

Creating "Jewish History for Our Own Needs:" The Evolution of Cecil Roth's Historical Vision, 1925-1935

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It is often forgotten that Cecil Roth, one of the most prolific Jewish historians of the twentieth century, did not begin his career as a specialist in Jewish history. Indeed, his transformation into a Jewish historian was the result of a dynamic interaction with the intellectual life of the American Jewish community. A study of Cecil Roth's early career not only reveals a great deal about the shaping of a modern Jewish historian, but also about the forces that shaped the writing of Jewish history in the first half of the twentieth century.

As an historian Roth is remembered primarily for his work on Anglo-Jewish history (he served six terms as president of the Jewish Historical Society of England) as well as the history of the Jews in Renaissance Italy. Yet Roth's early career, specifically the years immediately after he received his doctorate from Oxford University (1925), invites scholarly attention for it was at that point that Roth enunciated a methodology of Jewish history that would be the hallmark of his writing. Indeed, the basic framework of his historical philosophy was expressed in a January 1927 letter to Henry Hurwitz, the Editor of the *Menorah Journal*: "As you know I do not belong to the dryasdust [*sic*] school of Jewish history, and I think that all historical work worthy of the name must be accessible to the public."¹

From a historiographical perspective Roth's career has not always fared well. Often dismissed as a "popularizer," or criticized as an "apologist," or "filiopietistic" by academic historians, Roth's contributions to the development and dissemination of Jewish history are not consistently held in high regard.² Yet during a career that spanned over forty years Roth authored hundreds of books, articles, and essays, in addition to serving as the first general editor of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, which placed him in a position to further the dissemination of Jewish knowledge on a massive scale. In fact it was precisely to that purpose, the dissemination of Jewish history to a wide public, that Roth dedicated his career.³

Of all the prolific Jewish historians of his generation, which included Salo Wittmayer Baron⁴ and Jacob Rader Marcus,⁵ Roth was the only one who was not a product of one of the traditional *Wissenschaft* schools. Indeed, his Oxford University dissertation was not even on Jewish history, being a study of sixteenth-century Florence.⁶ Thus his turn to Jewish history, and how he developed his historical philosophy, deserves examination. It is somewhat surprising that he was not a direct product of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, because in many ways Roth epitomized the *Wissenschaft* quest to reconcile adherence to traditional Jewish norms with an appreciation of the vibrant methods of modern historical and cultural studies drawn from the secular world.⁷ Chaim Raphael argued that the "central element in all his [Roth's] historical writing was that while, as a fervent Jew, he drew on and expressed the continuity of the generations ... his own attitude was heavily, almost excruciatingly, English."⁸

Although very much in the mainstream of historical writing on most levels, Cecil Roth swam against the major currents of historical practice in several significant ways. As an academically trained historian Roth was joining a profession that had recently come to view "objectivity" as the highest academic goal. One way that academically trained, professional historians were supposed to achieve objectivity was through a redirection of their work towards a different audience. According to Peter Novick, pre-professional historians directed their work outward, towards a general reading public, while professional historical work was "increasingly, though unlike other disciplines, never exclusively, directed to colleagues." Simply put, history was supposed to become "less of an 'intellectual' and more of an 'academic' enterprise." One result of this professionalization was the goal of achieving an attitude of "cool detachment, which were the hallmarks of scientific objectivity."⁹

Throughout his career Roth portrayed little of this cool reserve or even detachment. Indeed, according to Jonathan Sarna, Roth's success as an historian lay in his ability to "produce creative, first-class scholarship in readable style." Furthermore, Sarna believes that "Roth fit the stereotype of an English gentleman scholar and might easily have been mistaken for his own caricature, complete with liberal dashes of eccentricity, charm, and Anglophilia." Despite Roth's claim that he only wrote history for the pleasure of it, Sarna argues that Roth possessed "an original, exacting, and creative mind."¹⁰

Another reason why Roth has not fared well, historiographically speaking, is that in the aftermath of World War II diaspora-centered scholars, who regarded the interaction between Jewish and non-Jewish society as the force propelling creativity, fell into disfavor. In the modern world history plays a key role in the development of Jewish identity, whether it be in the Zionist movement, where David Myers has demonstrated the significance of historical writing to Zionist ideology, or in the diaspora.¹¹ After World War II the "Zionocentric" vision of history has carried great weight. In this vision "diaspora" (*galut*) was fraught with the twin dangers of violence and assimilation. Creativity, in a Jewish setting, was not possible without ghettoization. In this context, scholars who saw the diaspora as a center of Jewish creativity were considered to have the weight of history against them. For someone like Cecil Roth, whom Myers describes as a diaspora-centered Jewish scholar, "wedded to the image of the cosmopolitan and interactive Jewish culture whose boundaries are constantly and creatively redrawn," the historiographic tide seemed to have swept over him.¹² Roth's vision of the importance of the diaspora, and the interaction between Jewish and gentile society, can be summed up in a statement he made in April of 1928 to the editors of the *Menorah journal*: "I am becoming more and more convinced that, in spite of the smug manner in which we attempt to deceive ourselves, the Ghetto was very nearly effective in carrying out its essential object of crushing its victims. Had the French Revolution and its emancipation come a century later, I doubt if it would have found anything worth emancipating. If you go to Rome, you will see the outcome even in the physique of the Jews."¹³

Roth has also not received significant attention, and this point is related to the first reason, because of a general neglect of contextualizing Jewish historical writing, and Jewish historians. As David Weinberg has recently argued, previous examinations of Jewish historians have either been hypercritical, or characterized by excessive reverence, and that it is only recently that a proper context has been given to Jewish historiography. So it is important to examine Jewish scholarship, such as Roth's, without reading back into it the impact of subsequent turning points in modern Jewish history, such as the Holocaust.¹⁴

Roth's work must also be seen in the context of the modern Jewish historical consciousness that no longer ascribes a providential design to Jewish survival, or even Jewish continuity. As Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi adroitly argues, in the modern age "it is not history that must prove its utility to Judaism, but Judaism that must prove its validity to history, by revealing and justifying itself historically."¹⁵

One thing that Roth cannot be faulted for is his use of primary sources. As an Oxford-trained historian he fits firmly into the mainstream of modern historical scholarship for his methods of research and in the critical examination of primary documents. It is his interpretation of the aggregate story that Roth has most often been criticized.

If Roth's career has received scant attention, even less commented upon are his ties to the Jewish community of the United States. Roth's introduction to United States Jewry, which came with his first teaching appointment, served two primary functions. It introduced him to the issues that came with teaching Jewish history and it acquainted him with the venues by which his ideas would be expressed. For example, a majority of his early books were published in the United States by organizations such as the Jewish Publication Society of America (QPSA) and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), while a number of his articles appeared in the *Menorah journal*, the publication of the Intercollegiate Menorah Society. In addition, his interaction with the American Jewish community, both

in publishing and lecturing, enabled him to earn a living as an historian in the years before his appointment as Reader in Jewish History at Oxford University in 1939.

Furthermore, although Roth had published articles on specific subjects in Jewish history prior to his American excursion, it was through his American audience that he developed his broader concept of Jewish historiography that would be the hallmark of his major publications.

Interestingly, Cecil Roth's early career was also tied to the early development of Judaic studies in the United States which in turn was tied to the migration of Jewish scholars from Europe. In 1925, Dr. Stephen Wise, the founder and president of the Jewish Institute of Religion (JIR) in New York, was searching for teachers. The establishment of the JIR occurred at a time when secular universities were exhibiting increased hostility towards Jews and Judaic studies. Within the Jewish community itself there was also an ongoing debate as to whether Jewish subjects were best taught in secular universities or in rabbinical seminaries. At a time when serious questions were being raised about the standards of scholarship, and the level of instruction in secular subjects at rabbinical seminaries, Wise envisioned his institution as a place for the professional training of rabbis on a post-graduate level, independent of secular universities.¹⁶

In order to establish the JIR's reputation as a center for the study of Jewish subjects, especially history, Wise sought prominent, as well as up-and-coming young scholars, to teach. Since there were virtually no domestic institutions granting higher degrees in Jewish Studies, Wise assigned most of his teachers from Europe, most of them associated with *Wissenschaft* schools.¹⁷ The desire to attract English-speaking teachers to augment his faculty led Wise logically to England. Cecil Roth was recommended to Wise by Israel Abrahams of Cambridge University.¹⁸ On August 28, 1925 Wise wrote to Abrahams informing him that he had met with Roth and had arranged for a one term lectureship. Wise's description of Roth is telling: "He seems a fine scholar, certainly a scholar of distinction in the making. I like his enthusiasm for his work, his thoroughly odd,-1 almost said old-fashioned,-academic point of view." Wise reported that Roth would offer three courses. One on the "Settlement of the Jews in Europe," another on either the "History of the Jews in Italy" or the "Sephardic Dispersion," and one seminar entitled "Treatment of Jewish Historical Materials."¹⁹

Roth's willingness to accept a temporary lectureship at the JIR can be understood in light of his lack of other prospects. In a long autobiographical letter to Henry Hurwitz in 1928, Roth described his student years in glowing terms, and claimed that he chose to write about the Renaissance because he needed "an excuse for living in Florence." The publication of his dissertation the year after its completion, Roth felt, made his "pathway in 1925 ... pretty well mapped out-a Donship, culminating probably in a Professorship, in Mediaeval and Modern History."²⁰

Yet despite Roth's confidence in his own accomplishments the expected career path failed to materialize. Roth attributed his lack of prospects to two factors. The first was the dearth of academic openings, which fed into his second problem. With so much time on his hands Roth decided to move from his previous field, which "had been strictly and exclusively Gentile," to his interest in Jewish history. It was here that Roth felt he made his "great blunder." Roth believed that writing and publishing on Jewish history made him a "marked" man.²¹

Roth's perception of his dilemma is worth quoting at length:

Now had I been a Wesleyan Methodist, and had written about the history of my own Church, or had I been a native of Hampshire, and had contributed papers to the local archaeological association, all would have been well But with Jewish pieces of research, as I found to my

cost, matters were quite different. For some absurd reason, they are not accounted contributions to 'history', as such. They are regarded, as I said, something purely sectarian, drifting between the Faculty of Oriental Languages and that of Theology, and an integral part of neither. By this time, the mass of my published writings, had they been centered about the Genesis of the Peasants Revolt or the Chartist movement, would have carried me by shere [*sic*] weight into any post within reason that I might have applied for. But my Jewish work, instead of being flaunted, had to be suppressed. I did not dare to bring it out, because I knew that it would tell against me: the results of a sort of intellectual anti-Semitism which denies to the Jew his place in the historical past I would be branded as an antiquarian, a sectarian: and my more Catholic interests would be entirely submerged.²²

Roth's difficulties finding a permanent academic appointment reflected the abyss that characterized early Judaic studies in the English speaking world. Jewish history, divorced from its Christological justification, had not yet achieved academic respectability. Thus for a scholar like Roth, the only recourse appeared to be teaching at one of the liberal Jewish theological institutions where Jewish history was a staple of the curriculum.²³

Several things came out of Roth's brief tenure at the JIR in 1925-1926. Roth apparently came to believe that as far as teaching was concerned, there were few sources available in English for students to read. Indeed, for the most part it seems as if Roth assigned specific articles from the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, which was then already twenty years old.²⁴

Roth's time in New York also introduced him to American academic politics. The experience apparently did not sit particularly well. On March 25, 1927 Roth was asked to assume a post as librarian and assistant professor at the JIR, which he declined.²⁵ Despite the offer of a permanent position, Roth openly expressed a bitter attitude towards Wise and several members of the faculty, who he felt had betrayed his trust. Although the circumstances behind the controversy are somewhat unclear, and may have simply been the result of a misunderstanding compounded by bruised egos, Roth felt that a promised appointment was delayed, in part because he was not a product of a *Wissenschaft* rabbinic education.²⁶ His bitterness lasted for a number of years, and is clearly expressed in a letter to Wise written three weeks before he was offered the position as librarian.

Do not imagine that what I resent is the fact that I was not appointed to a position for which my qualifications were considered to be insufficient. I have never posed as a Jewish scholar: and the thought of a permanent connection with the Institute would never have crossed my mind, however, remotely, without deliberate inculcation.²⁷

Although he did not obtain a permanent academic post in the United States, his work at the JIR bore other fruit. Shortly after coming to New York, Roth came to the attention of Henry Hurwitz, the editor of the *Menorah Journal*. After meeting personally with Hurwitz, Roth published "In the Italian Ghetto."²⁸ Although it was not Roth's first published work on a Jewish subject, it was one of the first that would reach a wide audience, for during the 1920s the *Menorah Journal* was reaching the peak of its popularity and influence within the American Jewish community.²⁹

Having immersed himself in the reading, teaching, researching, and publishing of Jewish history, Roth found that he was dissatisfied with the state of the field. One of the things that comes through in Roth's correspondence from this period is his intense bursts of arrogance. Only a few years out of graduate school, not officially a specialist in the study of Jewish history, and with no academic appointment, Roth nonetheless passed a negative judgement on the state of Jewish historical writing.

In order to help revitalize what he regarded as a moribund field, Roth first had to clarify, in his own mind at least, the forces that were holding Jewish history back. In 1927, Roth set about writing a series of articles, with encouragement from the editors of the *Menorah journal*, on the methods of studying and philosophy of Jewish history. Indeed, Henry Hurwitz asked Roth to consider writing a series of articles that would demonstrate that the Jews "have been an integral part of Western Civilization." Hurwitz also encouraged Roth to write a more detailed appraisal of what they called the "Genizah School," which would give "the much needed critique of Jewish historiography, and propounding the right spirit and method that should be applied today to the research and writing of Jewish history." The series could then be capped off by an article (or articles) containing Roth's "own analysis and summary of the periods of Jewish history."³⁰ Hurwitz was attracted to Roth's developing historical vision because the Intercollegiate Menorah Society sought to promote the study of the "interest and dignity of the Jewish past." Hurwitz believed that such a history was essential to encourage American Jews to be proud of their heritage, and thus fuel the creative force that he believed US Jewry was becoming.³¹

Roth's motivation for accepting this challenge was, in large part, the result of his dissatisfaction with existing scholarship. For example, in 1927 *A History of the Jewish People* by Alexander Marx and Max Margolis was published. Although it quickly became a standard single volume history of the Jews,³² Roth commented that it "came to me as something of a disappointment. It is regrettably episodic, its English is poor, and its accuracy far from unimpeachable. The Jewish Green, or Trevelyan, to which we have been looking forward seems as far off as ever."³³ That Roth's opinion of this book was not apparently shared by many scholars did not deter his confidence in his own vision of how Jewish history should be written.³⁴

The first of the articles that marked Roth's emergence into Jewish historiography was submitted to the *Menorah journal* in late March, 1926. It was, he claimed with his telltale confidence, "the first thing, I fancy, of its kind ever attempted."³⁵ The substance of the article, discussed below, was a twofold attack upon the focus of Jewish historical writing on a German model at the expense of English speaking Jewry, as well as the influence of rabbinical seminaries on the writing of Jewish history. Although it would take over two years before this article appeared, Roth continued to lay the groundwork, in his own mind at least, as to his role in modern Jewish historiography.

In November 1927 Herbert Solow, then on the editorial staff of the *Menorah journal*, asked Roth's advice on potential faculty for a summer teaching institute. Roth's reply revealed his opinion of the quality of professional Jewish historians then currently at work in the United States and Europe. Roth described Alexander Marx as "the nearest thing to a Jewish historian you have in the country." In particular, Roth was impressed with Marx's "obituary notices of foreign scholars in the Publications of your Jewish historical society." Roth could not resist, however, making at least one malicious stab, saying of Marx that "the trouble with him is, that he's dead: perhaps that's why his obituary notices are so good."³⁶ Roth conceded that Salo Baron "may be an exception" to the general lack of talent in the Jewish history pool. He had nothing good to say about Jacob Mann at the Hebrew Union College.³⁷

Roth did not limit his criticism to scholars in American universities.

Over here, we have Buchler, (Petrified in B.C. 476), and noone [sic] else: Lucien Wolf³⁸ has an astoundingly well-stored mind, but he is incapable of doing anything more than dictate his preconceived notions. On the Continent, there is possibly [Ismar] Elbogen,³⁹ and certainly [Umberto] Cassuto:⁴⁰ but I don't know of anyone else.⁴¹

That Roth was still a little unsure of how his upcoming critique of contemporary Jewish historiography would be received, and in particular his criticism of its focus on German Jewry, comes through in the next section of his letter.

I hope you made it dear to your very competent and intelligent friend ... that, though not an English patriot, I am a patriotic Englishman. However, that fact did not necessarily colour what I wrote. The trouble is, that we haven't any other word but English to cover the English Speaking culture, excepting Anglo-Saxon-which somehow seems more than a little ridiculous for Jewish purposes. No doubt local patriotism would be hurt by a preliminary note to the effect that, for present purposes, England is to be regarded as including America.⁴²

Roth assured Solow that "[i]t's not a question of my being afraid to come out in the open." Although quick to criticize other historians Roth emphasized that in this case "I don't want to single out any specific book for attack when I am dealing with the general tendency."⁴³

Roth's concern over this last point was reiterated in January of 1928 when he read Solow's editorial changes to the article. "You have made the essay far too much of an attack upon Graetz. I did my best to make it an attack on his whole school of the present day-which I feel is far more to the point, as well as far less likely to attract upon my head the outpouring of the vials of wrath of the Old Guard."⁴⁴

Roth was apparently only marginally reassured by the reply from the editor, Henry Hurwitz.

I must say that you are quite unjustified in your somewhat violent language ... regarding your Critique of Jewish Historiography For good or ill, we must use our own judgment here in view of our knowledge of the situation and the persons involved here.⁴⁵

In May 1928 ".Jewish History for Our Own Needs" finally appeared.⁴⁶ Although not one of his better-known works, this article marks a seminal point in the development of Roth's vision of Jewish history. He began by throwing down the historiographical gauntlet, declaring that "Clio, patroness of History, is today very much awake. She is abroad in every land It is only the Mount of Zion that she disdains. And Zion, apparently, does not care"(1).

Roth argued that history should be more important to the Jews than to anyone else. "It is for him [a Jew] not merely a record: it is at once an inspiration and an apologia. Only from his history can he be brought to appreciate not only his former glory but his former degradation, to realize its causes and to sympathize with its consequences. It is only from an appreciation of his past that he can be imbued with self-respect and hope for his future"(1).

In this work we are once again confronted by the fact that although Roth was not a product of a *Wissenschaft* education, he embodied its system of belief for, as Ismar Schorsch argues, it was only through the study of history that post-emancipation Jewry could find validity to its continued existence as a community.⁴⁷

All of this is slightly ironic considering that most of the rest of the article is an attack upon the limitations of what Roth called the "Graetz" school of Jewish historiography. His main argument is that Jewish history, amongst all historical studies, is "still virtually at the point which it was left in 1870"(2). To Roth the great tragedy is that 'Jewish history as we have it today is therefore still mainly a German product of the half century 1820-1870, and it bears the mark of its origin deeply impressed upon it for better or for worse"(2). Although Roth argues Graetz deserved a great deal of respect, his work was a product of his age, "his history was admirably adapted to the requirements of his period. Today, through the natural process of time, it has become antiquated, and the modern school based upon it is, more inexcusably, in the same position"(3). While Graetz's writings were well suited to its day and age, Roth argues the situation of the Jews has changed. "Two giant forces have come into being which were then no more than dreams-American Jewry and Zionism"(3).

Roth raises an important historiographical point about the contextualization of historical research. Why look to German Jewry as the model of post-emancipation Jewish life when the English speaking Jewish world, especially that of the United States, was beginning to take the lead in world Jewish affairs? Furthermore, the growth of Zionism as a viable force also changed the dynamic. To Roth the great tragedy of Jewish historiography was that it was too localized, following too closely on Graetz's lead, when the situation of world Jewry had changed dramatically. After all, Roth wrote, "For Graetz to have centered his history about the Jews of Germany was both natural and proper. He was German, writing primarily for his own compatriots"(5).

The only major challenge to "Graetz's excessive Teutonism"(6) was the work of Simon Dubnow. Unfortunately this did not lead to a widening of Jewish historical studies because Dubnow merely replaced German Jewry with Russian and Polish Jewry. "The result has been that (as far as the last few centuries are concerned) it is Ashkenazic Jewry which has filled the background while Germany has monopolized the stage"(6). The story of world Jewry, in particular the Sephardim, receives scant attention, as do other subjects such as Hebrew literature. Although Roth acknowledged that the Sephardim comprised a minority of world Jewry, nonetheless he made an impassioned plea for their inclusion onto the historical platform.

It is important to recognize that Roth's purpose in writing this article, indeed, his evolving sense of Jewish history, was not to act as an "objective" chronicler of events. Indeed, Roth argued that "complete objectivity is impossible, and not altogether desirable"(6). Nor was he advocating the writing of what could best be described as the "feel good" filiopietistic history of the Jewish historical societies of England and America. Rather, he believed that what the "ordinary Jew" needed was a history that would "explain the facts of his own existence."

If his history is to be localized, it should be localized for his own group, not for some foreign nucleus which, however vaster, however more important, has after all a point of view entirely different from his own. It is true that the vast majority of the Jews of England and America today derive from Russia and Poland. That does not mean, however, that their interest should be concentrated only upon their immediate forebears. (7)

Even with the antiquity of Jewish life in parts of Europe, Roth argued that English speaking Jewry has the potential to exceed even the Yiddish speaking Jews of eastern Europe. Indeed, one sign that English speaking Jewry was a world power was the fact that the Zionist movement was increasingly tied to these communities. Yet despite their continued growth, "what appears in the English language is written for the most part from the continental standpoint and in the Continental method. At the present moment, this foreign dependency is deplorable. Within a few years, it will have become positively ludicrous"(8).

Having identified what he perceived of as the symptoms of the stultification of Jewish history, Roth then turned to its causes. The systemic problem with modern Jewish history, as he saw it, was that its origins lay in the rabbinical seminaries. "A consequence of this has been that Jewish history has suffered the irreparable disaster of becoming almost a branch of theology. The professional world looks down with scorn upon any neophyte who has not served his apprenticeship over the folios of the Talmud" (8).

Certainly it is tempting to see in such statements Roth's lingering bitterness over his experience at the JIR. Yet Roth did not dismiss Talmudic study. Rather he argued that it was "by no means indispensable"(8). What made a scholar qualified to study Jewish History? Roth argued that "the only indisputable requirement for research in Jewish history of any period or from any angle-as for any branch of scholarship- is a knowledge of the principles and methods of research" (8). Roth was in fact taking on what he privately referred to as "the mutual admiration society,"⁴⁸ a group of scholars he felt whose education qualified them to deal with rabbinical text, "but who have not mastered even the elements of

the historian's craft." The major flaw in the writing and teaching of history was therefore not just a lack of research methodology, but a lack of understanding of historical context. The result, sadly, was that in "teaching, they give the impression that Jewish history took place in a vacuum, because they are ignorant of the very atmosphere of the external world in which it was enacted" (9).⁴⁹

Thus in this article we have some of Cecil Roth's earliest enunciations of his belief that Jewish history was the product of a creative interaction between Jewish and non-Jewish society. This interaction allowed Jewish intellectual and social creativity to contribute to the wider Non-Jewish world on a number of profound levels.

Roth was only moderately shy about citing specific examples of how "[u]nder Jewish patronage the right hand of Clio knoweth not what the left is doing." In particular he cited how "[a] recent German monograph by the newly-appointed Professor of History in one of the New York theological seminaries upon the Jewish Question at the Congress of Vienna failed to take account of a detailed study of the question which appeared in the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society!" (9-10) That Roth felt obliged to make a reference to Salo Wittmayer Baron, his erstwhile competitor for the JIR position, might be regarded as a malicious stab. Certainly Baron took it as such.⁵⁰

Rather than see this article *just* as a polemic against rabbinical training, rabbinical seminaries, and his own personal enemies, we should view this article as serving a twofold purpose. On the one hand it marked the beginning of Roth's conceptualization of a broad vision of Jewish history, while on the other he was staking a claim to legitimacy as a Jewish historian, even though he held an Oxford doctorate with a specialty in sixteenth-century Florentine history.

Such an interpretation is confirmed by Roth himself in the immediate aftermath of the article's publication. Roth's own perceptions as to why he was unable to obtain an academic appointment not only revealed his caustic wit, but also something about the plight of Jewish historical studies in the English speaking world. In addition to seeing his problem as part of a wider discrimination against Jewish history by academicians, Roth also directed his venom at the established leaders of Jewish higher education. Claiming that he was accepted by "foreign scholars," as well as among the reading public, Roth nevertheless felt that he was not accorded any professional acceptance. "The Goyim say: 'This man is not an historian: he is a Jewish antiquarian'. And the Jews say: 'This man is not a Jewish scholar: he is merely a historian'."⁵¹

Referring to his recent problems with the JIR, Roth claimed that when his name was mentioned for possible teaching appointments at "Jewish institutions on both sides of the Atlantic," he was rejected because "[h]is training has not been of the right sort. He has never seen the inside of a Rabbinical seminary. What we want is somebody with a good theological training!" Interestingly, Roth's claim that he "would have refused them if they were offered to me," is born out by his rejection of the position at the JIR. What is harder to explain is his continued bitterness. It is possible that Roth felt that the liberal rabbinical seminaries were unworthy of his talents, and yet he continued to express a bitterness that rings hollow, given that he was in fact offered a position. Despite this, Roth continued to insist that he was being slighted because of the preconceived notion that "for a person to teach Jewish history, the only sine qua non is apprenticeship over the folios of the Talmud!"⁵²

Roth continued his diatribe:

Of course, all of this is ludicrous. But to me, it is pretty serious as well. The fact of the matter remains that the 'call of the blood' which has drawn me to Jewish work seems to have ruined my career: and there doesn't seem to be any prospect of making good in the Jewish field what I have lost in the secular.

And the reason is, not so much that my Jewish equipment is inadequate, as that my historical equipment is over-adequate! Naturally, I feel it very deeply myself. But I feel it also on behalf of others. Nowadays, we are fond of summoning our youth to tum back to the treasures of their own people. To judge from my own experience, compliance is likely in some cases to be fatal.⁵³

Roth's long diatribe about the sorry state of his own affairs ended on a somewhat humorous note. "We have made the world safe for Democracy: let us now make Scholarship safe for Jews."⁵⁴ Roth's bitterness was likely exacerbated by the fact that in the late 1920s, Jewish history consistently seemed to be taught only in the rabbinical seminaries he disdained.⁵⁵

Roth's sense that a common bond existed between Jewish and non-Jewish history would form the nucleus of his next historiographical article. On submitting his second proposed critique of Jewish historiography he told Hurwitz that

I have just completed an essay, written entirely for my own benefit, on Epochs in Jewish History: there is such a thing as an intellectual cathartic, to clear one's mind of obsessions and to clarify one's thoughts. I hardly know whether it is worth publishing; and anyhow I would prefer to preserve my conclusions inviolate for presentation in my Cambridge Medieval History chapter. But (reverting to what I said above). I have been meditating an essay on The Genizah School of History, which would contain some scathing criticism of those leaders of American Jewish historiography who have changed Clio from a muse to a scavenger. Do you think you would care to publish it-under strictest anonymity?⁵⁶

Months later he explained the article's genesis to Herbert Solow:

When I started the CMH contribution, my first thought was this: how far does the term "Middle Ages" mean anything in Jewish history? That essay, on the Epochs was the result of my excogitations [*sic*]: I had to set it down on paper, because otherwise it would have kept trespassing into the more serious piece of work. And, it being a sort of intellectual bye-product, I don't care very many damns what happens to it. If you can find some way of employing it, you are welcome: but otherwise you can send it to the limbo of discarded manuscripts (Ye Gods! What a theme for a Dantesque [*sic*] vision!).⁵⁷

Published as "European History and Jewish History: Do Their Epochs Coincide?" in April 1929,⁵⁸ the article reiterated Roth's dissatisfaction with the state of Jewish historical writing, and not surprisingly, he blamed the same group of individuals.

Roth began by asserting that for Jewish history to be understood, it must first create a meaningful periodization. To accomplish this Jewish history "must be placed in their true positions relative to general movements" Roth eschewed any sense that there were absolute dividing lines between eras as "humanity does not progress by fixed marches or call a halt at the end of every stage consistently" (293).

Roth argued that Jewish historians lacked an adequate sense of chronology. Graetz and his followers divided Jewish history into three main epochs: the first covered the origins of the Jewish people to the destruction of the First Temple, the second to the capture of Jerusalem by Titus [70 C. E.], while the third took the story to the present day. Roth argued that these divisions only corresponded to "superficial differences in literary history and almost entirely neglect[s] political and social conditions" (294). Roth also criticized Simon Dubnow, who divided Jewish history into an eastern and a western period, for "thinking in terms of Hegelian cycles of rise and decay" (295). Ben-Zion Dinaburg,⁵⁹ meanwhile, tried to make Jewish history correspond to a geographical focus. In particular, "make historical lore come forth from Jerusalem (or, rather, from Tel-Aviv)" (295).

Roth's critique of these three was intended to show that they suffered from the major problem of Jewish studies, a "lack of relation to significant developments" (295). Specifically, a lack of understanding of what Roth regarded as the major element missing in Jewish historiography, a sense of where the Jews fit into the broad sweep of European history. In the process Roth was attempting to address what was, in his mind at least, the major question: when did the Jews become Europeans?

This question was paramount to Roth for, as he argued, "if the Jew of today is essentially European in actuality, the Jewish question is no less so in its antecedents" (297). Thus, by determining when and how the Jews entered European history a meaningful chronology of Jewish history could then be constructed. "If this relation can be firmly established, Jewish history will become thereby more intelligible to the man of today-not only to the Gentile who, where not a European, is becoming more and more saturated with Europeanism [*sic*], but also to the Jew permeated with the European outlook. Only thus can Jewish history be truly grasped and given its proper place in the general cultural background of the ordinary modern man" (297-298).

"European History and Jewish History" lacked something of the intellectual drive and logical erudition of 'Jewish History for Our Own Needs.' Indeed, in this article Roth was repetitive and long-winded in making the claim that "the history of the Jews in Europe begins where the Middle Ages themselves begin, at the period of the Christianization of the Roman Empire" (298).

Despite its drawbacks, the article points to several important issues that Roth would raise in later works. The first is that the periodization of Jewish history could not take on rigid definitions without numerous qualifications. For example, while some scholars argued that the "modern" age of Jewish history began with Moses Mendelssohn, and others pointed to the Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1789, Roth believed that it was "of the utmost importance to note that just as the essentially medieval treatment of the Jew has persisted in some places down to the present day, so the essentially modern status was to be found in others before the eighteenth century" (304).

A second point that must be kept in mind was that Roth was continuing to assert the growing significance of English speaking Jewry to world Jewry. Indeed, Roth concluded the article with a caveat for his English speaking readers when he declared that:

And so, in the lands which bordered on both shores of the Northern Atlantic, there sprang up Jewish settlements of a new sort, in which the Jew was able to attain the stature of a man as never before, perhaps since the heyday of the Roman Empire. Persecution was unknown, segregation with its attendant humiliation was no longer the main object of the governmental policy, and there was now possible a healthy individualism in Jewish life instead of the previous differentiatory [*sic*] collectivism. (305)

Finally, the article pointed ahead to a theme for which Roth would become famous: the contribution of the Jews to the history of Western Civilization.⁶⁰ Interestingly, although Roth was committed to the belief that Jewish history was not solely a story of tragedy, in this article he limited many of his comments to the significance of traumatic events, such as the expulsion from Spain in 1492, on Jewish history. His conclusion that "the status and distribution of the Jewish people show a suggestive coincidence with the great crisis of European history" (306) reflected his belief that Jewish history had to be understood as the result of Jewish-gentile interaction.

The publication of the *Menorah* articles were fundamental to Roth's development as a Jewish historian, on both the intellectual level, where he had to enunciate a philosophy, and on the practical level, earning a living as an historian without an academic appointment. As early as 1926 Roth had set himself the task of

making Jewish history interesting and accessible. Yet who was interested in a Jewish history of this ilk? Roth's vision of a Jewish history that would inspire and enlighten struck a responsive cord among a group of Jewish reform educators who were trying to raise the level of Jewish literacy.

In April 1930, Emanuel Gameron,⁶¹ the educational director of the Commission of Jewish Education of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations/ Central Conference of American Rabbis, identified five major problems in contemporary Jewish education: "the unschooled, the curriculum, textbooks, methods, training personnel."⁶² In addition to the problems of education Gameron believed that Jews needed something with which to "anchor" themselves in order to maintain their Jewish identity. As Gameron asserted, "The Jew can find anchorage by integrating himself into his past, into his present, and associating himself with the hopes of his people for the future."⁶³ Thus Roth's historical vision dovetailed with Gameron's educational pedagogy. Indeed, throughout the 1930s, Gameron oversaw the creation of a series of textbooks on "The Jewish Past" and "The Jewish Present" that would serve as the foundation for the reform of Jewish education, and beyond, for years.⁶⁴

In the fall of 1931 Roth was recommended as a potential author to Gameron by Hyman G. Enelow, a prominent reform rabbi and member of the commission.⁶⁵ Roth's philosophy on Jewish history as outlined in his *Menorah* articles, fit nicely with the educational philosophy of the commission, who wanted American Jews to understand not only the history of the Jewish people, but how they fit into the broad sweep of Jewish life. In December 1931 Gameron reported to the commission:

I am pleased to inform you that we have invited Dr. Cecil Roth of London, England, to prepare the one volume history of the Jews. While authentic as far as the facts are concerned, this is to be a book written in a style sufficiently readable for the average adult. I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Roth has accepted the invitation extended to him on behalf of our Committee.⁶⁶

In their discussions about the proposed volume we see the fruits of Roth's development as a Jewish historian. Roth advised Gameron that the book should begin with the return from Babylonian captivity, in order to begin with "the birth of the Jewish, as distinct from the Israelitish [*sic*], history and cultures." The "TERMINUS AD QUEM" Roth wanted was the present day. "Without" he said "taking up a specifically Zionistic [*sic*] standpoint, I feel it best to lead up to the modern revival in Palestine. It serves to give the picture a greater cohesion."⁶⁷ Roth also outlined his historiographical perspective:

I belong to no particular school, organization or movement. As far as questions of criticism, nationalism, and liberalism are concerned, I cannot however, put forward any point of view other than my own, which is that God fulfils himself in many ways. I sincerely trust that there is no need to belabour [*sic*] this point.⁶⁸

Although Cameron insisted that the book had to cover the period from Abraham to the present, he made no other major modifications to Roth's parameters.⁶⁹

As the book neared completion Roth wrote to Hurwitz that he was "not at all dissatisfied with it. I set myself out to fulfill the desideratum put forward in my various papers in the *Menorah*: and (considering the limitations of space and time, as well as the fact that the work makes no pretense of being based throughout on original sources) I have succeeded beyond my expectations."⁷⁰

Roth's pride in his work was based on the fact that in general he eschewed "linguistic fireworks and facile generalizations" while giving

a completely new perspective. Social history has been brought forward: literary history has been relegated to the background, and shewn [*sic*] in its proper relations: the Central European

standpoint has been abandoned: and I have tried to keep a sense of proportion, not allowing decades upon which we happen to be peculiar [*sic*] well informed to dominate centuries on which we are not. Needless to say, I have drawn abundantly upon my various *Menorah* contributions.⁷¹

In his self-assessment Roth enunciated the culmination of his decade-long evolution into a Jewish historian. Such a transformation could not have been wrought were it not for his interaction with the American Jewish community, and in particular the *Menorah journal*. Indeed, Roth acknowledged this on the publication of *A Bird's-Eye View of Jewish History* in 1935. Roth expressed his satisfaction and gratitude to Hurwitz in a long letter that is worth quoting at length.

I trust that you will by now have received a copy of my new book, *A Bird 's-Eye View of Jewish History*, which I asked the publishers to send you. In a few days I hope to be able to show for its slightly more dignified "big brother," *A Short History of the Jewish People*, which Macmillans are publishing in London today. If it receives a welcome as cordial as the American editions, which has been greeted almost rapturously in some quarters, I will be well satisfied. I am particularly anxious to have your opinion on this volume, and for the following reason:-It is, to a certain extent, *our* volume rather than *mine*. I mean, that it could not have been written but for the *Menorah Journal*. I feel that I have been able to give perhaps a clearer picture of the development of the Jewish people than has been achieved before, to present the story in a fresh perspective, and to accentuate various aspects of social history generally overlooked. But I was able to do this only because the *Menorah*, years ago, provided me with a medium in which I was able to present-and, in presenting, to clarify my ideas: a medium which was available nowhere else, whether in English or in any other language. You will recall, I am sure, the series of essays on Jewish historiography to which I refer. While I was in Palestine last year, I was surprised to hear criticisms of these, from persons of the eminence of the late Shemariah Levin, who had obviously followed them closely. I don't know whether they had any permanent effect on myself, enabling me to grasp more clearly the problems with which I attempted to grapple; and I venture to believe that my new book, which has been complimented as the best and clearest Jewish history in the English language and which, incidentally, has already been translated into Hebrew could never have been written without the *Menorah*. It is for that reasons that I [am] so anxious to convey to you, too, some of my own thrill of paternity on its publication.

The publication of *A Bird's-Eye View of Jewish History* in 1935 marked the fulfillment of Roth's vision that the history of the Jewish people had to be available to a wide audience. *A Bird's-Eye View* became one of Roth's most influential works, and would be reprinted numerous times. Indeed, this book would form the basis, or inspiration, for a number of Roth's subsequent publications.⁷² It is also worth mentioning that *A Bird's-Eye View of Jewish History* remained on the UAHC's recommended reading list until well into the 1950s.⁷³

Roth's early career was shaped by a number of forces. His inability to obtain an academic appointment immediately after his matriculation from Oxford, whether or not it was caused by the factors he claimed, led to his temporary immigration to the United States. Although this did not lead to permanent residence, it did set up a relationship that lasted for the rest of Roth's professional career. Roth continued to lecture in the United States on a regular basis, even after his appointment at Oxford University in 1939. Some of his most famous, and enduring publications, were issued by American publishing houses, such as the JPS and UAHC. It is ironic that the very factor that vexed him so much, his inability to obtain a permanent academic post until 1939, contributed to his fame as a historian. For in order to earn a living as an historian, Roth was forced to write the type of history that would sell to a wide audience, and thus pay him a living wage.

Because of the depth of his knowledge, and his lively style of writing and lecturing, Roth had many admirers. By 1935 Roth's transformation into a Jewish historian was complete. Although his vision of a Jewish history accessible to the public gave him a wide audience, the acceptance of his academic colleagues was often harder to obtain. His influence on subsequent generations of historians was through his lectures and publications, rather than through acting as a mentor. Even today Roth is remembered as a popular writer, a great lecturer, and yet he had no real disciples.⁷⁴

NOTES

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1. Letter, Cecil Roth to Henry Hurwitz, January 26th, 1927. Ms coll. 2, Box 50, Folder 3, The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA).
2. Most recently Todd Endelman argued that in Anglo-Jewish historiography Roth wrote in "the same apologetic vein as the amateurs of the Jewish Historical Society of England." See Todd Endelman, "Writing English Jewish History," *Albion* Vol. 27, No. 3 (Autumn 1995), p. 628. On the milieu that Roth came out of see Robert Liberles, "Postemancipation Historiography and the Jewish Historical Societies of America and England," in *Reshaping the Past: Jewish History and the Historians (Studies in Contemporary Jewry, Vol. 10)*, ed. Jonathan Frankel (New York, 1994), pp. 66-92.
3. See the biographical entry on Roth in the *Encyclopedia judaica* for the basic contours of his life and career. Cecil Roth's wife Irene wrote a biography of him that contains valuable insights into his life and personality, but is episodic and unreliable as to his career and historical methodology. See Irene Roth, *Historian without Tears: A Memoir* (New York, 1982). Geoffrey Alderman is apparently in the process of writing a biography of Roth, the first installment of which covers his life up to 1924. See Geoffrey Alderman, "The Young Cecil Roth, 1899-1924," *Jewish Historical Studies* (Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England) Vol. 34 (1994-1996), pp. 1-16.
4. See Robert Liberles, *Saló Wittmayer Baron: Architect of Jewish History* (New York, 1995).
5. On Marcus's career and significance see Lance J. Sussman, "'Historian of the Jewish People:' A Historiographic Reevaluation of the Writings of Jacob R. Marcus," *The American Jewish Archives journal* Vol. 50, Nos. 1 & 2 (1998), pp. 10-11; and for a comparison between Marcus and Baron see Jeffrey Gurock, 'Jacob Rader Marcus, Saló W. Baron, and the Public's Need to Know American Jewish History,' *The American Jewish Archives journal* Vol. 50, Nos. 1 & 2 (1998), pp. 22-27.
6. Cecil Roth, *The Last Florentine Republic* (London, 1925).
7. For a concise survey of the ideas of this intellectual movement see *Encyclopedia judaica*, s.v. "Wissenschaft Des Judentums."
8. Chaim Raphael, "In Search of Cecil Roth," *Commentary* Vol. 50, No. 3 (Sept. 1970), p. 75.
9. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*, (New York, 1988), pp. 52-53.
10. Jonathan D. Sarna. *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture, 1888-1988* (Philadelphia, 1989), pp. 163-164.

11. David N. Myers, *Re-Inventing the Jewish Past: European Jewish Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History* (New York, 1995).
12. David N. Myers, "Introduction" in *The Jewish Past Revisited: Reflections on Modern Jewish Historians*, ed. David N. Myers and David B. Ruderman, (New Haven, 1998), p. 9.
13. Letter, Cecil Roth to Herbert Solow, April 22, 1928, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
14. See David Weinberg's thoughtful critique of the Myers and Ruderman volume in *American Historical Review* Vol. 105, No. 1 (February 2000), pp. 166-167.
15. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History & Jewish Memory* (New York, 1989), p. 84.
16. On the creation of the JIR see Michael A. Meyer, *Hebrew Union College--Jewish Institute of Religion: A Centennial History 1875-1975* (Cincinnati, 1992), pp. 137-169; for an examination of the context of Jewish studies in general see Paul Ritterband and Harold S. Wechsler, *Jewish Learning in American Universities: The First Century* (Bloomington, 1994), chapter six, passim.
17. Meyer, *Hebrew Union College*, p. 152; Liberles, *Salo Wittmayer Baron*, pp. 27-30.
18. Israel Abrahams (1858-1925) was a professor of rabbinic and Talmudic literature at Cambridge University. He had deep ties to the American Jewish community, corresponding with many prominent individuals. One of his most famous books, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, was published by the Jewish Publication Society. See Elliot Horowitz, "Jewish Life in the Middle Ages and the Jewish Life of Israel Abrahams," in *The Jewish Past Revisited*, pp. 143-162.
19. Letter, Stephen S. Wise to Israel Abrahams, August 28\ 1925, Ms. coll. #19, Box 32, Folder 1, AJA.
20. Letter, Cecil Roth to Henry Hurwitz, June 1, 1928, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ritterband and Wechsler, *Jewish Learning in American Universities*, chapter seven, gives a detailed discussion of the problems faced by Jewish Historians; Liberles, *Salo Wittmayer Baron*, chapter two, describes the specific travails Baron faced trying to find a permanent departmental "home" after being named to the Miller Chair at Columbia University.
24. Announcement to students, January4\ 1926, 32/1, AJA. On the Jewish Encyclopedia see Shuly Rubin Schwartz, *The Emergence of Jewish Scholarship in America: The Publication of the Jewish Encyclopedia* (Cincinnati, 1991).
25. Telegram, Julian Mack to Cecil Roth, March 25, 1927, Ms. coll. #19, 32/1. Roth's rejection telegram is dated March 28, 1927.
26. Although Liberles asserted that no action was taken on offering Roth the position, and that it was subsequently filled by Baron, records in the JIR Roth file indicate that he was in fact offered the position. See Liberles, *Salo Wittmayer Baron*, p. 32. Roth's bitterness was expressed in a letter to Julian Mack, April 2, 1927, Ms. coll. #19, 32/1.

27. Letter, Cecil Roth to Stephen S. Wise, March 1, 1927, Ms. coll. #19, 32/1, AJA. The details of the controversy between Roth and Wise are found in this folder as well.
28. The *Menorah Journal* Vol. 12, No. 6 (December 1926), pp. 577-588.
29. See Seth Korelitz, "The Menorah Idea: From Religion to Culture, from Race to Ethnicity," *American Jewish History* Vol. 85, No. 1 (March 1997), pp. 75-100 and Lauren Strauss, "Staying Afloat in the Melting Pot: Constructing an American Jewish Identity in the *Menorah journal* of the 1920s," *American Jewish History* Vol. 84, No. 4 (December 1996), pp. 315-331.
30. Letter, Henry Hurwitz to Cecil Roth, July 29, 1927, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
31. Mark Krupnick, "The Menorah Group and the Origins of Modern Jewish-American Radicalism," *Studies in American Jewish Literature* Vol. 5 (Winter 1979), p. 58; also see Susanne Klingenstein, *Jews in the American Academy, 1900-1940* (Syracuse, 1998), pp. 41-42.
32. Max L. Margolis and Alexander Marx, *A History of the Jewish People* (Philadelphia, 1927). The Russian born Max Margolis (1886-1932) was a prominent biblical and Semitic scholar who taught at several American universities. See *Encyclopedia judaica*, s.v. "Margolis, Max Leopold." Alexander Marx (1878-1953) was born in Germany and was named librarian of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York in 1903. See *Encyclopedia judaica*, s.v. "Marx, Alexander." Both men came from the traditional *Wissenschaft* school. Their book was one of the more widely known and highly regarded single volume histories of the Jewish people for a number of years.
33. Letter, Cecil Roth to Henry Hurwitz, June 15, 1927, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
34. See Ritterband and Weschsler, *Jewish Learning in American Universities*, p. 141 for a discussion of the Marx and Margolis book.
35. Letter, Cecil Roth to Henry Hurwitz, March 29, 1926, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
36. Addendum to Letter, Cecil Roth to Herbert Solow, November 11, 1927, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
37. Jacob Mann (1888-1940) was a specialist in medieval Jewish history. Born in Galicia he was educated in London and taught for many years at Hebrew Union College. His pioneering work laid the foundation for the study of medieval Jewish communities in the middle east. See *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v., "Mann, Jacob."
38. Lucien Wolf (1857-1930) was an Anglo-Jewish diplomat, journalist, and historian. In addition to his activities on behalf of continental Jews during and after World War I, he played an active role in the Jewish Historical Society of England, and published a number of articles on Anglo-Jewish history. See Mark Levene, *War, Jews, and the New Europe: The Diplomacy of Lucien Wolf 1914-1919* (Oxford, 1992); also see *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Wolf, Lucien." Interestingly, this entry was written by Cecil Roth.
39. Ismar Elbogen (1874-1943) was a product of the Breslau Rabbinical Academy and eventually joined the faculty of the Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin. His primary interest was in Jewish history and the history of Jewish literature. See *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Elbogen, Ismar."

40. Umberto Cassuto (1883-1953) was an Italian historian and biblical and Semitic scholar. He held several academic posts in Italy until 1939, when he joined the faculty of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. See *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Cassuto, Umberto."
41. Addendum to Letter, Cecil Roth to Herbert Solow, November 11, 1927, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Letter, Cecil Roth to Herbert Solow, January 30, 1928, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
45. Letter, Henry Hurwitz to Cecil Roth, February 3, 1928, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
46. Cecil Roth, "Jewish History for Our Own Needs," *The Menorah Journal* Vol. 14 (May 1928), pp. 1-16.
47. See Ismar Schorsch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover, 1994).
48. Roth made this reference at the end of a letter to Hurwitz, January 10, 1927, Ms coll. #2 50/3, AJA. In this context Roth could be his own worst enemy. Alexander Marx broke off contact after Roth sent him "corrections" to *A History of the Jews*. See Ritterban and Wechsler, *Jewish Learning in American Universities*, p. 141.
49. Ritterban and Wechsler argue that Roth's perception of the problem was in fact largely accurate. See *Jewish Learning in American Universities*, pp. 126-147 for the discussion.
50. Letter, Herbert Solow to Cecil Roth, May 24, 1928, Ms coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
51. Letter, Cecil Roth to Henry Hurwitz, June 1, 1928, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. See Ritterband and Wechsler, *Jewish Learning in American Universities*, pp. 139-147.
56. Letter, Cecil Roth to Henry Hurwitz, January 26th, 1927, Ms coll. #2, 50/3, AJA. See Cecil Roth, "The Jews in the Middle Ages," in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VII (New York, 1932). Roth covered the period between the destruction of the Temple and the fifteenth-century migration to eastern Europe.
57. Letter, Cecil Roth to Herbert Solow, November 11, 1927, Ms. coll. #2, 50/3, AJA.
58. Cecil Roth, "European History and Jewish History: Do Their Epochs Coincide?" *The Menorah Journal* Vol. 16 (April 1929), pp. 293-306.

59. Ben Zion Dinaburg (also Dinnur) (1884-1973) was a teacher, and later head, of the Teachers Training College in Jerusalem from 1923-1948. In 1936 he was appointed to the History Faculty of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Dinaburg approached the study of Jewish history from a Zionist standpoint, and saw the establishment of a Jewish homeland as a negation of the diaspora experience. David Myers has an insightful analysis on Dinaburg in *Reinventing the Jewish Past*, chapter six, passim. Also see *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Dinur, Benzion."
60. See Cecil Roth, *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization* (London, 1938).
61. Emanuel Cameron (1895-1962) served as director of the Commission of Jewish Education since 1923. See Kerry Marc Olitzky, "A History of Reform Jewish Education during Emanuel Gamoran's Tenure as Education Director of the Commission on Jewish Education of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations 1923-1958," (DHL Thesis, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1984); see also *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Cameron, Emanuel."
62. Emanuel Cameron, "Notes on Minutes of the Commission," p. 5, Small Collections, SC-3857, AJA.
63. Emanuel Cameron, "What the Jewish Religious School is Trying to do for the Jewish Child." Small Collections, SC-3854, AJA.
64. One of the most popular, and enduring, books sponsored by Cameron's program was Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book: 315-1791* (Cincinnati, 1937). Originally intended for adult education, this book became a mainstay of Judaic studies and has been reprinted by at least four different publishers since 1937.
65. Hyman Enelow (1877-1934) was a prominent Reform rabbi and educator in his own right. See *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Enelow, Hyman." See also Jacob Rader Marcus, *A Concise Dictionary of American Jewish Biography* (New York, 1994), s.v. "Enelow, Hyman G."
66. Report of the Committee on Adult Education to the Commission on Jewish Education, December 29, 1931, Ms. coll. #11, 7/3, AJA. Emanuel Cameron's son, Rabbi Hillel Cameron, informed me that his father and Roth developed a lasting friendship during this project. Rabbi Hillel Cameron, personal comments to the author, December 1999.
67. Letter, Roth to Emanuel Cameron, December 29th, 1931, Ms. coll. #11, 7/3, AJA.
68. Ibid.
69. Letter, Emanuel Cameron to Cecil Roth, January 15th, 1932, Ms. coll. #11, 7/3, AJA.
70. Letter, Cecil Roth to Henry Hurwitz, March 19, 1933, Ms. coll. #2, 50/5, AJA.
71. Ibid.
72. Cecil Roth, *A Bird's-Eye View of Jewish History* (Cincinnati, 1935) and subsequently republished in Great Britain as *A Short History of the Jewish People, 1600 B.C.-A.D. 1935* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1936); in the U.S. it was later published as *A History of the Jews: From the Earliest Times Through the Six Day War* (New York, 1961), the copyright was renewed in 1989.

73. See Emanuel Gamoran, "Suggested Books for Home and Religious School in Observance of Jewish Book Week, November 30th-December 7th, 1952," (New York, 1952). Typescript held at the Klau Library, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

74. I owe this point to my colleagues at the Midwest Jewish Studies Colloquium.