned above is certainly indicative of one level of societal interactions, it is more difficult to establish the precise nature and extent of intimate personal friendships between Jews and non-Jews. Yet it is precisely this social intimacy, especially at the highest social levels, which is most instructive regarding structural assimilation. The Knight family of newspaper fame was probably the most prominent Akron family mentioned in this regard. C. L. Knight apparently had close relationships with both Alex and Armin Sicherman (Alex was his personal physician) and the Whitelaws, and John Knight played football with Sidney Freeman.⁸⁶

There is of course another sense of the term "social" than that implied above, involving the active awareness of societal problems and social responsibilities. It is in this sense that Rabbi Philo identified his own personal efforts to bring about "more friendly feelings between Jews and Gentile."⁸⁷ It is also in this context that Jews

deliberately worked--and let others know they worked--to keep their brethren from becoming a public charge ("Let any citizen ask how many Jewish poor have begged, how many in poorhouses as vagabonds. It is not because they do not exist, but because the [congregation] would not permit it.")⁸⁸

Evidence that religious links were being forged between Reform Judaism and liberal Christianity in Akron was cited in an earlier chapter. To review: the city's Christian congregations and two ministers were invited to share in the Akron Hebrew Congregation's twenty-fifth anniversary. Reverend Ira Priest, president of Buchtel College, gave the first Christian address from a Jewish pulpit (1898), a Universalist minister participated in Rabbi Gross' installation, rabbis spoke from Christian pulpits.⁸⁹ Although the limits of such "detente" soon became defined, in 1929 a full page local ad "dedicated to the cause of spiritual development" featured a sermonette quote--with accompanying picture--of Rabbi Alexander. Furthermore, this ad, which called for widescale Sunday church attendance, prominently displayed pictures of major local churches--including Temple Israel.⁹⁰

Akron's Jews were willing to seek non-Jewish help and allies for local projects and international concerns. Thus, the Akron Hebrew Alliance in 1891 was reported as asking for the cooperation of all citizens in its immigrant aid program. At a mass meeting in 1905, Rabbi Philo indicated that he would gladly accept money from gentiles for the suffering Jews of Russia.⁹¹ Several years later Temple Israel sent out a form letter asking for outside assistance with its new building program. In 1913, Rabbi Gross, incensed over the ritual murder

trials in Russia, planned a citizen's mass meeting and urged "not only Jews but all citizens" to attend.⁹² The meeting was presided over by a non-Jewish local judge with other prominent Christians including a minister, the prosecuting attorney, and another judge actively participating. The report of this rally noted that "many religions" were represented in the audience.⁹³

Rabbi Philo stands out among the rabbis of this period in his willingness to express a message which could be surprisingly critical of the Christian community. In a long printed column he indicated that there was "room for much moral improvement" in Akron. He charged that though Akron had many churches, there was "little genuine religion." Indeed, he saw the multiplicity of churches as evidence of the lack of unity and love. A major complaint revolved around the public schools which he claimed were really all sectarian. "In every school room, a different religious creed is taught . . . [which] conforms with the convictions of the teacher in charge." Philo insisted that it was not the function of the public schools to teach religion. He argued that Akron "needs non-sectarian public schools." Furthermore, he believed that many Akronites couldn't "breathe" in the narrow theology which too often was their only recourse and recommended a non-denominational church as the answer.⁹⁴

There are other data which provide insight into the response of this era's general Akron community to the local Jewish community, to individual Jewish residents, and to matters of Jewish concern. Extensive newspaper coverage given to local religious holidays and observances, congregational affairs, and social events suggests awareness of

the Jewish community and may well indicate more general readership interest. Thus, a rabbi's scholarly sermon was reproduced verbatim because it had "so much value to others besides those of his faith."⁹⁵ Front page coverage was allocated to stories ranging from local synagogue disturbances to local communal action on behalf of new Russian immigrants. An example of press awareness of Jewish sensitivities occurred when an announcement of "Jewish Easter" services was corrected the next day with regrets for "an excessively annoying blunder."⁹⁶

Considerable attention was bestowed on the rabbinical leadership of Temple Israel, the city's largest Jewish religious institution. Rabbi Philo's press was especially good. "He is a most congenial gentleman, a scholar, a student, a thinker and an eloquent orator. His personality has done much to help him in his work. Since his coming to the city he has done much for his congregation and has endeared himself to all. Both Jew and Gentile love and respect him."⁹⁷ Two years later the accolades were, if anything, intensified. "Perhaps few pastors better known in Akron . . . his courageous stands . . . on prominent questions of reform, and his lively interest in all public affairs both state and local, has given him an influence felt throughout the city, and commended him popularly to the friendship of all."⁹⁸ As indicated before, Philo was associated with labor causes. The Akron Central Labor Union in 1905 acknowledged his contributions. "His effort in behalf of organized labor . . . endeared him to the delegates of the Central Labor Union and to members of all the unions in the city and vicinity affiliated with our Central body . . . he has deeply studied and considered the problems of labor and economic conditioning . . . recognized the need of

the toiling masses . . . ever placed his best services at our command . . . to arbitrate, to discuss and to advise . . . in promoting the interests of the union men in Akron and vicinity."⁹⁹ Much as Philo was popular in the city at the turn of the century, so Rabbi Alexander was admired in the greater community in the 1920s. He was praised in 1928 as an "outstanding figure in Akron for the past nine years not only in church affairs but in community and civic life."¹⁰⁰

There are also examples of recognition extended to the Jewish business community. A Jewish business firm which was singled out several times for commendation was J. Koch & Company. The store was noted for "their straightforward, honorable way of doing business . . . honest goods and honest prices No firm anywhere in the U.S. in the clothing or any other business, stands higher or commands greater respect"¹⁰¹ Honesty was also singled out as an exemplary trait of Jewish business man Jacob P. Whitelaw. Thus, "honesty and industry . . . were ruling traits of his nature" and he was further identified as "universally esteemed by his fellow citizens."¹⁰²

Local response seems more ambiguous vis-a-vis matters of national and international Jewish concern. Newspaper editorials of 1886, 1888, and 1889 joined the national trend advocating immigration restrictions and restraints on foreign laborers, and supporting legislation limiting immigration of undesirable aliens (" . . . they are of the physically inferior races") and generally restricting immigration.¹⁰³ However, Russia's persecution of the Jews was strongly condemned. "Nothing in recent history has so appalled the civilized world as Russia's inhuman persecution . . . in pursuing her barbaric policy toward five million

of her subjects . . . a supreme contempt for the opinion of the civilized nations of the world."¹⁰⁴ On a more mundane level, the press could even hold up Baroness Hirsch and her extensive charitable contributions as "an example for the Christians of the world to emulate."¹⁰⁵

A strong case against anti-semitic invective appeared in an 1895 editorial. Reporting on a well-known German anti-semite newly arrived in this country, the editorial found it "hard to believe that this impudent agitator will gain . . . more than trouble for his pains. . . . what business has he to meddle with our affairs at all. The Jews are not giving us any troubles, and if they were, we . . . take care of ourselves." The column went on to decry the recent Jew-baiting in Germany as "an almost incomprehensible example of surviving barbarism." While the recent arrival of many new Jewish immigrants was acknowledged with less than overwhelming enthusiasm, they were seen as part of the larger general and Christian immigration from similar parts of the world. "We should have been glad if they had not come; being here, we shall protect them and give them a chance, and it would be well if all of the immigrants were likely to make as good use of their chances as the Jews among them." The final word on the German named Ahlwardt: "The man is either a pestilent rioter or a downright idiot."¹⁰⁶

The Ahlwardt editorial seems to corroborate Bloom's analysis of anti-semitism in Akron. He claimed there was little, especially before World War I. (It will be recalled that national discrimination was seen as on the rise after 1910.) According to Bloom, if the sentiment of the city could not exactly be termed pro-Jewish, it could legitimately

be described as "anti-anti-Semitic." Bloom also commented on the "ripples of editorial indignation" condemning early twentieth century pogroms and the support for Congressional resolutions which officially expressed such condemnation.¹⁰⁷

Recollections of personal experiences are more divergent. Max Schneier, mentioned in an earlier chapter in connection with his business success story, had no question but that anti-semitism did exist. He recalled restaurants and institutions who rejected business dealings with him because of his Jewish identification.¹⁰⁸ In his view, this barrier did break down, but only slowly and gradually. Another prominent merchant insisted there was little anti-semitism in the community but was able to elaborate on his personal efforts to combat what he observed in his own store. For example, overheard anti-semitic remarks were handled by initiating a private dialogue with the offender.¹⁰⁹

It is difficult to know how much significance to assign to delinquent incidents such as that of four young boys arraigned for disturbing services by throwing stones at the Temple, or the destruction of property at the Sons of Peace congregation, or recollections of youthful name-calling.¹¹⁰ Perhaps more revealing are some rabbinical charges made still in the pre-war period. Thus, Rabbi Philo accused the YMCA of being "unworthy" and "discriminating" and Rabbi Gross accused a local Baptist minister of scattering "seeds of hate" and claimed he had "wantonly . . . insulted the intelligence and outraged the sensibilities of a number of Akron's citizens who profess the Jewish faith . . ." (attacks against those of Italian and Hungarian descent were also decried).¹¹¹

The 1920s need to be considered as a special case. Local Jewish perception of social discrimination seems to have become quite acute by then and the view prevailed that the Rosemont Country Club was organized because Jews were excluded from such country clubs as Portage (despite the above presented evidence that a few Jews may at one time have belonged to Fairlawn Country Club, the general perception seems to be that all country club membership was restricted).¹¹² The two major city clubs seem to have had different policies regarding Jews, the City Club accepting them, the University Club following a practice of social exclusion.¹¹³ It would seem more than coincidental that in the year the Jewish country club was established (1921), Temple Israel's minutes record the purchase of a quantity of published materials combating anti-semitism for donation to the Akron public library.¹¹⁴

There is no doubt that Akron was an active center of Klan activities in the 1920s. Beginning in 1921, peaking in 1925, and virtually dissolved by 1928, the Klan in the mid-twenties had its largest chapter in Akron, claiming an enrollment exceeding 52,000.¹¹⁵ At one point the Klan actually controlled the offices of mayor, superintendent of schools, county sheriff, county prosecutor, clerk of courts, two of the three county commissioners, and four of seven seats of the Akron board of education plus several judges.¹¹⁶ The impact of all this Klan power on the Jewish community is open to debate. Clearly Jews, along with Roman Catholics and Negroes, were shut out of possible serious political contention during the years that Klan power made it expedient for anyone with political aspiration to join its ranks.¹¹⁷ Thus, when Jewish attorney Charles Sacks attempted to turn an acting

appointment as the city's chief electrical officer into a permanent assignment, he was told that that was impossible because of possible Klan repercussions.¹¹⁸ In 1924, school board member, Harry Huber resigned his seat for what he said were business reasons.¹¹⁹ In a "Klan Symposium" written two years later, Dr. W. E. Du Bois charged that this resignation was actually forced because Huber was Jewish. Du Bois referred to his lecture in Akron not long after the event. "And yet, there in Akron, in the land of Joshua L. Giddings, in the Western Reserve, I found the Klan calmly and openly in the saddle. The leader of the local Klan was president of the Board of Education and had just been tremendously busied in driving a Jew out of the public schools."¹²⁰

A Jewish attorney who claimed he knew of no actual Klan-initiated damage to local Jews was Lee Ferbstein. He recalled the situation as one involving considerable noise but with the community's "better element" not taking the matter seriously and with the press lampooning the Klan as "knights of the facial diaper."¹²¹ Bloom would agree that Jews were not the chief targets of the Klan. However, he claimed that Jewish stores suffered from a silent boycott and social relations in clubs of mixed memberships were strained.¹²² (This supports national observations that the Klan's efforts to boycott Jewish stores were feeble and failed abysmally because the townspeople were on good terms with Jews they actually knew.)¹²³ He also believed that the Klan's numerical and political clout resulted in intensified in-group Jewish sentiment which bridged internal class, ethnic, and theological barriers (i.e., external anti-semitic rumblings nurtured internal structural

assimilation).

Interactions during the Depression and World War II (1929-1945)

With the exception of the relatively few new German-Jewish refugees, American gentiles now increasingly interacted with a second generation, determinedly upward-bound Jewish community. While the arenas of interaction remained the same (i.e., economic, civic and cultural, political, social, religious), the previously described nationwide upsurge of anti-semitism during this period raised a critical concern which cut across these fields of study.

It will be recalled that the patterns of Jewish economic adjustment in Akron during these years assured high visibility and narrowly circumscribed community interactions.¹²⁴ This was primarily due to a continuing wide-scale presence in the commercial sector of the economy. Thus, Jew met gentile across the cash register (sometimes with special implications as, for example, when the business at hand was a pawn shop--an enterprise monopolized by local Jewish merchants). Secondly, despite difficulties in breaking into the professions (medical school quotas; restrictive legal hiring practices), Jews worked in the professions at some four times their numerical proportions in the city. Such occupational visibility led Bloom to contend that Akron overestimated the size of its local Jewish population.¹²⁵

It bears repeating that the rubber industry and the Jewish community did not have a close working relationship. To the contrary, the prevailing recollection is one of decidedly limited white collar opportunities (and even a suggestion that discrimination may have existed

at the common laborer level).¹²⁶ There are exceptions to such an assessment (much as there were differences regarding the level of social harmony within the Jewish community). Attorney Lee Ferbstein claimed there was no industry-wide discrimination and pointed to Jews working in such roles as chemist, researcher, or salesman.¹²⁷ There were also the examples of Sydney Weinberg, a long-term Jewish member of Goodrich's board of directors (though not an Akron resident), and Karl Arnstein, vice-president of Goodyear Zeppelin Corporation.

A 1941 study of Akron and the rubber industry by a non-Jewish observer tends to support the more negative assessment. Thus, Alfred Jones remarked on the fact that the rubber chemists were so exclusively of "American" stock.¹²⁸ Furthermore, in the course of investigating the general attitudes of the rubber workers, he uncovered this extreme view: "As for the New Deal, I think its OK except that the Jews have gotten mixed up in it. Otherwise we'd be much farther along. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I hate the sight of a Jew. . . . They control the money of the United States. They have almost all big business concerns tied up and where they want them except Henry Ford, and maybe if they keep at him long enough, they'll get him too. I'm like Hitler when it comes to the Jews. They would all leave the country if I had the power. I get mad when I start talking about them."¹²⁹

In addition to a general wariness of rubber's personnel policies, Akron's Jews had doubts about their welcome in trucking, banking, heavy manufacturing, and the utilities (although the special counsel for the city's public utilities in the late 1930s was Jewish). One family

recalled (revealingly, with pride rather than condemnation) that their daughter was one of only two Jews hired by the telephone company.¹³⁰ Even more revealing of the scarcity of Jewish representation in these fields--and the expectations of the Jewish community when a breakthrough occurred--was the response to George Nobil's election to the Board of the First Central Trust Company in 1945. The director of the Jewish Center sent Nobil a letter in the name of the Center Board, reading in part, "I was very thrilled to read in yesterday's newspaper . . . that you were elected to the Board. . . . We know that your presence . . . will be a great asset to the community and we shall all benefit from your efforts" [*italics added*].¹³¹

On the positive side of the employment picture, the educational establishment introduced no apparent restrictions on the employment of Jewish teachers, and some 3 percent of the local college faculty in 1939 were identified as Jewish.¹³² This latter surprisingly liberal stance was probably directly attributable to the policies of the then college president who declared that "in these days, one must give the lie to prejudice before it arises."¹³³

Finally, the economic pressures of the Depression need to be reconsidered in terms of their implications for communal interaction. The extent of the catastrophe meant that the Jewish community had to bend its long standing position of economic self-reliance and turn to the outer community for aid. Thus, the city's oldest established religious institution, Temple Israel, had to borrow substantial funds from the bank; the Jewish Social Service Federation had to transfer relief cases to the Department of Public Charities; and Bloom estimated that as many

as 10 percent of Jewish families received aid directly from such sources as CWA and WPA.¹³⁴

Civic and cultural points of interaction expanded in a period of proliferation of Jewish and non-Jewish agencies and activities. The Jewish Center became the major institutional vehicle for communal outreach in this area. Initially conceived in more parochial terms, the need to prove anti-semitic charges false and the pressing need for additional revenue were seen as reasons for the change in Center orientation to a position of greater inclusiveness.¹³⁵ Such openness could produce dramatic figures in some enrollment data. For example, in 1943, of 195 children participating in the summer camping program, only 69 were Jewish.¹³⁶

The heart of the Center's cross-cultural programming was the Civic Forum. As outlined in an earlier chapter, the Forum brought speakers of such national repute as Elmer Davis, Will Rogers, Will Durant, Amelia Earhart, Bertrand Russell, and Eleanor Roosevelt to Akron. The value placed on such programming was exceptional. One of the fifty reasons given for joining the Center in 1934 was that it sponsored the Forum, "which attracts to our halls a large audience of non-Jews and emphasizes to them the high . . . calibre of Jewish thought."¹³⁷ The extent of this preoccupation with strengthening the Center's esteem in the general community was indicated by the contention that even if the Center had done "nothing else" (than offer the Forum) it would have performed "a worthy service."¹³⁸

The Center not only provided services to the greater community, it participated in existing greater community programs as well. For

example, one year the Center Auxiliary supplied some thirty workers for the Community Chest Drive. In 1943, the Center, as well as the Jewish Social Service Federation, became members of the newly established Council of Social Agencies of Summit County. Another specific reason given for joining the Center was that it represented the Jews of Akron in civic undertakings such as the peace movement and city beautification. Other Jewish organizations also actively encouraged their membership to participate in civic affairs. In 1938, a team of ten women from Pioneer Women, twenty men from the Criterion Club, ten from Farband, and other representatives from various sisterhood groups were identified as Community Chest volunteers.¹³⁹ Individual Jewish community leaders were associated with prominent civic positions as well. In the late thirties and early forties, Rabbi Alexander served as chairman of the City Health Commission; Lee Ferbstein became the first president of the Council of Social Agencies, George NobiI headed the merchants' division of the Community Chest, and Center director Howard Adelstein was elected chairman of the Akron Group Work Council. The city's mayor (Harter) also named H. B. Harris, H. S. Subrin, and Howard Adelstein to serve on the Citizen's Postwar Planning Commission.¹⁴⁰

National and international events of the thirties and early forties made politics an arena of activity the local Jewish community could scarcely ignore even though their presence in the councils of political power remained minimal. In contrast to observations discussed earlier regarding national Jewish voting trends, Bloom's study found no evidence of what could be called a "Jewish" vote in the 1930s.¹⁴¹ He found that while the disproportionate number of merchants in the

community tended to give a "conservative cast" to the Jewish electorate, the younger and less affluent tended to favor the New Deal. He further claimed that the local Jewish vote could not be "delivered" and that no one had succeeded in organizing the Jewish community for political purposes. Whether they succeeded or not, there is evidence that at least some Jewish leaders believed they could. Thus, full page ads in the Center News and Yearbooks signed by such well-known community leaders as Sam Friedman, Nathan Koplín, and Charles Sacks, appeared in 1938, 1943, 1944, and 1945 supporting specific candidates for mayor, governor, and congressman.¹⁴² Such political support was not carefully disassociated from specifically Jewish concerns either. To the contrary, the 1938 ad specifically recommended the candidate as a supporter of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine and "as a friend of the Jewish people [who] will at all times work for the interests of the Jewish people both at home and abroad."¹⁴³

Although Bloom is probably correct in discounting the impact of left-wing Jewish politics in Akron (indeed, claiming it was not uncommon to find Bund members voting a straight Republican ticket), it should be recalled that the Jewish community was not unmindful of the International Workers Order and considerable debate ensued as to their right (at one point denied) even to have access to Center facilities for meetings.¹⁴⁴ A non-Jewish labor activist, who described Akron as having the largest Young People's Socialist League group between New York and Chicago and who helped establish the local Socialist Workers Part in 1938, described that party's membership as deriving from a variety of family backgrounds including hillbilly, foremen's children, and Jewish.¹⁴⁵ In any event,

political associations were not exactly a secret in the Akron Jewish community and unusual party affiliations were known and remembered (e.g., the Jewish lawyer who was active in the World Federalists).

Ideologically, the national Jewish community at this time was typically characterized as strongly committed to Democratic New Deal liberalism. While Roosevelt certainly had a lot of support in the local community (The Federation president's 1935 report referred to "the mighty leader whom fate has ordained to point the way out of our difficulties"), the few Jewish figures who achieved political visibility (e.g., Charles Sacks, chief assistant prosecuting attorney in 1935-36, who was appointed municipal judge to fill an unexpired term in 1943) did so within the Republican party.¹⁴⁶ (More will be said about this "Republican connection" in a following section.) Paralleling this mixed New Deal allegiance is the evidence regarding the community's liberal political ideology. The Akron Jewish Center, for example, presented a "progressive point of view" insofar as its Forum programming of national and international issues was concerned (by 1933 controversial discussions of the New Deal, capitalism, and disarmament were sponsored).¹⁴⁷ Despite this willingness to open up a platform for the national liberal issues of the day, liberal local issues were conspicuously avoided. In view of what was going on in Akron in the early thirties, it seems significant that such topics as labor movements, industrial unions, and racial problems were absent from the Forum agenda. Hurvitz claims that the avoidance of such sensitive areas until the 1937-1942 period involved a "conscious effort" to bypass such "greater community currents."¹⁴⁸ (This suggests either conflicting internal political views or concern

about the greater community's response to sponsorship of such controversial issues.)

There was no comparable foot-dragging in local Jewish support and display of "Americanism" and patriotism. One of the Center's stated constitutional objectives was "to foster and develop the highest ideals of American Citizenship."¹⁴⁹ To promote such objectives, the institution took great pride, for example, in bringing a "great American patriotic play" to the general public (simultaneously noting that such a production would enhance the prestige of American Jewry).¹⁵⁰ The local Jewish War Veterans, as described in an earlier chapter, were also deeply committed to promoting patriotic activities including the education of Jewish immigrants in the principles of American democracy. They were especially interested in promoting American citizenship, an interest which was widely shared in the Jewish community (e.g., B'nai B'rith assumed the responsibility of defraying expenses for citizenship papers as needed). As the European skies darkened, the push to insure citizenship status for all local Jews intensified. In 1937 the Akron Jewish News urged anyone knowing of a Jewish alien to turn in his or her name to a designated committee.¹⁵¹ The number of free citizenship classes increased. In 1938 two teachers were available every Thursday evening. The following year there were two-hour free classes twice daily. The Center urged all non-citizens to "wake up," become aware of the imperative nature of citizenship, and take advantage of the Center's assistance in filing papers, etc.¹⁵²

Once war broke out, the Jewish community spared no measure of patriotic fervor or endeavor. The chairman of the Jewish Army and Navy

Committee, Samuel Friedman, charged the community: "When you are called upon as a member either of the Center or as a part of the Akron Jewish Community to perform some task which is part of our national defense . . . be ready to respond to the request of your leaders. . . . It is my hope . . . we will write a new milestone in the history of service by the Akron Jewish Center to the community of Akron during the coming year."¹⁵³ Throughout the war years, the level of Jewish support for the War Chest, national bond drives, scrap collections, Red Cross, and servicemen-related projects proceeded at a feverish pitch. Even Center membership was solicited in the context of its virtual indispen- sibility to the war effort in such areas as civilian defense, moral support of the forces, preparation for post-war adjustment ("For Victory and for Peace, join the Center now!").¹⁵⁴

For Akron Jews, the war effort was not only a matter of inter- national objectives but of local preoccupation with proving self-worth and refuting anti-semitism. An article in the Akron Center News in November, 1945, reported on the upcoming War Records Month by asserting that World War II "may be the last opportunity the Jews of this country will ever have to cite, by fact and figure, the numbers, ratios and percentages in reply to such questions as 'What do the Jews do when our country is threatened with destruction? . . . Do they give their last full measure of devotion?' There is nothing for which the Jews have to apologize. But theories, guesses, etc. do not count. Accurate facts, valid statistics, honest name by name citizens and enumerations are what decent, fair-minded Americans want and should have" [italics added].¹⁵⁵ The Center article went on to note that while it had worked

at keeping accurate files on all local Jewish servicemen and women, the files were still incomplete. The major purpose of such records was clearly stated: "To secure accurate facts to refute any possible charge by subversive elements about Jewish participation in the war effort." The Jewish Center jumped into the records game calling for all-out support: "Let Akron be the first city to complete its record."¹⁵⁶

Social adjustment patterns continued to include examples of well-known figures in Jewish communal life who also maintained some connections with non-Jewish social groups. Much as the prominent merchants who preceded them and wore their contemporaries, the newly emerging professionals also became active Masons, Eagles, Elks, and City Club members (e.g., attorneys Charles Sachs, Nathan Koplin, Sam Friedman, and Lee Ferbstein).¹⁵⁷ Social contacts between ethnically similar Jewish and gentile immigrants was virtually non-existent compared to the earlier days of German bonding. However, one Hungarian-Jewish senior citizen remembered attending Hungarian picnics and there is evidence of at least one meeting (discussed in greater detail below) of local Hungarians which included a Jewish communal leader as speaker and which took action on Hungarian Jewish policy.¹⁵⁸

Social interactions also occurred on Jewish turf. In his annual report of 1937, the Center director reported a substantial increase in non-Jewish children's membership. He noted, "We think this is a good thing because it allows our Jewish children and non-Jewish children of our community to meet with one another, work and play together at a time when they are not so conscious over their differences and not so set in [their] prejudices."¹⁵⁹ Such mingling was never defended as contributing

to assimilationist goals but rather as promoting improved inter-group relations ("We think that this kind of program will bring about a better understanding of Jews and non-Jews in Akron").¹⁶⁰ Thus, when a 1940 Silver Gloves tournament aroused some question over the Jewish character of the institution (given the obvious mixing of Jews and white and black gentiles in the audience), the Center pointed with pride to its policy which by then had changed sufficiently to warrant the institution's identification as a real "Community center" where "all can come and attend city-wide events. . . ."161

An especially interesting aspect of social interactions between Jews and gentiles occurred vis-a-vis Akron's black community. Early in 1937 Dr. Levey's athletic report to the Center Board noted that the question of colored children using the Center pool had been raised during a meeting planning a learn-to-swim week. Boards of the various organizations involved in planning the city-wide program were asked to discuss the question. The Center Board's position was complex. It claimed it was "not opposed to permitting colored boys and girls to use our pools" but at the same time indicated that the colored question was not necessarily a Center problem because membership was not solicited from this group.¹⁶² Furthermore, "the Jewish Center did not care to place the YMCA and YWCA on the spot by approving mixed swims in the face of these other organizations refusing them."¹⁶³ In 1937 the Center's desire to work harmoniously with these groups apparently superseded major commitments in the field of racial integration. However, since the various agencies agreed they would not feel in an uncomfortable position if such pool usage was permitted, the pool was not closed

to blacks.¹⁶⁴

The pool became an issue again in April, 1945, when the Summit County Children's Home initiated an unofficial request for its use (the YMCA pool had turned them down because two Negro children were involved). The Center's athletic committee decided that the swimming pool should be offered free of charge to the twenty-four boys from the home and the Board approved this decision.¹⁶⁵ The same month a report on adult activities contained the interesting observation that "race problems must be understood lest Jews become the offenders with the Negro . . . or create narrow ghettos thriving on fear of the outside world."¹⁶⁶

Connections between Jews and gentiles in Akron also existed in or derived from the religious arena. Probably the outstanding individual example of this was Rabbi Alexander, who was widely regarded as the Jewish community's main "emissary" to the Christians. An earlier chapter has already described Alexander's visits to Christian pulpits, his overall civic prominence, and the congregation's pride in such activities.¹⁶⁷ Bloom undoubtedly had Alexander in mind when he noted that in the rabbi's hands "Judaism is no vital compulsive force, but a mannerly social practice in the best Gentile taste."¹⁶⁸ It will be recalled that Alexander himself specifically commented on the pleasure he took in his friendships with the local Christian clergy and participated with them in ventures to promote "better feeling among different creeds and to develop in the churches a peace program."¹⁶⁹ The rabbi was not alone in his involvement with interfaith programming. The local Jewish War Veterans sponsored non-sectarian Thanksgiving religious services at the

Center and Jewish religious school students visited and were visited by church members.¹⁷⁰ Finally, religious issues pushed Jewish community opinions into the public arena. It will be recalled that the introduction of Chanukkah observances in one school at the time was commended as setting "a precedent for the recognition of all religions in holiday celebrations which might well be followed by other schools in Akron and other cities."¹⁷¹

Much as in earlier periods there is evidence of Akron's general awareness of and response to the local Jewish community and Jewish communal leaders. For example, there was substantial press coverage of scheduled local Jewish events as well as issues of international Jewish concern. There was editorial praise for Rabbi Alexander ("He is an Akronite of whom all Akron is proud. May his second twenty years be . . . as great an inspiration to others as the first. We wish Akron had more such self-professed 'creditors.'").¹⁷² There was also support for the Jewish people. Another editorial written in the same critical year (1939) remarked on the special and sorrowful significance of the approaching Passover: ". . . in this dark age there are new exoduses in progress necessitated by blind hate that is outside every consideration of human decency." Turning to the holiday's local observance, the editorial went on to note that, "Here, the members of an ancient and proud race can conduct the ceremonies of their venerable act of thanksgiving with no mortal fear. . . ." This right to worship was put in the context of the basic law of the land and it was further asserted that "If these rights ever go, they will go for all races, creeds, classes and colors." The editorial concluded that if recent history proved anything it was

that whenever one group was singled out for persecution, none was safe.¹⁷³ In addition to a sympathetic press, there was also public acknowledgment of the contributions made by a Jewish institution such as the Center to the city at large. Akron civic leaders like the executive secretary of the local Red Cross, the chairman of the USO Citizen's Committee, the minister of the First Congregational Church, and the judge of the Juvenile Court applauded Center efforts in their respective fields of concern.¹⁷⁴ On the occasion of the Center's thirteenth birthday, the city's mayor commented, "The city of Akron has for thirteen years been appreciative of the splendid and helpful part which the Jewish Center has played in the civic life of our city Our city hails the beneficent and patriotic work . . . of this great civic, patriotic and service-rendering enterprise."¹⁷⁵

As suggested above, anti-semitism was an aberrant form of community response which greatly concerned local Jews. One need only recall the Center's argumentation for the need of precise Jewish war records to realize that this was a group with its social antennae alerted. A specific incident can further elaborate on this point. A highly critical letter from the Center director to the president of the Orthodox group, the Vaad Hakashruth, was mentioned in an earlier chapter to illustrate the contentious dimensions such groups could assume. While the "tumult" and "disgraceful behavior" directly affronted the director, there was an additional matter that aroused substantial concern, namely the presence in the building at that moment of a local school principal whom "We had to spirit . . . quickly out of the building." This "spiriting" was deemed necessary so that this

greater community representative might ". . . not witness the exhibition."¹⁷⁶

Correlating such defensive maneuvers with actual incidents of local anti-semitism is difficult. As was the case in the preceding period, perceptions of the existence and extent of anti-semitism vary. One resident declared that Akron was not an anti-semitic town but qualified this assessment with acknowledgment of "incidents."¹⁷⁷ A harsher evaluation charged that even the local Y's were inhospitable and when Jews did get in, bloody noses frequently resulted.¹⁷⁸ (Even if the facts are erroneous, the perception itself is noteworthy.) Still another community member remembered her children being called names in this period and became convinced that "underneath" gentiles in Akron didn't like Jews.¹⁷⁹ The above oral recollections are supplemented by some written records of the 1930s and 1940s. Among the fifty reasons cited for joining the Center in 1934 were its ability to reduce the feelings of "Rischus" between Jews and non-Jews while simultaneously providing privileges "without being exposed to the prejudices of non-Jews."¹⁸⁰

Bloom's study probed anti-semitic discrimination in Akron. He concluded that "in all areas they are regarded as undesirable neighbors (although not uniformly so). When Jews move into a street for the first time the residents become restive and it is felt that the property is likely to depreciate."¹⁸¹ Bloom went on to describe the social ostracism which greeted the first wealthy family to move into an elite section of town previously off limits to Jews. Although the wife had achieved acceptance by the "best people in town" due to her contributions to the

cultural life of the city, she quickly discovered that this companionship did not extend to neighborliness.¹⁸² The area involved was undoubtedly Fairlawn Heights which was not effectively integrated until the post war period. Yet, *having documented such examples of discrimination in housing*, it will be recalled that Bloom found that overall Jewish residence was primarily limited by financial considerations.¹⁸³

Mention of possible employment restrictions has already been suggested above. On this subject Bloom "seldom" found evidence of blatant and public prohibitions such as advertisements indicating no Jews need apply.¹⁸⁴ He did report, however, that Jews and gentiles admitted there were disadvantages facing Jews seeking employment. Bloom concluded that a minority of the larger concerns excluded Jews as a matter of policy, either expressed or concealed. Alleged reasons for such hiring practices were: "They are not strong enough for heavy work; Jews don't have loyalty to the company; Jews are too ambitious-- they know too much for their own good; you can't trust them; other employees don't want to work with Jews." When not hired, Jewish explanations were typified by such comments as: "It's just a matter of prejudice; a Jew has to be twice as good as a Gentile to get a job in this company; all the Nazis aren't in Germany; they're always afraid a Jew will get into competition and get their trade away."¹⁸⁵ That such assessments were not merely paranoid delusions was confirmed by Jones' study which reported strongly anti-semitic attitudes existing among some rubber workers (quoted above) and which also quoted a local priest as saying, "The Jews are at the bottom of most of our troubles, and will someday suffer for it."¹⁸⁶

Anti-semitic charges from a highly respectable source were directed against some of the newly arrived Jewish refugees in June, 1942, producing front page and editorial press coverage. The Council of the Summit County Medical Society made public a resolution recommending that local refugee physicians join the nation's armed forces and apply for citizenship. Noting that the community had provided many of them a place to live and the privilege of practicing, it urged that they in turn show appropriate appreciation ". . . for privileges and courtesies extended."¹⁸⁷ Claiming there were twelve to fifteen such physicians in the county, the Council implied they were assuming the positions of those local practitioners already serving their country ("snuggling down in a warm nest left vacant") rather than joining the war effort or manning the state institutions.¹⁸⁸

The Akron Jewish Community Council investigated the charges and refuted the Society's allegations. Identifying only ten refugee physicians in the county, it contended that of these only four were licensed, the others being local interns. Proceeding to document each of the physician's citizenship and military status, the Council warned that such an "unwarranted charge of lack of patriotism and appreciation . . . is productive of irreparable injury to the people thus singled out. . . ."¹⁸⁹ The Akron Beacon Journal entered the fray with an editorial entitled "Refugees Smeared" which was sharply critical of the medical society's misinformation and labeled the resolution a "gratuitous insult."¹⁹⁰ The editorial concluded that the medical society should be grateful to the Akron Jewish Community Council for searching out the facts and further recommended that the Society make suitable amends for

their unjustified stand. (The Beacon Journal, per C. L. Knight's instructions, had on another occasion refused to print a press release on Gerald K. Smith's efforts to organize a rally in Akron.)¹⁹¹

The Beacon Journal's position suggests that significant elements in the community did rally to support Jewish interests. Another example would be the protest meeting of the United Hungarian Societies of Akron alluded to earlier. Representatives included members of all the Christian Hungarian lodges, clubs, political parties, and social organizations. Speakers were a Canton Hungarian minister, a local Hungarian attorney, and Dr. F. W. Steiner, long active in local Zionist organization work. The mass meeting adopted several resolutions protesting Hungarian governmental policy toward the Jews (1939) and urging the liberal opposition of the government to act. These resolutions were to be communicated to Hungarian organizations throughout the country.¹⁹²

The Jewish community did not rely solely on such external support to combat anti-semitism. As indicated above, the Akron Jewish Community Council which was established in the late thirties took the major active role in investigating and challenging the medical society's case against the refugee physicians. In this instance, it was acting precisely within its institutional charge, namely to represent the total Jewish community in combatting discrimination. Two years after this incident, local Jewish representatives hosted a meeting with representatives from Canton, Youngstown, and Warren to discuss common problems of anti-semitism in the region.¹⁹³ If specific incidents and problems with anti-semitism were thus confronted head-on, considerable attention was also devoted to improving general attitudes--with the burden on the

"improving" seeming to rest on the Jewish community. Thus, one response pattern to perceived anti-semitism was a "try-harder" approach, such as appears in a mid-thirties annual Center presidential report. "If the Center served no other purpose than to try and act as an ambassador of good will from Jew to Gentile; if it served no other purpose than . . . to demonstrate our intention to our Christian brothers; or . . . to reduce the thunderous and echoing bolts of anti-Semitism, it has vindicated its birth and justified its survival. . . . It is our task . . . to apprise our oppressors of our dedication to society and to enlighten them of our noble deeds and sacrifices. . . . It is destined that we must be as good as gold to pass for silver [italics added]. . . let us gird our loins to the task."¹⁹⁴

Interaction in the Post War Era (1945-1975)

As reviewed in Chapter I, the post war period was characterized nationally by generally improved relations between Jews and gentiles. While total acceptance by Christian primary group cliques did not occur, participation was increasingly widespread in the worlds of work, civic and cultural affairs, etc.

Chapter II documented the upward economic mobility of Akron Jews and their continuing concentration in the business and professional sectors of the economy. Figures supplementary to those presented earlier underscore the relative high socio-economic level the Jewish community has attained. By 1948, only .4 percent of Akron's Jews were unskilled workers as compared to 27.3 percent for the general Akron population; 12.6 percent were in managerial positions vs. 8 percent

for Akron as a whole; 49 percent were retail proprietors while only 13 percent were so identified in the larger community; 13 percent were professionals compared to 7.7 percent in the greater community.¹⁹⁵

One interactional implication of such socio-economic standing--given the limited commitment to or imposition of stringent segregated residential patterns--was increased residential mixing in ever more prosperous neighborhoods.

The increasing economic success of Jewish businessmen in Akron was accompanied by their election to positions of prominence in the city's business establishment.¹⁹⁶ Thus, many Jews were active in the Akron Chamber of Commerce and in the 1960s two of them, Willard Bear and Bert Polsky, became Chamber president and honorary chairman of the Board, respectively. Not only was George Nobil re-elected to his precedent-breaking bank directorship, but Willard Bear, Lincoln Gries, and Jerome Kaufman assumed similar positions with First National, Akron National, and Evans Saving Association. Jews also assumed the presidency of such general business organizations as the East Akron Board of Trade and the Akron Merchants Association. Furthermore, the more specialized business associations elevated Jews to their top positions (e.g., presidencies of the local Real Estate Appraisers, Appliance Dealers, Home Builders, Retail Grocers, and Meat Dealers).

Comparable recognition accrued to Jewish professionals.¹⁹⁷ Local Jewish lawyers became active in the Akron Bar Association and several, Herman Harris, Robert Moss, and Samuel Goldman, became presidents of that body. The Summit County Medical Society, cited for anti-semitism

in the previous period, by the 1950s had elected Drs. Millard Beyer and Arthur Dobkin to its presidency. Jewish practitioners served as chiefs of staff at Akron General Hospital (Drs. Alven Weil, Reuben Pliskin, and Benjamin Moorstein) and as heads of their respective local professional health organizations (podiatrists, psychiatrists, dentists, chiroprodists, optometrists). In education, they advanced to such positions as high school principal and director of research and development for the Akron public schools and chairman of an academic department at Akron University. Ben Maidenburg's role as executive editor and later publishers of the Akron Beacon Journal and the Berk family's role as officers and manager of WAKR deserve mention in terms of the prominence local Jews had achieved in the communications area.

The Jewish businessmen and professionals who achieved prominence in the greater community by virtue of their position or through special selection by their colleagues were typically also active in and generally respected by the Akron Jewish community. For example, Willard Bear, Akron Chamber of Commerce president, was president of the Jewish Center; Herman Harris, Akron Bar Association president, was president of the Jewish Community Council; Dr. Irvin Kaplan, president of the Akron Dental Society, became president of the Jewish Center. An exception to this generalization, worth noting because of the previous special scrutiny given the role of Jews in the rubber industry, was the relatively inactive Jewish communal role assumed by Sam Salem, the first and only Jew to become a top executive of any of the major rubber companies.¹⁹⁸

In Akron's civic and cultural arena the evidence is overwhelming: Jewish participation in the post war period was extensive and included significant representation in the highest community leadership positions. Such participation can be analyzed in terms of institutional outreach, inter-organizational connections, and individual activities.

The Jewish Center continued to pride itself on its inter-group programming. Referring to the Center in the first person idiom, the Akron Jewish News wrote: "Your Christian neighbors in Akron have grown to know you much better through my non-sectarian cultural activities such as free concerts, Talent Hunt, Civic Forum, Theatre Guild. . . . Ask any of your Christian friends what contribution the Jew makes to our city's culture and see whether or not the first thing he mentions is the Center and its activities."¹⁹⁹ It was possible for the "reaching out" to come from the other direction. On one occasion Akron's Council of Social Agencies asked the Federation to make its director, Nathan Pinsky, available on a part time basis until they could find a new executive. The Federation board responded by indicating its pleasure at such "recognition" and providing the requested services on a one day a week basis.²⁰⁰

The inter-organizational connection produced by such a personnel exchange was not an isolated incident. By 1955, the Center received a quarter of its financing from the United Fund.²⁰¹ Similar community agency funding for Jewish Family Service has already been discussed in an earlier chapter. The United Fund for its part benefited from considerable leadership derived from the Jewish community (campaign directors, board members, solicitors, etc.). It was in the Federation

offices that plans were laid converting the Community Chest to the United Fund.²⁰² In major part, the United Fund also based its leadership training programs, child adoption procedures, and career planning services on the model provided by the Jewish Family Service.²⁰³ When a citizen's advisory committee concluded that the Juvenile Court needed an advisory board, the Jewish Social Service Federation and Jewish Center were invited to elect members to that board.²⁰⁴ Despite such examples of inter-connectedness, the self-selected separateness of Jewish social agencies was carefully maintained. For example, in 1951 there was a unanimous Federation Board decision that the agency should not move into combined offices with the Community Chest because of the need for frequent meetings with its sister agency, the Jewish Welfare Fund, and the need to work toward obtaining independent facilities.²⁰⁵

It is on the level of individual participation that the Jewish role in civic and cultural affairs is most easily documented.²⁰⁶ Of the two areas, the cultural "titles" were far fewer but did include such positions as president of the board of trustees of the Akron Art Institute (Bernard Schulman) and treasurer of the greater Akron Musical Association (Merryl Sicherman). It is in community social service--in health, education, recreation, and welfare--that Jewish participation was most prominent (a fairly self-evident duplication of Jewish commitments within their own communal domain). There were Jews who served on the hospital boards of Akron General, City, Children's, and even St. Thomas'. Jews assumed leadership roles in the local Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation, the March of Dimes, and the Heart Association, and were especially active in the Rehabilitation Center of Summit County.

Mental health attracted considerable Jewish participation with Federation director Nathan Pinsky involved in establishing a local mental hygiene clinic and Jewish community leader Belle Miller serving as president of two mental health county agencies. Involvement in the community's educational efforts is evident in Leslie Flaksman's and Sy Kaplan's roles as presidents of the Akron Area Adult Education Council Association as well as the presence of Willard Bear, Ben Maidenburg, and Bernard Rosen on the Board of Trustees of Akron University. Akron's recreational interests were served by local Jews who had leadership positions on recreational committees of the United Community Council, the Citizen's Committee for Public Swimming Pools, and the East Akron YMCA athletic club board of governors.

The major welfare agencies operating in the community at large (United Fund, Red Cross, United Community Council) did so with substantial leadership and grass roots support from the Jewish community. The United Fund seems to have received special Jewish attention and such leading personalities in the Jewish community as Charles Schwartz, Alex Schulman, Malvyn Wachner, Hyman Ekus, Morris Sacks, Norman Nobil, etc. served as board members, executive committee members, campaign chairman and leaders, etc. Ben Maidenburg at one point was publicly identified as "Mr. United Fund" of Akron.²⁰⁷ Jewish support was also evident in the Red Cross (Willard Bear and Millard Beyer served in the top local positions) and for the Council of Social Agencies, later known as United Community Council (Lee Ferbstein and Norman Nobil served as presidents). In addition to these major welfare institutions, Jewish Center board members were also active on other community boards

such as the YMCA, Salvation Army, International Center, and Goodwill Industries.

The adjustment pattern of multiple memberships in Jewish organizations documented in an earlier chapter apparently carried over to participation patterns in non-Jewish groups. The civic credits of Norman Nobil, a stellar performer in this mold, serves to illustrate this point.²⁰⁸

Civic Leadership

- General Chairman, United Fund-Red Cross Campaign
- President, Central Hospital Bureau
- President, United Community Council
- Board, Child Guidance Center
- Executive Committee, United Fund

Jewish Communal Leadership

- President, Jewish Social Service Federation
- President, Jewish Welfare Fund
- Vice-President, Akron Jewish Center

The family dimension of leadership roles cited in the earlier chapter on Jewish institutional development is found here once again. Thus, Norman's brother George, cited earlier for his role as bank director and president of the Akron Merchant Association, served on the executive committees of the local Red Cross and Akron General Hospital, was a United Fund board member, and a vice-president and trustee of the Art Institute.

It will be recalled that American-Jewish political consciousness was acute in the post war period, manifesting itself in continuing support of internationalism (providing for Holocaust survivors and Israel) and liberalism (commitment to fair employment, civil rights, etc.).²⁰⁹ Despite this reasonably coherent political ideology and a

widespread affinity for the national Democratic party, few Jews served in political office, especially outside of the larger cities. When they did, they most typically worked in appointive positions (e.g., housing commissioners) and in jobs associated with legal training (e.g., assistant district attorneys).

The Akron Jewish experience in the political arena essentially mirrored these generalizations. When the recognized patron of both internationalism and liberalism--Franklin Roosevelt--died, ". . . all activities [at the Center] stopped. There was no laughter and gaiety . . . all went into the Schul to attend services. . . . the oldest to the youngest . . . felt . . . they had lost a personal friend."²¹⁰ Commitment to Roosevelt's dual political emphases, however, was continued locally by Jewish individuals and groups. For example, in international affairs, Meyer Wise was active in forming the Akron UN Council, and the Akron Jewish Community Council worked to promote local political action for a less restrictive Displaced Person's Act.²¹¹

In 1950 the director of the Akron Jewish Community Council reviewed the legislation and social action which had preoccupied the Council over the preceding three years. The following excerpt from that report suggests the prevailing communal support for the liberal issues of the day and the role individual Jewish community leaders played in shaping liberal policies in the greater community.

. . . we have been deeply concerned with the civil rights program of the present administration, fair employment practice legislation, the recent federal housing bill, liberal legislation for displaced persons. . . . We have done everything in our power to express the voice of the Akron Jewish community to our Senators and Congressmen.

The same type of effort has been carried on at the state level, where for the past three years, we participated in efforts to bring about the passage of an Ohio Fair Employment Practice Bill. . . . We look back with pride to our role in the effort to create the Akron Commission on Civic Unity concerned with local problems of discrimination and civil rights. . . .

We point with pride to the fact that Mr. H. B. Harris, President of our Community Council, and Mrs. I. R. Birnbaum, member of our Borad, are both members of the Commission on Civic Unity. We are even more gratified that its first important statement of policy--that one that was enunciated at the time of the contemplated visit of Paul Robeson to our city--was introduced by Mr. Harris. . . .²¹²

Apparently the anti-Communist pressures of the mid-fifties did not squelch the Center Civic Forum's commitment to free speech on controversial issues. In 1954 the Forum sponsored a two-day conference on Communism which attracted students from many surrounding communities as well as reporters from both wire services (who in turn nationally publicized the Conference program).²¹³ The relationship of the Jewish community to the black community's struggle for civil rights will be discussed further below. Suffice it to say here that seven Jewish groups were among the sponsoring organizations of the 1952 Akron Committee for a Community Audit which was charged with studying discrimination in the city.²¹⁴ Mrs. I. R. Birnbaum was secretary-treasurer of this group and a substantial number of Jews served as sub-committee chairpeople. Local Jews also emerged as leaders of other popular liberal causes such as the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy.

Much as in the rest of the country, Akron's Jews were not overly visible in political office. A few were elected (e.g., Koplin, Neiman, and Reaven to City Council; Steiner to the Borad of Education; Koplin to municipal judge; Rosen ran unsuccessfully as the Democratic nominee

for Congressman) while others were political appointees (e.g., director of Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, deputy clerk and judge in Probate Court, numerous assistant city prosecutors).²¹⁵ In contrast to the preceding period, Jews now assumed party leadership positions in both political parties (e.g., Jerome Holub and Charles Sachs in the Republican party; Bernard Rosen and Fabian Yellin in the Democratic party).

Non-partisan citizen groups often included Jewish members.²¹⁶ Thus, the city's Citizens for Progress Committee included Willard Bear, Lincoln Gries, Ben Maidenburg, and Bert Polsky; the Citizens' Committee on Aging had a Jewish president; so did the Citizen's Advisory Committee to the Juvenile Court; the League of Women Voters had Jewish officers; the director of the Federation served on the Community Action Council, Juvenile and Probate Court committees on adoption and aging, and on the advisory committee of the Akron City Planning Commission.

The question of Akron Jewish voting patterns is considerably more complex than the generalization "Jews vote Democratic." Certainly large numbers--undoubtedly a substantial majority--did. However, of the relatively few Jews who ever achieved political visibility a surprising number did so as Republicans (e.g., Charles Sachs, Nathan Koplin, Jerome Holub). This somewhat erratic Jewish political behavior was not seriously questioned by the Jewish community and in no way adversely affected the esteem accorded these Jewish communal leaders. To the contrary, Jewish voters remember the vote-switching which occurred when a Jewish candidate like Nathan Koplin ran on the Republican ballot.²¹⁷ Such "landsmann" endorsements were not automatic, however, and a later

Jewish candidate for school board did not receive unconditional public or private block support.²¹⁸ Nevertheless, there was always distinct awareness on the part of the Jewish community of the Jewish connections of any candidate running for political office. This sensitivity extended beyond known fellow "landsmann." An outstanding example of "ethnic appeal" campaigning was an ad for a non-Jewish Democratic Congressman which appeared in the Akron Jewish News in 1954.²¹⁹ The ad featured not only the endorsement of several prominent Jewish community members but a picture of the candidate's mother some fourteen years earlier delivering a donation from the Akron Association of Hungarian Jews to a Women's Charity Society dinner in Budapest.

The local Jews who did succeed in the political arena tended to juggle multiple political, civic, and Jewish leadership roles much as their peers who achieved primary distinction in the community's economic or civic arenas. A prime example is Nathan Koplin:²²⁰

<u>Political Positions</u>	<u>Civic Positions</u>	<u>Jewish Positions</u>
-Asst. Akron Law Director	-President, Summit Co. United Fund	-President, Temple Israel
-Councilman-at-large	-Board of Trustees, YMCA	-President, Akron Jewish Center
-Municipal Judge	-Urban Renewal Commission	-President, Talmud Torah
-Probate Judge		-Board, Jewish Social Service Federation; Jewish Welfare Fund

It is difficult to ascertain the precise extent of Jewish involvement in non-Jewish social and fraternal groups. The only available figures derive from the 1975 demographic study of the Akron Jewish community and relate to the teenage children of the respondents. Five

times as many youth were described as not participating "at all" in non-Jewish organizations than as participating a "great deal."²²¹ Some 5 percent more teenagers were identified as belonging to Jewish organizations than non-Jewish organizations.²²² No similar statistical data are available for the adults in the community. It is fairly evident, however, that the men at least were participating in a greater number of social groups than before and that they were being elected to more leadership positions. Jews were members of the Masons, Eagles, Elks, Knights of Pythias, Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions, as well as the City Club, Toastmasters Club, and such veterans groups as the American War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion. There were Jewish presidents of several Lions clubs in the area, a few presidents of Kiwanis, a commander of the Summit County Council of American War Veterans and even presidents of Akron's Harvard Club.²²³

Invitation to membership in these groups was not viewed as a defection from the ranks. To the contrary, it could be viewed as reflecting credit on the Jewish community. Thus, the Center's director announced that "An honor was bestowed upon the Center this past year by the Akron Rotary Club when your executive director was invited to become a member of its body. . . ."²²⁴ The Center's Personnel Committee *agreed and recommended* that the director's membership fees be assumed by the Center much as was done for the YMCA and Boy Scout directors. *There were still bastions of Akron social exclusiveness* such as the University Club and the two country clubs which remained closed to Jews. Furthermore, an event such as the *annual cotillion of the Women's Board of Children's Hospital* (supposedly open to invitation on

the basis of the family's participation in community affairs) was suspect given the high rate of Jewish civic involvement and the few Jewish girls invited.²²⁵

The Akron Jewish Center continued to reach out to the greater community. In the mid-fifties, the Center's very name was seen as a "misnomer" given the institution's actual and more comprehensive role as "West side community center."²²⁶ Non-Jewish membership figures increased from 1,390 in 1949 to 2,490 in 1955.²²⁷ Early on in the post war period the pros and cons of maintaining a clearly identifiable sectarian bias received considerable attention. This was especially so in the case of the summer camp when its enrollment proved to be two thirds non-Jewish. It was proposed that the camp no longer be publicized as non-sectarian even at the risk of substantially lowered registration. An overtly sectarian position did not prevail, however, and the camp continued to be identified as under Jewish auspices and offering material of specialized Jewish content but essentially open to all. As for the counselors, they were to be employed on the basis of individual merit but a knowledge of Jewish life was a consideration in their hiring.²²⁸

There was a dramatic shift in the nature of social interactions between the local Jewish and black communities during this period. In the years immediately after the war, the Center pool remained the only swimming facility in the city which was open to both whites and blacks.²²⁹ The official Center policy continued to be one of keeping all of its facilities open to blacks either on a guest basis or through membership privileges. In the greater community, Jews were involved

in the local struggle for black civil rights. In this regard the community recognition of the race relations activities of I. R. Birnbaum and Belle Miller will be discussed further below. One feature article quoted a Jewish leader as remembering, "I used to be called to serve on all the boards . . . I worked on fair housing and urban league problems. . . ." ²³⁰ Not only individuals became involved. For example, the Akron Jewish Community Council intervened after Negroes protested the hiring practices of a Jewish grocer and worked out a solution which altered the grocer's employment patterns. ²³¹ However, a change came about in the sixties and by the early seventies local Jews were expressing concern over cooled relations between the black and Jewish communities (again, part of a national trend). In Akron, this "cooling off" on the Jewish side reflected such experiences as heightened tension and feelings of threat in changing neighborhoods, or the individual disillusionment of sympathizers who sought to provide housing and then had unsatisfactory experiences with black tenants. ²³² In any event, the Jewish leader quoted above as being on all the appropriate boards, by the early 1970s claimed he was no longer involved at all. "They don't ask me anymore. . . . I still have good friends in the black community, but I have little contact with the black community in general." ²³³

The interactional issue which seems to have received the greatest amount of Jewish attention in the religious arena was the question of religion in the schools. As previously mentioned in the above chapter on religion, the specific nature of Jewish concerns was reflected in the agenda of a program sponsored in 1949 by the Akron Jewish Community

Council: the distribution of Bibles, Bible reading, singing of carols and hymns, Christmas and Chanukkah programs. A Temple Bulletin of the early sixties was still dealing with many of the same questions, namely, how to respond to Christmas programming and whether to participate in caroling or Christmas plays.²³⁴

Some of these problems were resolved to the Jewish community's liking. The Akron Jewish Community Council, working together with the president of Akron's Rabbinical Association and the pastors of the First Universalist, First Methodist, and First Congregational churches, successfully protested the distribution of Gideon Bibles throughout the school system and this practice was revoked in 1950.²³⁵ The matter of Jewish religious holidays was also worked out with the school board providing for special arrangements regarding absences (not counted) and school activities (no exams scheduled, special make-up provisions, etc.). There were less satisfactory answers possible to the perennial problem of Christmas in the schools. Jewish positions shifted from attempting to get "equal time" for Chanukkah to trying to get all religion out of the school. It will be recalled that the message to Temple Israel's members was, "we do not condone what takes place in the public schools at Christmas . . . however, we . . . are rather helpless to do very much about it outside of expressing our attitude and trying to keep celebrations to a minimum."²³⁶ While the singing of carols was condoned (" . . . as long as your hearts beat with the rhythm of Rock of Ages, the strain of Adeste Fidelis will not taint your souls"), it was suggested that the leading roles in Christmas plays, "properly belong to those who . . . identify with the religious

leaders of their faith."²³⁷

Jewish concerns with religious education went beyond the public school. For example, the Jewish Community Relations Committee successfully worked with the Council of Churches and Roman Catholic officials to eliminate objectional materials about Jesus and the Jews from local Roman Catholic textbooks.²³⁸ The controversial parochial school issue found the Jewish community consistently disapproving not only of public support for any such institution but also wary of establishing and maintaining its own parochial system. Undoubtedly the most controversial Jewish institutional venture of these years was the Hillel Academy, the Jewish day school, which among other charges, felt it had to defend itself against the attack that its students would be "unable to deal with non-Jews."²³⁹ As late as 1975, when the Academy was already established for around a decade, the Federation's study of the Jewish community indicated that well over a majority of the respondents (57 percent) did not believe the Akron Jewish community should sponsor an all-day Jewish day school.²⁴⁰

The role of the rabbi in the greater community inevitably assumes special significance in assessing the nature of inter-group interactions. Thus, it seems especially noteworthy to recall that an intimate personal relationship had developed between Charles Seiberling, the pioneer rubber industrialist, and Rabbi David Alexander, who was regarded as Seiberling's "favorite minister."²⁴¹ When Seiberling died, the rabbi was one of the clergymen officiating and "in a breaking voice" said the last words over the grave.²⁴² Following Alexander's model, Rabbi Morton Applebaum assumed the most active interactional role among Akron's rabbis

in the post war period. He served on the boards of such institutions as Akron General Hospital, the Child Guidance Center, the United Fund; delivered invocations for groups ranging from the Ohio Real Estate Convention to Rotary (to which he belonged); addressed service clubs such as Kiwanis and Lions, and religious organizations like the Akron Association of the Disciples of Christ and the Akron Ministerial Association; hosted regular interfaith services in his own congregation.²⁴³

The distinctive religious composition of Akron described in an earlier chapter, namely, its strongly fundamentalist and evangelical orientation, at times had special implications for the Jewish community. Concern was expressed over the five different missionary organizations allegedly operating in the area. The official Jewish response was that while such activities were undoubtedly a "source of unpleasantness" to the average Jew, it was "out of the question" that municipal ordinances could regulate this aspect of individual religious conviction. The appropriate antidote was seen as "a well grounded Jewish home."²⁴⁴ The suspicions which such missionary zeal generated, however, were somewhat dissipated by the staunch pro-Israeli stance assumed by such noted evangelical figures as Rex Humbard.²⁴⁵

Even by this late period there are still indications of Jewish sensitivity about the impact their institutions and behaviors might have on gentile attitudes toward the total group. Thus, the Akron Rabbinical Council urged synagogue affiliation on the grounds that here was the institution which above all other ". . . gains . . . the respect of the non-Jewish community . . . ," and complained about Jewish patients not filling out the appropriate clergy-notification

forms in the context of what the hospital authorities would think about such behavior.²⁴⁶

The recognition extended to individual Jewish community members as well as to Jewish institutions suggests that the greater community was willing to acknowledge the contributions of the Jewish community in its midst. In addition to the various presidencies of civic and social groups mentioned above, examples of special awards to numerous individuals can be cited: Jaycees' Young Man of the Year, United Fund's Man of the Year, Akron Business and Professional Women's Woman of Achievement, Akron Bar Association's Naturalized American Award, YMCA's Man of the Month, etc.²⁴⁷ The civil rights contributions of well-known figures in the Jewish community were rewarded when the mayor presented a Brotherhood Award in 1962 to Dr. I. R. Birnbaum "for outstanding efforts contributing to better relations among the races and religions in our area."²⁴⁸ The following year the same award went to Mrs. Belle Miller who was commended for her role in securing fair employment and her staunch support of non-discriminatory public housing. In both cases civil rights activities and membership in black community organizations were combined with a long list of credits in Jewish organizational life. Public recognition also took the form of editorial comment in the local press. Examples span the post-war period. In 1949 the Beacon Journal praised Alex Schulman's Horatio Alger-like rise from Akron newsboy to executive head of a major corporation; in 1973 it paid final tribute to Jack Saferstein ("Because of his efforts, the Akron area is a better place in which to live. And that is the highest tribute that can be paid any citizen."²⁴⁹ Perhaps the most

permanent formal recognition of the civic contributions of an Akron Jew came in 1972 when the Bert A. Polsky Memorial was dedicated. Editorial comments on this occasion reproduced the lengthy inscription on the commissioned sculpture and elaborated on "The Bert Polsky Example," which in essence was identified as that "of a great humanitarian."²⁵⁰

The role and function of the Jewish Center continued to receive positive public acclaim. At varying times the local press described it as ". . . a requirement in the total healthy life of a community" and ". . . one of Akron's most valuable assets."²⁵¹ The Center's Civic Forum was praised as one of the city's "greatest cultural achievements . . ." and in 1956 Mayor Berg actually proclaimed an Akron Civic Forum Day.²⁵² Supportive awareness extended beyond recognition of such local activities. There was the repeated phenomenon in the fifties of the mayor designating Israel Bond Week and urging all citizens to "join wholeheartedly in this effort. . . ."²⁵³ Such support for Israel also appeared when the 1967 crisis erupted in Israel and the Federation received calls from non-Jews in the community asking how they could help. Speaking perhaps most directly to the question of the level of support and confidence which the "establishment" placed in Jewish institutions and the Jewish community was the \$200,000 loan given by the banks to the Jewish Welfare Fund in 1949 in advance of their fund drive solely on the strength and reputation of the community.²⁵⁴

Sometimes establishment institutions contacted Jewish institutions such as the Center with a specialized need for Jewish-related information. From the telephone company came requests for the dates

of Jewish holidays so that loads could be adjusted accordingly; from the IRS came questions concerning identification of baffling organizations ("they break their teeth pronouncing the names") listed on income tax forms.²⁵⁵ A far more unusual type of such "need to know" interaction was alluded to one year by the director of the Akron Jewish Community Council. He acknowledged a reciprocal relationship between the Akron police department and his office which involved the accessibility of police files to the Council and the accessibility of Council files to the FBI and U.S. Naval Intelligence.²⁵⁶

The positive recognition and cooperative interactions described above occurred in a national and local atmosphere generally agreed to be far less overtly anti-semitic than the immediately preceding period.²⁵⁷ The overall ambiguity mentioned earlier ("things are fine-- but I could tell you stories"), however, continued to characterize the Jewish community's view of this particularly sensitive area. At the same time that the Akron Jewish Community Council reported a substantial decline in local manifestations of overt and organized anti-semitism (a reduction of 50 percent in reported problems from 1946-47 to 1947-48 with an even further dramatic decline in 1949-50), the director reminded his constituency that "the decline of overt anti-semitism in no manner reflects the still vast problem of prejudice in important areas of our national and community life. The problems remain; the methods have become more refined. . . . There are anti-semitic elements in this city whose activities have been, and must continue to be watched with the most diligent care."²⁵⁸ As late as 1972, a local feature story reported Jewish leaders claiming that

while Jews faced no greater problem than many other groups . . . "there is still discrimination."²⁵⁹ Reporting the glass as half full or half empty--either as the by-product of personal conviction or political strategy--resulted in different messages emanating from the Jewish communal leadership. Thus, one article would appear quoting the director of the Center on the subject of local discrimination with details about industrial anti-Semitism (specifically in rubber) and professional anti-Semitism (in local law firms).²⁶⁰ Shortly thereafter the director of the Federation (essentially disapproving of such a public posture) would be quoted in another article: ". . . over all, discrimination against Jews is at an all-time low. . . . I have seen everything get better in my twenty-five years here. . . . This is the finest place in the world where Jews have an opportunity" ²⁶¹

Despite such ambiguity there can be no doubt that heightened awareness to the issue of existing or potential anti-semitism continued to characterize the Jewish community. There were early efforts to assess the possible impact of the new state of Israel on attitudes in the greater community. The Jewish Community Council director was reassuring about the Hagannah's positive influence on public opinion toward the Jews and concluded that Israel's existence would not be likely to foster anti-semitism. This conclusion was hedged, however, by the disclaimer that if Israel should indeed "tip the balance against us"--then this was merely additional confirmation of the need of Israel in the first place.²⁶² That such sensitivity to anti-semitism long continued to be a given reality which would be expected to strike a chord in the local Jewish psyche is indicated by the tone

of the Jewish Welfare Fund's 1961 appeal message. Financial support was seen as the necessary response to such apparently familiar questions as, "Daddy, what is a kike?" and the adult realities assumed in the questions, "Do . . . your close non-Jewish business intimates forget who you are at five p.m.? . . . Was your membership application pigeon holed? . . ." ²⁶³

There do not seem to have been any page one incidents in these years comparable to the early forties case of the immigrant physicians. Certain incidents, however, did not go unnoticed. There was the problem posed by Bill Denton, a radio preacher who used his program in the late forties to relate Jews to Communism "in a particularly vicious manner. . . ." ²⁶⁴ There was strong disapproval of a church ad which incorporated a stereotypic Jewish cartoon figure and negative reaction not only to the anti-semitic agitator Upton Close's presence in the city but to the fact that Kiwanis invited him to speak and in effect limited press coverage by locking the doors of the meeting room. ²⁶⁵ Incidents which could be identified as anti-semitic continued on into the late sixties and early seventies. These included threatening phone calls to the Federation, stickers labeling Jews as Christ killers, and bomb threats to a congregation during the high holy days. ²⁶⁶ One concern which seemed to cut across the post war years was the problem of anti-semitic slurs and incidents among children. In the late forties complaints of children being intimidated were registered with the Akron Jewish Community Council. Reference was already made above to the use of the term "kike" in the 1960s. In the early 1970s individuals were still reporting name-calling as an issue confronting

their children.²⁶⁷

Much as Gordon's theory predicted, exclusion from some of the most prestigious social clubs continued to exist. The barrier to possible Jewish membership in the University Club was not cracked until the late sixties and the Akron Shrine similarly accommodated Jewish Masons only quite belatedly. The country clubs continued to be virtually impregnable.²⁶⁸

Through such institutions as the Akron Jewish Community Council and its successor, the Community Relations Committee of the Federation, the Jewish community monitored and responded to perceived anti-semitic threats. For example, in the Denton case, the Council joined with other liberal groups the preacher had offended in escalating the pressure on the station to the point of petitioning the FCC. (The station eventually agreed that comments such as those provoking the complaints would not recur.) In reporting on this issue, the Council director remarked, "We scarcely need tell you that the Akron Jewish Community Council as well as a number of national civic defense agencies played an important role in this entire affair."²⁶⁹ Meanwhile, preventive educational programming continued in the form of joint efforts with the Akron Public Library, radio programming, speaking engagements, etc. calculated to promote improved inter-group relations throughout the greater Akron community.²⁷⁰

A final question relating to interactions between the local Jewish and gentile communities--one which applies to all the above periods and arenas of interaction--is the extent to which the latter determined the adjustment patterns of the former. In other words,

were Akron Jews primarily a self-initiating community or a reactive body. Unfortunately, the data can be used to argue either side of the question. For example, the Jewish community public relations work described above can be seen as a response to perceived threat or the outreach of services. The difficulty in finding people to join the University Club once that barrier was cracked can suggest a residual fear of being unwelcome or a basic disinterest given alternative Jewish facilities.²⁷¹ Probably the ambiguity repeatedly mentioned in this study as characteristic of so many adjustment choices is operative here as well.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹See Chapter I above, pp. 10-39, passim.
- ²Dean, "Jewish Participation in the Life of Middle Sized American Communities," pp. 307, 315.
- ³Fuchs, "Jews and the Presidential Vote," pp. 68-72.
- ⁴Liebman, The Ambivalent American Jews, p. 24.
- ⁵Stember, ed., Jews in the Mind of America.
- ⁶Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, p. 76.
- ⁷Fein, The Making of an American Jewish Community: The History of Baltimore Jewry from 1779-1920, p. 224.
- ⁸Kramer and Leventman, Children of the Gilded Ghetto, p. 34.
- ⁹Dean, "Jewish Participation in the Life of Middle Sized American Communities," p. 319.
- ¹⁰Stember, Jews in the Mind of America, p. 28.
- ¹¹See Chapter I above, p. 85.
- ¹²Akron Beacon Journal, 1 July 1975.
- ¹³Ibid., 28 December 1869.
- ¹⁴Ibid., 6 March 1888; 27 April 1889.
- ¹⁵Botsum, "Stores and Merchants," A Centennial History of Akron, p. 450.
- ¹⁶Lane, Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County, pp. 515; Akron Beacon Journal, 23 April 1894; 11 June 1883.
- ¹⁷Ibid., 30 January 1874; 6 January 1886.
- ¹⁸Akron City Directory, 1859; Akron Beacon Journal, 8 January 1870; Akron City Directory, 1879-80, p. 338.
- ¹⁹Temple Israel, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, p. 6.

- ²⁰ Akron Beacon Journal, 20 August 1868.
- ²¹ Ibid., 28 November 1874.
- ²² Ibid., 5 July 1879.
- ²³ Ibid., 8 January 1870; 9 August 1870.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 24 August 1859.
- ²⁵ Rotenberg, "Jews in the Making of Akron," p. 42.
- ²⁶ Grismer, Akron and Summit County, p. 724.
- ²⁷ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 February 1881; 30 July 1888.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 17 September 1868.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 6 June 1870.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 28 November 1874.
- ³¹ Olin, Akron and Environs, pp. 186-187.
- ³² Akron Beacon Journal, 1 August 1888; 24 January 1889.
- ³³ Ibid., 2 May 1867.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 17 September 1868.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 6 June 1870; 30 January 1874.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 15 April 1885.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 13 January 1883; 6 January 1886.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 19 January 1881.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 28 November 1874.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 23 April 1894.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 7 June 1860; 14 June 1860.
- ⁴² Ibid., 14 July 1880; 21 March 1881.
- ⁴³ Lane, Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County, pp. 210-11.
- ⁴⁴ Akron Beacon Journal, 20 August 1868.

- ⁴⁵See Chapter I above. pp. 91-96.
- ⁴⁶Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County, Ohio, 1825-1928
2:135, 249.
- ⁴⁷Jewish Social Service Federation Files; interview with Philip
Dunn.
- ⁴⁸Rabbi I. Philo, speech, reprinted in The People, Akron Ohio
6 (6 September 1907):1, American Jewish Archives Files.
- ⁴⁹Charles Schwartz tape.
- ⁵⁰Information sheet, Alex Shulman Company.
- ⁵¹Akron Beacon Journal, Special Section, 1 July 1975.
- ⁵²Ibid., 21 July 1890; 31 March 1897.
- ⁵³Ibid., 8 July 1896; 17 April 1896; 18 February 1889; 8 January
1890; 9 January 1890.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., 24 August 1896; 11 August 1893; 16 August 1892.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., 12 July 1892.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., 25 September 1891; 22 January 1891.
- ⁵⁷Interview with Jack Reich.
- ⁵⁸Akron Beacon Journal, 9 June 1899.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., 21 March 1924; 20 May 1924.
- ⁶⁰Ibid., 28 May 1924.
- ⁶¹Lurie, A Heritage Affirmed, p. 346.
- ⁶²President's speech, Jewish Social Service Federation, 7th
Annual Report, 1921.
- ⁶³Hartstein, "History of the Ahavas Zedek Congregation."
- ⁶⁴Akron Beacon Journal, 25 October 1902.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., 6 February 1922; 16 January 1920.
- ⁶⁶Akron Jewish News, 7 May 1965; interview with Nathan Pinsky.
- ⁶⁷"Biography in Brief," Akron Beacon Journal clipping, 2 May
1948.

- ⁶⁸ Jewish Social Service Federation Files.
- ⁶⁹ Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County 2:263.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid.
- ⁷¹ Notes of Leslie Flaksman's interview with Merryl Sicherman.
- ⁷² Ibid.; interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.
- ⁷³ Akron Beacon Journal, 28 January 1907.
- ⁷⁴ Lee Ferbstein tape.
- ⁷⁵ Akron Beacon Journal, 18 February 1926.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid., 18 March 1901.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., 22 December 1917.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., 11 May 1921.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid., 28 January 1899; Temple Israel, Minutes, 5 January 1902.
- ⁸⁰ Akron Beacon Journal, 13 September 1902.
- ⁸¹ President's Speech, 7th Annual Meeting, Jewish Social Service Federation, 1921.
- ⁸² Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County, Ohio 2:135, 661.
- ⁸³ "Biography in Brief," Akron Beacon Journal, 2 May 1948.
- ⁸⁴ Kenfield, ed., Akron and Summit County, Ohio 2:233, 249; 3:585.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid., 2:263.
- ⁸⁶ Lee Ferbstein tape; interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw; notes of Leslie Flaksman's interview with Merryl Sicherman.
- ⁸⁷ Akron Beacon Journal, 1 March 1902.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid., 13 May 1890.
- ⁸⁹ Akron Beacon Journal, 19 May 1890; see above, pp. 156-57.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid., 23 February 1929.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., 7 September 1891; 13 November 1905.

- ⁹²Ibid., 23 October 1913.
- ⁹³Ibid., 27 October 1913.
- ⁹⁴Ibid., 19 December 1903.
- ⁹⁵Ibid., 15 October 1892.
- ⁹⁶Ibid., 22 April 1891.
- ⁹⁷Ibid., 3 January 1899.
- ⁹⁸Ibid., 24 December 1901.
- ⁹⁹Akron Central Labor Union Resolution, 4 April 1905, American Jewish Archives Files.
- ¹⁰⁰Akron Beacon Journal, 29 January 1928.
- ¹⁰¹Ibid., 12 April 1895; 3 October 1898.
- ¹⁰²Local obituary newspaper clipping.
- ¹⁰³Ibid., 22 March 1886; 9 August 1888; 22 May 1889.
- ¹⁰⁴Ibid., 2 June 1891.
- ¹⁰⁵Ibid., 24 April 1899.
- ¹⁰⁶Ibid., 12 December 1895.
- ¹⁰⁷Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 198.
- ¹⁰⁸Max Schneier tape.
- ¹⁰⁹Taped interview with Nate Wollins, 1972.
- ¹¹⁰Akron Beacon Journal, 2 November 1899; 25 July 1906; taped interview with Sidney Freeman, 1972; Sidney Havre tape.
- ¹¹¹Akron Beacon Journal, 19 December 1903.
- ¹¹²Interview with Nathan Pinsky; Sidney Freeman tape.
- ¹¹³Interviews with Nathan Pinsky; Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.
- ¹¹⁴Temple Israel, Minutes, 18 October 1921.
- ¹¹⁵John Lee Maples, "The Akron, Ohio Ku Klux Klan, 1921-1928" (Master's Thesis, University of Akron, 1974), p. 111.
- ¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 111.

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- 118 Taped interview with Charles Sacks, 1972.
- 119 Maples, The Akron, Ohio Ku Klux Klan, p. 49.
- 120 W. E. Du Bois, "The Shape of Fear," North American Review 223 (February-March 1926):292.
- 121 Lee Ferbstein tape.
- 122 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 198.
- 123 John Higham, "American Anti-Semitism Historically Reconsidered," p. 249.
- 124 See above, p. 99.
- 125 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 192.
- 126 Interview with Nathan Pinsky; conversation with Morris Rombro, Winter 1975.
- 127 Lee Ferbstein tape.
- 128 Jones, Life, Liberty, and Property, p. 188.
- 129 Ibid., p. 274.
- 130 Interview with Edith and Maurice Whitelaw.
- 131 Leslie Flaksman to George Nobil, 9 March 1945, Akron Jewish Center Files.
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- 133 Bloom, Ibid.
- 134 Temple Israel, Minutes, 7 December 1941; Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 28 April 1933; Bloom, Ibid., p. 194.
- 135 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, pp. 89-90.
- 136 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 31 August 1943.
- 137 Akron Jewish Center, 5th Annual Meeting, June 1934.
- 138 Akron Jewish News, 12 November 1937.

- 139 Ibid., 4 November 1938.
- 140 Akron Beacon Journal, 2 November 1939; Akron Jewish News, 7 May 1943; 4 June 1943.
- 141 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 194.
- 142 Akron Jewish News, 4 November 1938; Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1943, 1944, 1945, back pages.
- 143 Akron Jewish News, Ibid.
- 144 See above, pp. 241-42.
- 145 Burr McCloskey, "I Appeal the Ruling of the Chair," Rank and File: Personal Histories by Working Class Organizers, eds. Alice and Staughton Lynd (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), p. 154.
- 146 President's Report, Jewish Social Service Federation, 1935.
- 147 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 127.
- 148 Ibid., p. 130.
- 149 Revised Constitution of Akron Jewish Center, 26 March 1930.
- 150 Akron Jewish News, 31 March 1939.
- 151 Ibid., 29 October 1937.
- 152 Ibid., 6 December 1939.
- 153 Ibid., 19 December 1941.
- 154 Ibid., 9 October 1942.
- 155 Ibid., 9 November 1945.
- 156 Ibid.
- 157 Charles Sachs and Lee Ferbstein tapes.
- 158 Interview with Belle Weiss; Akron Jewish News, 3 March 1939.
- 159 Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, 29 April 1937.
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- 161 Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, pp. 80-81.

- 162 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 18 March 1937.
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p. 87.
- 165 Quoted from Akron Jewish Center Minutes of 18 March 1937,
in Hurvitz, History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 86.
- 166 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 15 April 1945.
- 167 See above, p. 174.
- 168 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 186.
- 169 Akron Beacon Journal, 2 November 1939.
- 170 Akron Jewish News, 6 April 1945; 2 December 1938.
- 171 Ibid., 14 January 1944.
- 172 Akron Beacon Journal, 4 November 1939.
- 173 Akron Jewish News, 5 April 1939.
- 174 Ibid., 9 October 1942.
- 175 Akron Jewish Center, 13th Annual Meeting, 6 December 1942.
- 176 Leslie Flaksman, Director, Akron Jewish Center, to Sam
Koplin, President, Vaad Hakashruth, 4 December 1944.
- 177 Interview with Ruth Cooper, 3 December 1972.
- 178 Interview with Ida Sigalow.
- 179 Interview with Belle Weiss.
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- 181 Bloom, "The Jews of Buna," p. 195.
- 182 Ibid.
- 183 Ibid.
- 184 Ibid., p. 193.
- 185 Ibid.

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- 187 Akron Beacon Journal, 11 June 1942.
- 188 Ibid.
- 189 Ibid., 15 June 1942.
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- 191 Notes of Leslie Flaksman's interview with Lee Ferbstein.
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- 199 Akron Jewish News, 4 March 1953.
- 200 Jewish Social Service Federation, Minutes, 12 September 1952.
- 201 Leslie Flaksman, "Social Factors Affecting Membership in the Akron Jewish Center," p. 2.
- 202 Interview with Nathan Pinsky, July 1972.
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- 205 Ibid., 16 January 1951.
- 206 See sources listed in footnote 196.
- 207 Akron Jewish News, 3 February 1961.

- ²⁰⁸ Akron Beacon Journal, 15 March 1959.
- ²⁰⁹ See above, p. 38.
- ²¹⁰ Akron Jewish News, 4 May 1945.
- ²¹¹ Ibid., 2 August 1946; 30 July 1948.
- ²¹² Efraim Rosenzweig, "Report on the Akron Jewish Community Council," Akron Jewish News, 6 January 1950.
- ²¹³ Akron Jewish News, 1 January 1954.
- ²¹⁴ Akron Committee for a Community Audit, The Akron Community Audit: A Study of Discrimination in the City of Akron, Ohio, 1952, p. 2.
- ²¹⁵ Elected, appointed, or party leadership positions were typically listed in Akron Jewish News, 1945-1965, passim; also references to Council members in Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.
- ²¹⁶ Jewish participation in non-partisan citizen groups was duly noted in the Akron Jewish News, Ibid.; also references to Citizen's Progress Committee in Akron Beacon Journal, 4 July 1975, Sesquicentennial Section.
- ²¹⁷ Interview with Gloria Reich, 11 July 1972.
- ²¹⁸ Conversations with candidate and non-supporting member of Jewish community.
- ²¹⁹ Akron Jewish News, 1 October 1954.
- ²²⁰ Ibid., 1 March 1963; 6 December 1963.
- ²²¹ Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 108.
- ²²² Ibid.
- ²²³ "News and Notes on Peoples and Things," Akron Jewish News, 1958-1964, passim; Akron Beacon Journal, 24 January 1963.
- ²²⁴ Meeting of Personnel Committee, Akron Jewish Center, 20 August 1959; Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 24 January 1960.
- ²²⁵ Interview with Nathan Pinsky.
- ²²⁶ Akron Beacon Journal, 15 January 1954, as quoted in Flaksman, "Social Factors Affecting Membership in the Akron Jewish Center," p. 9.

- 227 Flaksman, *Ibid.*, p. 151.
- 228 Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 6 October 1946; Akron Jewish Center Summer Camp Committee, Minutes, 27 April 1948.
- 229 Hurvitz, The History and Function of the Akron Jewish Center, p. 87.
- 230 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.
- 231 Akron Jewish News, 14 June 1948.
- 232 Conversation with Gloria Reich, 15 May 1978.
- 233 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.
- 234 Akron Jewish News, 10 June 1949.
- 235 Director's Report, Akron Jewish Community Council, Akron Jewish News, 6 January 1950.
- 236 Temple Israel, Bulletin, 8 December 1961
- 237 *Ibid.*
- 238 Taped interview with Nathan Pinsky, 1972.
- 239 Hillel Academy brochure.
- 240 Wagner, et al., A Demographic Survey, p. 114.
- 241 Conversation with S. J. Kaplan.
- 242 Akron Beacon Journal, 24 September 1946.
- 243 Temple Israel, Bulletin, January 1954; October 1956.
- 244 Akron Jewish News, 16 June 1948.
- 245 Interviews with Rabbi Abraham Feffer and Nathan Pinsky.
- 246 Akron Jewish News, 2 September 1955; Temple Israel, Bulletin, February 1954.
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- 248 Akron Jewish News, 2 March 1962.
- 249 Journal editorial reprinted in *Ibid.*, 2 December 1949; Akron Beacon Journal, 20 March 1973.

- 250 Akron Beacon Journal, 28 June 1972.
- 251 Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 26 January 1947; Akron Beacon Journal, editorial, 30 January 1955.
- 252 Akron Jewish Center Yearbook, 1953, p. 26; 1956, p. 18.
- 253 Akron Jewish News, 13 August 1951; 6 December 1957; 3 October 1958.
- 254 Ibid., 8 April 1949.
- 255 Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, Minutes, 1 February 1948.
- 256 Akron Jewish Community Council, Minutes, 13 January 1948, Akron Jewish Center Files.
- 257 See above, p. 38.
- 258 Director's Report, Akron Jewish Community Council, Akron Jewish News, 6 January 1950.
- 259 Akron Beacon Journal, 9 August 1972.
- 260 Ibid., 24 January 1972.
- 261 Ibid., 9 August 1972.
- 262 Akron Jewish News, 28 May 1948.
- 263 Akron Jewish Welfare Fund, "Newsletter," 31 January 1961.
- 264 Director's Report, Akron Jewish Community Council, Akron Jewish News, 6 January 1950.
- 265 Akron Jewish News, 9 October 1946.
- 266 Interview with Federation Director, Nathan Pinsky.
- 267 Akron Jewish News, 23 July 1948; conversations with Edith Weinstein and Robert Gordon, 9 December 1972.
- 268 Interview with Nathan Pinsky.
- 269 Director's Report, Akron Jewish Community Council, Akron Jewish News, 6 January 1950.
- 270 Ibid.
- 271 Interview with Nathan Pinsky.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The remaining task of this paper is one of review, integration, analysis, and inference, or in the expressive vernacular: "getting it all together." In brief summary, then, this study has attempted to describe and interpret the adjustment patterns of the Akron Jewish community over a century in three dimensions: as an entity in its own right, as a part of the American--more specifically, the American-Jewish--immigrant experience, and as a case study of immigrant integration theory. To this end an initial chapter was devoted to outlining the significant topics, periods, and concepts of immigrant adjustment. Importance was assigned to such subjects as immigrant demography, religion, institutional development, social choice, and inter-group interactions. Similar time frames emerged as critical in American immigration history, American-Jewish life, and the internal timetable of the greater Akron and Akron Jewish communities. This overlapping permitted a comparative analysis of adjustment patterns in the above mentioned areas over four periods (1865-1885; 1885-1929; 1929-1945; 1945-1975). From the numerous theories and observations regarding immigration integration as a whole or Jewish adjustment in particular, Milton Gordon's theory of structural pluralism (supplemented by Kramer and Leventman's generational model and Liebman's theory of conflicting values) was selected as the main conceptual model of this study.

As the local data were studied in conjunction with the above historical contexts and theoretical concepts, the following hypothesis was formulated: the adjustment of the Akron Jewish community was directly affected by significant events in American and Jewish history; that in the main the Akron Jewish community responded to environmental challenges much as did the American-Jewish community as a whole; and that this response was also generally consistent with the theory of structural pluralism. Using the chapter on religion as a model, the interpretive format resulting from the above tri-partite focus on Akron Jewry can briefly be reviewed. Thus, in fleshing out Akron's unique adjustment profile, religion was identified as a central--probably the central--identifying and organizing principle for over a century. While this potentially controversial assertion will be discussed further below, it is worth recalling here that the evidence supporting such a conjecture includes the initial statement of purpose of Akron's first Jewish organization effort, the Akron Hebrew Association (1865); the large scale increase in numbers of synagogues during the period of influx; Bloom's assessment of the underlying religious orientation of the community in the late thirties; and the high rate of synagogue affiliation which characterized the post-war period, far exceeding such popular, but relatively recent, institutional affiliations as the Akron Jewish Center.

Although the relative importance of religion in Akron Jewish communal life is debatable, its perpetual state of flux and variability can scarcely be denied. As detailed in the above chapter, this was evident in the ever changing numbers and locations of synagogues, the

shifting bases for congregational affiliation (from ethnic to denominational), the rapid turnover in rabbinical leadership--with some noted exceptions--and the modifications of worship services and ritual observances. A third conclusion about religion in the Akron Jewish community suggests that it influenced the form and content of internal and external social relationships. Whether it enhanced unity or promoted divisiveness is a question surrounded with the ambiguity so often alluded to in the preceding pages. Certainly each period offers numerous instances of the "push and pull" evident within and among various segments of the community in struggles over Orthodoxy and Americanization. Clearly for a while the Reform temple was the preserve of the old-time German settlers while the immigrant shuls served their own ethnically differentiated clientele. Yet some feelings of religious connection cut across such divisive lines even in the early days, for example, the active support of Reform leaders for the Sons of Peace congregation and the Talmud Torah school. Later unifying elements which can be credited to the religious arena were the Akron Rabbinical Association, the reduction in the number of synagogues with the accompanying merger of congregational allegiances, multiple congregational membership patterns, and the overall acceptance of congregational affiliation as a virtual sine-qua-non of communal identification. Even more complex and ambiguous are the data regarding religion's role in influencing the nature of Jewish relationships with the greater community. Undoubtedly issues of religion in the schools, missionary efforts, anti-semitic threats, and Sunday store openings troubled the waters while interfaith services, pulpit ex-

changes, and active civic roles of Jewish religious leaders calmed them. In any event, there was rabbinical support for the view that belonging to the synagogue was an assured way of gaining respect in the gentile community.

A striking parallel to this view of religious identification as a means to social acceptance was expressed in Cleveland--in this case it was claimed that if Jews observed the holy days there would be less prejudice directed against them.¹ Which brings us to the task--and problems--of comparing Akron's religious experience to Jewish religious adjustment patterns in general. As presented above, the primary referent is something identified as the "mainstream" of American Jewish life. While there are obvious difficulties in precisely defining this concept, at the very least it refers to the Jewish immigrant majority's experience as it unfolded in the largest urban centers; in other words, Akron Jewish life is like--or unlike--that of New York and Cleveland Jews. It could reasonably be argued that the middle-sized Jewish communities are a more appropriate referent group. Indeed, when differences among classes of Jewish communities are known, Akron frequently approximates middle-sized community norms (e.g., more peaceful absorption of Russian immigrants, lower incidence of anti-semitism, higher rate of synagogue affiliation). It is beyond the scope of this study to establish such communal distinctions in depth. However, the importance of establishing the group with whom Akron Jewry is being compared at any given point is self-evident. For example, the early religious commitment of local Jewish community leaders seems to have been equally strong and determined in Akron and Cleveland while being

weak and conspicuously reluctant in Toledo.² To pursue this particular instance one step further, both Akron and Cleveland have been described as cities with strong church influences, while Toledo for a time became the center of the free religion movement.³ It is interesting to speculate about the extent to which Jewish religious commitment may correlate with the overall commitment to Christianity in the various communities where Jews settled.

In any event, Akron Jews followed the nationally identified trends evident in the Reform, Orthodox, and Conservative movements, and much as Glazer and Moynihan concluded for New York Jews, they generally agreed that the one thing they were not, was Christian. Similarly, the literature reveals widespread replications of Akron's state of religious flux and the ambiguous role religion played in internal and external social interactions. Finally, Akron's changing religious orientations and affiliations across generations, its inner turmoil over Sabbath observances and kashrut, and the clear evidence that behavioral adaptations (e.g., language) did occur while merger with liberal Christianity did not, provide substantial support for the respective theoretical positions of Kramer and Leventman, Liebman, and Gordon.

With some variations, the above review of Akron's religious adjustment can in effect be repeated for each of the subsequent chapters on institutional life, social choices, etc. Approached slightly differently, however, material from the various chapters can also be extracted and reassembled to provide a composite view of the Akron Jewish community vis-a-vis larger historical and theoretical perspect-

ives. For example, in the initial settlement period, the Akron Jewish community shared in the experiences generally characterized as typical for "mainstream" American Jews in the following ways: the founding fathers came from southern Germany, were part of a relative chain, moved along the economic peddler-merchant trail, interacted with German gentiles but moved to a substantial investment in closer in-group institutional and social life. As did their fellow American Jews, they joined the Reform movement, flirted with liberal Christianity, generously participated in civic life, sent their offspring to college, responded to appeals for philanthropic help, tended to marry within the fold, joined some external groups such as the Masons, experienced little apparent anti-semitism, and came to assume responsibility, if not social affection for the new immigrants.

There were obvious similarities in the period of influx as well. The East European Jews in Akron reflected national trends in their extended family bonds, their fraternal lodges, local peddling, small shops, ethnic shuls. They established similar lending agencies and educational facilities, and maintained equally strong commitments to in-group marriage. There were difficulties in internal and external social relationships--though these were probably comparatively less severe than those experienced by Jews in the larger communities. Just as major local industries, law firms, and elite social clubs tended to keep Jews out elsewhere, so too in Akron, rubber, the banks, utilities, and the various elite social and country clubs were generally perceived as off limits.

Depression and war jolted Akron much as they did the rest of the American Jewish community (e.g., problems with institutional mortgages, Federation welfare clients, etc.). Problems of local anti-semitism were acknowledged (although again they probably were relatively less severe) and similar institutions responded to combat them (B'nai B'rith, Jewish Community Council, Jewish War Vets, etc.). The approaching Holocaust evoked great local, as it did national, Jewish concern and prevented the erosion of Old World ties which characterized other immigrant groups during this period. Support for the New Deal and the war effort was extensive both locally and nationally. The move to a more homogeneous American-born community occurred simultaneously in Akron and the "mainstream" communities during the post-war era. The Jewish building boom and religious revival of the fifties found its way here. So did the general economic trends of increasing Jewish prosperity and greater professional visibility. Similar social and institutional choices included smaller but still very concerned families, virtually the same institutional directory (Center, Federation, etc.), multiple membership patterns, widespread concern about intermarriage, and commitment to Israel.

The differences which did emerge were usually a matter of degree and sometimes dependent on the particular Jewish referent group selected. Residential adjustment patterns were the most obvious point of difference between the Akron Jewish community and such mainstream Jewish centers as New York or Cleveland. For example, in the 1930s during the hey-day of the Wooster Avenue area, a 25 percent Jewish concentration of any elementary school was far from reality while in

Cleveland, there were nine schools at least one-third Jewish and two with Jewish student bodies of over 75 percent.⁴ While suburban movement strongly affected the Jewish communities of New York, Cleveland, Chicago, etc., in Akron (much as in Cincinnati), strong commitment to areas within the city limits remained.⁵ In political life, Akron showed some interesting differences from a comparable community such as Toledo which had two Jewish mayors by 1875 (in this instance the relative lack of political visibility was more akin to "mainstream" experiences). There may have been more cross-over voting than has typically been identified for the Jewish vote. Further investigation would be profitable into the extent of active Republican identification--more than might be expected, given national norms--in middle-sized Jewish communities. The proletarian phase of Jewish economic adjustment, which introduced big city Jewish immigrants to the clothing sweat shops and the Jewish trade union experience, did not similarly characterize economic adjustment in Akron (or other middle-sized mid-western Jewish communities). Finally, it should be noted that while the mainstream Jewish adjustment patterns appeared in Akron, they did so after they were evident elsewhere. This can be illustrated in a comparative review of the founding dates of various institutions in Akron and Cleveland: Federation, 1914 (1904 in Cleveland); Workmen's Circle, 1916 (1904); Jewish Welfare Fund, 1935 (1930); Jewish Community Council, 1939 (1934).⁶

Shifting from the perspective of common historical experiences to a more theoretical framework, a review of the local data most importantly suggests that there are instances when assimilation occurred

and instances when it did not. The differences seems to depend on factors identified by Milton Gordon, namely, whether the activities and behaviors involved in-close primary social relations (structural assimilation) or acceptance of more general cultural traits and secondary level associations (behavioral assimilation). To reiterate some examples from earlier chapters: intimate relations were maintained within the in-group from the Jewish nursery to the Jewish religious school, from the Jewish country club to the Jewish senior citizen's group, and ultimately to the Jewish cemetery. Meanwhile, external cultural forms were adopted, from the English language to citizenship, faith in the political process, and civic participation. In a variant form of such assimilation, there was significant co-option--but with important in-group modifications--of customs and institutional forms ranging from social balls to "PTA's." It thus seems reasonable to conclude that the Akron Jewish community found a mid-way point of adjustment somewhere between total assimilation and total self-containment and that the specific form that this adjustment took approximates Gordon's paradigm of structural pluralism.

Having completed the above summary of this study's findings as they relate to the larger contexts raised in Chapter I, it is germane to inquire about the relative significance of these findings. An early motivation for undertaking this project was the anticipation that the Akron Jewish story would emerge as a special case in the annals of American-Jewish communal experience. After all, Akron clearly wasn't New York City, and if that was the "World of Our Fathers," then something totally different might reasonably be expected

to have occurred here. Not only was Akron not New York, it wasn't Cleveland either, or even another Youngstown. No large scale interactions here among immigrants only steps apart on the assimilation ladder. This was a Protestant town uniquely linked to a New England past and a later Southern evangelical tradition.

As the data gradually accumulated, however, hope of finding "the unique American-Jewish community" vanished. If Akron provided an unusual setting, the Jewish experience that it nurtured was all too familiar. The Lower East Side may not have been reinvented, but the peddlers, Workmen's Circle, and even the Jewish left wing--not to mention the ethnic shuls, religious disputes, the Federation and the Jewish Center--they were all here. And, as suggested above, where the major urban center experiences were not duplicated, there were obvious links to other middle-sized Jewish communities. Furthermore, the data offered scant expectation of toppling any major contemporary assimilation theories. To the contrary, the evidence provided support for quite a few, especially Gordon's.

The conclusion that the Akron Jewish community is a footnote to American-Jewish history or a particular theory of immigration hardly seems designed to set off seismic waves of intellectual implications. One evening, however, at a discussion session of Howe's classic book, one of the participants commented that in not having grown up in New York City, he (and by inference other non-New Yorkers) had somehow existed outside of the Jewish mainstream. If the findings of this study have any wider implication--not so! That Jews in as different a host environment as Akron managed, consciously or not, to duplicate

the "World of Our Fathers" in as much detail as they did suggests the American-Jewish experience was an amazingly shared occurrence. Transplant the Akron Jewish family to another American-Jewish community (or vice-versa, drop off a Jewish family from New York or McKeesport) at virtually any point during the past century and culture shock would be minimal. Work roles, religious expression, institutional affiliations, social roles and values, relationships vis-a-vis the greater community--all could be transferred with considerable ease (basically the content of Part II of Chapter I juxtaposed with data from the second half of Chapter II through Chapter VI above). As to why this was so, one can but assume that traditional Jewish imperatives and shared experiences were sufficiently intense and the American cultural message sufficiently unified to preclude extensive local modifications.

Secondly, the conclusion that the Akron Jewish community is just one supportive example of Gordon's theory of immigrant integration takes on somewhat more significance at a time when society is confronting its newest acknowledged "immigrants," the so-called minority groups. Sociologist Jane Mercer, for example, is using similar constructs to educate many levels of decisions makers regarding the "realities" of how integration occurs vis-a-vis the "core" society. She and others are also attempting, in some cases successfully, to build on the pluralistic aspects of such a theory to promote specific programs such as bilingual education and non-discriminatory assessment. (The step from observations about how assimilation happens, to value judgments of how it ought to happen has often been a short one for those concerned with America's immigrants.)

The above conclusions and implications stem from the Akron Jewish community's relationship to American-Jewish history and American immigration history. In the final analysis, however, and as the final page draws nigh, the community must be assessed on its own terms as a single independent entity which--no matter how much its experiences turned out to parallel others--made its own critical adjustment choices. Which brings us back to beginnings. As the title of this study suggests, "adjustment" is the key word in Akron Jewish communal life. As used in this paper, that term refers to a set of identifiable and characteristic individual and group decisions made in response to the changing challenges of American life. It is assumed that the intent of such an ongoing adjustment process, whether consciously or unconsciously, was to achieve equilibrium between the perceived demands of the greater society and the sometimes contradictory demands of an internalized sense of Jewish peoplehood. The gusto with which that equilibrium was pursued and debated tends to support the conclusion that for the most part the process was undertaken actively by individuals and groups who had the power to choose and exercised it rather than by an oppressed group of outcasts from the larger society who only reacted defensively to anti-semitic external pressures. While the precise terms of the state of equilibrium were renegotiated by successive generations and varied from adjustment area to adjustment area, in each case certain critical aspects of adjustment were at stake, namely, self-definition, social and institutional connections, attitudes, and levels of stability and continuity.

For Akron Jews, the bottom line of self-definition meant the private and public acknowledgment of a primary Jewish identity on both the personal and communal level. At times such self-definition involved a selecting-out process (e.g., the separation of German Jews from German-gentile immigrants); at other times a coming-together (of various ethnic sub-groupings). While the "content" of this Jewish identity is diffuse and difficult to pinpoint, this paper has suggested that religion was probably the primary organizing principle at work over the century in maintaining group identity intact. Whether religion should be defined with or without a strong social component has obvious consequences. However, even in its more restricted role as custodian of traditional observances and historical connections, and advocate of a non-Christian belief system, religion--for Jewish believer and non-believer alike--was recognized as somehow integral to the Jewish life of the community. The chapters on religious life and social choices suggest that Jewish self-definition was expressed by continuous preoccupation with maintaining synagogues, providing Jewish religious education, guaranteeing Jewish burial, preserving Jewish family life, and meeting the needs of fellow Jews. Among Akron's Jews, acceptance of Jewish identity was widespread and long-lived, and directly influenced individual and family life styles (e.g., multiple membership and leadership roles).

Acknowledged Jewish self-identity was also directly translated into institutional forms and social acts. Jewish organizational life was abundant, heavily subscribed, and ever expanding. Thus, it will be recalled that there were over fifty active groups in the community

by World War II and the ratio of Center membership to the total Jewish population was described as higher than that of any comparable community. Furthermore, even the 1941 boast that institutional coverage extended from six to seventy-six was surpassed by 1953 when the newly identified age limits were 3½ to 100.⁷ Individual institutions were regarded as direct reflections on the total community and the problems of any one (e.g., Jewish Center or country club) could be viewed as a "Jewish problem" for all. Such a response tends to disprove the contention that a single Jewish community is an arbitrary designation imposed by later needs to "see community" where little or none existed and where socio-economic variables exceeded shared Judaic traditions in importance. In-group social connections were also maintained in successive Jewish "neighborhoods" and through active promotion of in-group friendships and marriages.

Any analysis of immigrant adjustment would seem incomplete if it did not take into account the attitudes associated with that difficult experience. For the Akron Jewish community, such attitudes can best be characterized as ambivalent. There were differing perceptions of how successful the Jewish community was in preserving its essential integrity. These ranged in a single decade from self-congratulation for external Jewish recognition of Akron's success in achieving communal objectives to self-condemnation of the community for following "the path of least resistance" and submerging Jewishness to the "general scene."⁸ There are also widely conflicting assessments of the relative harmony or conflict within the Jewish community at any given stage. Similarly, there is contradictory evidence regarding the relative level

of accord or discord between the Jewish and greater Akron communities during any given period. Personal recollections covering the range of views from "things are/were so good" to "I could tell you stories" not only vary among community members but often co-exist within individuals as expressed in the course of a single conversation. Contrasting evidence and perceptions of intra-community and inter-community relations are not the only examples of contradictions or seeming paradoxes in Akron Jewish life. For example, it will be recalled that the number of synagogues declined at the same time that overall synagogue membership increased; that the extent of overall Orthodox observance declined while Reform observances became more traditional, etc.

Finally, the level of stability and continuity which surrounds personal and communal life seems a significant variable to consider in the adjustment process. As the chapters on social and institutional choices indicated, while the influx of new immigrants around the turn of the century created confusion and the post-war period introduced new faces while removing familiar ones, there was sufficient stability in community size, leadership, social and familial inter-connectedness, and organizational structure to perpetuate a community that could be "known" with a measure of assuredness and comfort.

A century requiring choices in all the important areas of life inevitably provided opportunities for deviation from the developing norms and consensus regarding acceptable modes of Jewish identity. It was possible to avoid Jewish institutional affiliation, to break with continuity, and, when internal inclination met with external opportunity,

to opt for total assimilation into the greater community. Such assimilation, however, was the exception to the overall adjustment pattern for Akron's Jews. Basically, for over a century, this community chose to maintain Jewish primary group associations and support institutions which frequently paralleled those of the larger society. Simultaneously, Akron Jewry, accorded tolerable levels of acceptance by the greater community, was able to choose and did choose to participate in and influence many areas of general community life. Throughout successive periods of challenge, influenced by the major currents of American and Jewish life, and with varying social alternatives available, a hyphenated Jewish-American community was established and reaffirmed.

FOOTNOTES

¹Gartner, History of the Jews of Cleveland, p. 144.

²Ibid., p. 35; Anderson, "The Jews of Toledo," p. 233.

³Anderson, "The Jews of Toledo," p. 62.

⁴Gartner, History of the Jews of Cleveland, p. 297.

⁵David P. Varady, "Recent Changes in the Settlement Patterns of the Jewish Population of Cincinnati" (Technical Report submitted to Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, 1973), p. 5.

⁶Gartner, History of the Jews of Cleveland, pp. 227, 251, 305, 308.

⁷President's Report, Akron Jewish Center, 12th Annual Meeting, 9 November 1941; Director's Report, Akron Jewish Center, 23rd Annual Meeting, 20 January 1953.

⁸President's Report, Jewish Social Service Federation, 12 May 1940; Letter to the Editor, Akron Jewish News, 4 July 1947.

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Interviews (In contrast to the conversations presented below, these contacts were either specifically scheduled, more directly focused, of longer duration, or repeated. Individuals are identified in terms of their positions or their areas of interest and expertise.)

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Baranoff, F., Workmen's Circle, 24 June 1975 (telephone conversation).

Cooper, Ruth, Hungarian-Jewish community, social adjustment patterns, etc. (series of Sunday morning discussions, October-December 1972).

Feffer, Abraham D., Rabbi of Congregation Beth El, 26 April 1972.

Friedman, Anna, Congregation Ahavas Zedek, 28 November 1972.

Gordon, Robert, funeral director, 8 September 1972.

Liebttag, Abraham, Rabbi of Anshe Sfard Congregation, 10 September 1976.

Pinsky, Nathan, Director, Jewish Family Service and Executive Director, Jewish Welfare Fund, 21 April 1972; 13 July 1972.

Reich, Gloria, general community organization, series of discussions, during Summer 1972 and periodically thereafter.

Reich, Jack, economic enterprises, legal profession, 20 June 1972; 24 December 1975.

Segal, Belle, community social distinctions, 5 July 1972.

Weiss, Belle, Hungarian Jewish community, 1 December 1972.

Whitelaw, Maurice and Edith, early settlers, 9 February 1975.

Conversations (These discussions were informal and often occurred in more general social or work settings.)

Flaksman, Leslie, former Director, Akron Jewish Center, 15 November 1972.

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Havre, Peggy, Temple history, 15 July 1977 (telephone conversation).

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Leibtag, Florence, local Orthodox life, 5 October 1972.

Levin, Harold, information on community leader, 14 January 1975 (telephone conversation).

Marks, Ted, Federation issues, 5 July 1978.

Meltzer, Jenne, staff, Akron Jewish Center, 26 September 1972.

Pules, Nina, immigrant organizations, 13 July 1972.

Rosen, Bernard, Democratic party, Spring 1978 (telephone conversation).

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Sass, Birdie, community attitudes, 2 November 1975.

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