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Jews and the Sources of Religious Freedom in Early Pennsylvania

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JEWS AND THE SOURCES OF
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN EARLY PENNSYLVANIA

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by

Jonathon Derek Awtrey
B.S. University of West Georgia, 2007
M.A. University of West Georgia, 2009
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*For Christina, Sandra, Cole, Val, Suzy, April, Les,
Carolyn, John, Nita, Kevin, and families*

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Bill Cooper, Victor Stater, Stephen Andes, Jonathan Earle, and Jerry Kennedy offered sage advice. My fellow graduate students provided the much-needed distractions on Thursday evenings at Chimes, including Lindsay Silver, Tom Barber, Dave Brokaw, Garrett McKinnon, Andrew Johnson, Matthew Perreault, Zach Isenhower, Jeff Crawford, Erik Wagner, Erin Halloran, Alexis Hlavaty, Jessica Payne, Luke Hargroder, Fernando Rodriguez, Evan Caris, Sabrina Cervantez, Eric Broussard, Jeff Hobson, Tim Landry, James Wilkey, Ali Nabours, Jason Wolfe, Michael Robinson, Kat Sawyer Robinson, Andrew Wegmann, and Adam Pratt. Spencer McBride deserves special mention here because he read and critiqued this study and has been a constant supporter of my work and career. Such friends and mentors have made my career at LSU a memorable one.

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Writing a book is a singular, often solitary act. Yet, no scholar whose histories are worth reading writes them entirely alone. This paradox among historians is one shared by the subjects of this book. Anglo-American Jews participated in the public square unlike ever before, but Jews' cultural integration and legal equality incited anti-Jewish prejudices against them. There the similarities end. As I write these lines, my own freedoms are decidedly secure and, as a white male, prejudices against me or my family remain a distant abstraction. If readers take away anything of value from the pages endured here, surely it is an appreciation of and respect for the diversity that defines American culture, in the historical past and today. The final "thank you" goes to the many amateur and professional historians who laid the intellectual foundations upon which this dissertation is built, though I alone take responsibility for its demerits.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	American Antiquarian Society
AJA	American Jewish Archives
AJA	<i>American Jewish Archives</i> (Journal)
AJD	Marcus, Jacob R. <i>American Jewry. Documents. Eighteenth Century.</i> Cincinnati: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1959.
AJHQ	<i>American Jewish Historical Quarterly</i>
AJHS	American Jewish Historical Society
APS	American Philosophical Society
BMG	Byars, William Vincent ed. <i>B. And M. Gratz: Merchants in Philadelphia, 1754-1798.</i> Jefferson City, MO: The Hugh Stephens Printing Company, 1916.
CAJ	Marcus, Jacob R. <i>The Colonial American Jew, 1492-1776.</i> 3 Vols. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970.
DHJ	Schappes, Morris U. <i>A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States, 1654-1875.</i> New York: Schocken Books, 1971.
EAJ	Marcus, Jacob R. <i>Early American Jewry.</i> 2 Vols. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1951-53.
EEQ	<i>East European Quarterly</i>
GHQ	<i>Georgia Historical Quarterly</i>
HLQ	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
HSP	Historical Society of Pennsylvania
JCC	<i>Journals of the Continental Congress</i>
JER	<i>Journal of the Early Republic</i>
JOP	Whiteman, Maxwell and Wolf, Edwin. <i>The History of the Jews of Philadelphia from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson.</i> Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956.

- LCP Library Company of Philadelphia
- LFF Hershkowitz, Leo and Meyer, Isidore S. *The Lee Max Friedman Collection of American Jewish Correspondence: Letters of the Franks Family, 1733-1748*. Waltham: American Jewish Historical Society, 1968.
- LRG Philipson, David ed. *Letters of Rebecca Gratz*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1929.
- MAJ Marcus, Jacob R. ed. *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*. 3 Vols. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955.
- NEQ *New England Quarterly*
- PAJHS *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*
- PHB Stevens, Sylvester K. et al. eds. *The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet: Series 21631 and Series 21632*. 15 Vols. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1940-94.
- PHJ *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*
- PMHB *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*
- PWJ Sullivan, James. ed. *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*. 8 Vols. Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1921-33.
- USJ Marcus, Jacob R. *United States Jewry, 1776-1985*. 4 Vols. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989.
- WMQ *William and Mary Quarterly*

ABSTRACT

Historians' traditional narrative regarding religious freedom in the colonial period and early republic focuses on Protestants and sometimes Catholics to the exclusion of other religious groups; the literature also emphasizes the legal dimensions of freedom at the expense of its cultural manifestations. This study, conversely, demonstrates that Jews, the only white non-Christian minority group in early Pennsylvania, *experienced* freedom far differently than its legality can adequately explain. Jews, moreover, reshaped religious freedom to include religious groups beyond Protestant Christians alone. But such grassroots transformations were neither quick nor easy. Like most of the Anglo-American world, William Penn's "Holy Experiment" excluded Jewish émigrés and other non-Protestants from citizenship and full participation in civil society. Jews, though, played active, not passive, roles in redrawing the boundaries around freedom. Jews participated in the secular marketplace, enlightenment culture, and newspaper politics, which normalized Jews and Judaism in public life and forged important relationships between Jews and economic and political patrons of cultural and political authority. Although Jews contended with prejudices, their activities in the public square and relationships with patrons granted them enough influence among enlightened elites to demand wider parameters for their public religious expressions and political participation. After about 1800, Jews enjoyed full religious freedom, cultural integration, and citizenship, but waves of nineteenth-century Jewish migrations revived dormant anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic sentiments. Despite pervasive prejudice that sometimes negated their statuses in civil society, Jews utilized cultural institutions to refashion their reputations, honor, and respectability in the eyes of their Protestant neighbors. As activists, not victims, Jews sat in the vanguard of the cultural transformations that made a meaningful religious pluralism in antebellum culture a reality.

INTRODUCTION

JEWISH MIGRANTS & FREEDOM

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.
We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song;
and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

— Psalm 137

In Philadelphia, in 1788, sixteen Christian clergymen who represented several denominations walked side by side with a Jewish rabbi (some accounts describe their interlocked arms), probably Philadelphia's *hazan* Jacob Raphael Cohen, down the city's streets in a national procession honoring the recent ratification of the U.S. Constitution. After the parade was over, Benjamin Rush remarked, "There could not have been a more happy emblem contrived, of that section of the new constitution, which open all its powers and offices alike, not only to every sect of christians, but to worthy men of *every* religion." From Rush's hyperbole, historians have underscored a triumphant religious pluralism, equality, and philo-Semitism, or comity between Jews and Christians. Although there is certainly something to be said for expressions of Judaism in Philadelphia's public square, Jews remembered it a bit differently. Naphtali Phillips, whose father Jonas fled Germany for British North America in the 1750s, participated in the parade and remembered, "there was a number of long tables loaded with all kinds of provisions, with a separate table for the Jews, who could not partake of the meals from the other tables." Although historians have utilized this fête to celebrate freedom and cooperation among disparate religious groups in the early republic, it is worth noting that Protestants set a *kosher* table for Jews separated from their own. Phillips's interpretation is a reminder of Jews' continued marginalization in public life at the hands of Pennsylvania's Protestant majority. Although the U.S. Constitution and subsequent Bill of Rights granted Jews legal emancipation at the federal

level, Pennsylvania's 1776 constitution instituted a Christian oath for officeholders that disbarred Jews from political participation as public servants. This study shows that comity and mutual respect collapses into dissent and mudslinging epithets when we consider Jews' response to anti-Semitism in the colonial period and their political activism in popular, newspaper politics in the early republic.¹

Naphtali Phillips was a descendant of a Jewish family (one among many) of German ancestry who identified as ethnic and cultural Ashkenazim. Those families fled early eighteenth-century London and Amsterdam and other lands of eastern and southern Europe and settled and developed early Pennsylvania. They struggled to define themselves and their religiosity on the frontier of a global empire and North American continent and eventually as citizens of an emergent republic. As business people, they participated in the expansion that marched Anglo-American civilization farther into the interior of the North American continent. Jews constructed domestic and transatlantic networks of patronage, business associations, and ideas between Jews *and* Christians. Jews partnered with James Logan, members of the Penn and Hamilton families, George Croghan, Benjamin Franklin, William Franklin, among many other powerful gentiles to speculate in western lands and frontier trade; several Jews of affluence owned slaves and traded in slaves and servants as well. They participated in the secular marketplace but also the institutions of enlightenment culture. Jews, for instance, were members of and contributed books to the Library Company of Philadelphia; they helped to fund the establishment of the College of

¹ Chris Beneke argues that law placed religious pluralism "beyond toleration," see *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism* (Oxford, 2006), 3-5; quoted in "Naphtali Phillips," *PAJHS* 21 (1913), 172-74, and for transcription and contextual introduction, see "The Federal Parade of 1788," *AJAJ* 7 (1955), 65-7. Rush quoted in "Observations on the Federal Procession on the Fourth of July, 1788," *American Museum* IV (1788), 77. Some scholars, admittedly, have examined the British custom that allowed Jews to eat apart from Protestants as a sign of respect for Jews and Judaism, see Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism* (New Haven, 2004), 38, n14. Although English custom dignified Jews and Judaism with *kosher* meals in public, Phillips shows that Pennsylvania's Jews often interpreted such gestures through the lens of recent, often unfriendly, experiences. My contributions, though, build upon Sarna's insistence that American Jews have always been agents of social change.

Philadelphia and, later, their children and grandchildren matriculated, both women and men. Jews made up 25% of Freemasonry's brotherhood and enjoyed the prestige of membership in the American Philosophical Society. In 1744, three travelers to Pennsylvania noted Jewish cultural contributions in their travel narratives—remarkable observations because only about fifty Jews resided there at that time. So important was the Gratz family's contributions to the development of early Pennsylvania, their papers found permanent homes at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and APS. In 1787, Naphtali's father Jonas became the *only* individual to petition Philadelphia's Constitutional Convention; he promised the federal delegates that “the Israelites will think themselves happy to live under a government where all Religious societies are on an Equal footing,” which was, of course, not the case at that time. As local and national Whigs and eventually Republicans, they participated in post-revolutionary newspaper politics as well. Their numbers were so large in Democratic-Republican clubs and public discourses that Federalist pundits cast the entire dissenting opposition as “Jews,” a rhetorical tool they applied to “infidels,” “deists,” “foreign aliens,” “democrats,” “Turks,” “heathens,” and even Muslims. Such bigotry was a continuation of anti-Jewish mythology with deep roots in antiquity. Prejudice always remained a part of their lives, but Jews' oversized presence in the public square altered their neighbors' attitudes toward them and Judaism. Although Jews made their new homes on the *periphery* of a global empire, they became *central* actors in the cultural transformations that made possible an unfolding of their own equality.²

² Quoted Jonas Phillips to the Federal Constitutional Convention, September 7, 1787, MS-382, Jonas Phillips Papers, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 21, AJA, transcribed with commentary in *Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience*, eds., Jonathan D. Sarna and David G. Dalin (Notre Dame, 1997), 72-74. Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell argue that Jews became insiders after Abraham Lincoln bestowed them with patronage, see *Lincoln and the Jews: A History* (New York, 2015). There are only a handful of book-length projects that examines Jewish migrants to early Pennsylvania, see Hyman P. Rosenbach, *The Jews in Philadelphia prior to 1800* (Philadelphia, 1883); Henry S. Morais, *The Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1894). Jacob R. Marcus devotes much of the second volume to Pennsylvania's Jews, see Jacob R. Marcus, *Early American Jewry*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1951-53) (hereafter *EAJ*). Marcus examines Pennsylvania's Jews in several sections, see idem, *The*

This study tells the story of how Jews influenced imperial, colonial and, later, republican leaders enough to widen the contours of religious freedom for non-Christians and to achieve political emancipation and integration in state and national politics. It also shows a persistent anti-Jewish sentiment in Anglo-American society and culture, a cultural barrier to their integration and equality that Jews overcame. In doing so, it offers a radical departure, a reshuffling of how historians of early American religion have presented the origins and evolution of religious freedom and emancipation for white non-Christians. Scholars have presented religious toleration as an ideal born of European Enlightenment thinkers—John Locke and Voltaire for example—and reformulated in the minds of Anglo-American cultural elites such as

Colonial American Jew, 1492-1776, 3 vols. (Detroit, 1970) (hereafter *CAJ*); idem, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985*, Vol. I (Detroit, 1989) (hereafter *USJ*). Edwin Wolf and Maxwell Whiteman's *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson* (Philadelphia, 1956) (hereafter *JOP*) is the most comprehensive scientific treatment of Pennsylvania's Jews, but it focuses on Philadelphia alone. William Pencak devotes a single chapter to Jews in Philadelphia, not Pennsylvania, and for Gratz family and travelers, see *Jews & Gentiles in Early America, 1654-1800* (Ann Arbor, 2005), 178-80. For Lancaster, see David Brener, *The Jews of Lancaster, Pennsylvania: A Story With Two Beginnings* (Lancaster, 1979). On individuals and specific families in early Pennsylvania, see Sidney M. Fish, *Barnard and Michael Gratz: Their Lives and Times* (Lanham, 1994); Mark Abbott Stern, *David Franks: Colonial Merchant* (University Park, 2010); Dianne Ashton, *Rebecca Gratz: Women and Judaism in Antebellum America* (Detroit, 1997). For the Jewish business community in Philadelphia, see Toni Pitock, "Commerce and Connection: Jewish Merchants, Philadelphia, and the Atlantic World, 1736-1822," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Delaware, 2016). For document sourcebooks, see Morris U. Schappes, *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States, 1654-1875* (New York, 1971) (hereafter *DHJ*); Jacob R. Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, 3 Vols., (Philadelphia, 1955) (hereafter *MAJ*); Leo Hershkowitz and Isidore Meyer, *Letters of the Franks Family* (New York, 1968) (hereafter *LFF*). Updated edition of these letters *The Letters of Abigail Levy Franks, 1733-1748*, Edith B. Gelles, ed., (New Haven, 2004). For Gratz family documents, see *B. And M. Gratz: Merchants in Philadelphia, 1754-1798*, William Vincent Byars, ed., (Jefferson City, MO, 1916) (hereafter *BMG*); *Letters of Rebecca Gratz*, David Philipson, ed., (Philadelphia, 1929) (hereafter *LRG*). For genealogy of Jews, see Malcolm H. Stern, *Americans of Jewish Descent: A Compendium of Genealogy* (Cincinnati, 1960). Although it focuses upon Savannah, Newport, and Jamaica, Holly Snyder's excellent dissertation offers a useful framework to discuss Jewish-Gentile relations, see "A Sense of Place: Jews, Identity, and Social Status in Colonial British America, 1654-1831," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brandeis University, 2000). Up to the 1970s, professional historians emphasized New England and the South in their examinations, before turning their attentions to the Mid-Atlantic region thereafter. For historiography of Mid-Atlantic region, see *Friends and Neighbors: Group Life in America's First Plural Society*, Michael Zuckerman, ed., (Philadelphia, 1982), 3-25. Zuckerman wrote, "For far too long we have been looking for keys to American culture under New England lampposts... Today it seems increasingly clear that the configuration of American civilization first found its essential contours in the mid- and South-Atlantic regions, and especially in the province of Pennsylvania. In political, economic, social, and even religious life, Pennsylvania provided the pattern for the nation more than Massachusetts ever did," quoted pages 11-12. This study does for Jews what Spencer W. McBride did for politicized Protestant clergy, it situates Jews as central, not peripheral, agents of historical change, see *Pulpit & Nation: Clergymen and the Politics of Revolutionary America* (Charlottesville, 2017).

Thomas Jefferson, whose eloquence begat a language of natural rights that inspired a nation-state of republicans devoted to religious equality, not toleration. Other scholars, meanwhile, pointed to sectarian Protestant dissenters and other non-conformist Christians who contested and reshaped these ideals. Protestants' activism widened religious freedom to include many Protestant denominations and a variety of personal religious opinions in the public sphere; they demanded from a reluctant clergy (especially old-line Congregationalists) and an opportunistic political leadership the elimination of state-sanctioned and supported religion. Disestablishment eliminated assessments that supported Protestant churches, which allowed a wide variety of religious opinions to proliferate. Scholars have emphasized James Madison's constitutional statecraft that ensured the natural rights of religious minority groups, a robust religious freedom equally applied to all—through the separation of church from state, for example. The historical consensus maintains that political leaders institutionalized in state and national laws the ideal of religious freedom, which the Protestant masses embraced. Protestant visions of a god-ordained “Christian Nation” of equal white, propertied males of a Protestant bent melded well with their commitments to Protestant equality and overt evangelicalism.³

³ Scholars have made the distinction between religious tolerance (liberty of conscience) and religious freedom, at times concentrating on the plight of Catholics, but at no point are white non-Christians discussed in more than a cursory manner in their celebrations of religious liberty for Protestant dissenters, see J. William Frost, *A Perfect Freedom: Religious Liberty in Pennsylvania* (New York, 1990); idem, “Pennsylvania Institutes Religious Liberty, 1682-1860,” *PMHB* 112 (1988), 323-47; idem, “Religious Liberty in Early Pennsylvania,” *PMHB* 105 (1981), 419-51; Sally Schwartz, “William Penn and Toleration: Foundations of Colonial Pennsylvania,” *PHJ* 50 (1983), 284-312; idem, *A Mixed Multitude: The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania* (New York, 1988); Henry J. Cadbury, “Persecution and Religious Liberty, Then and Now,” *PMHB* 68 (1944), 359-71; Charles J. Stillé, “Religious Tests in Provincial Pennsylvania,” *PMHB* 9 (1886), 365-406. For Catholics, see Joseph J. Casino, “Anti-Popery in Colonial Pennsylvania,” *PMHB* 105 (1981), 279-309; Paul Douglas Newman, “‘Good Will to all men... from the King on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill’: William Penn, the Roman Catholics, and Religious Toleration,” *PHJ* 61 (1994), 457-79; Michael Pasquier, *Fathers on the Frontier: French Missionaries and the Roman Catholic Priesthood in the United States, 1789-1870* (New York, 2010); Maura Jane Farrelly, *Papist Patriots: The Making of a Catholic Identity* (Oxford, 2012); Michael D. Breidenbach, “Conciliarism and the American Founding,” *WMQ* 73 (2016), 467-500.

For a culture rooted in unprecedented religious and ethnic diversity, the road from toleration to freedom for white Protestants therefore seemed an inevitable outcome. In this version of history, 1776, 1789, and 1791 marked watershed moments when religious freedom for Protestants became a foregone conclusion. Freedom gained momentum thereafter, so the story goes, which fomented additional religious sects, some radical in nature, as well as the rapidly democratizing and evangelical impulses within Protestantism and culture in general indicative of the antebellum decades and Second Great Awakening. Yet, this traditional narrative, with its legitimate focus upon the Protestant majority, leaves little room for the behavior and belief of the *only* white non-Christian minority group in early Pennsylvania.⁴

Pushing against the triumphant nature of scholars' presentations of Protestant religious freedom, however, David Sehat argues that freedom was a *myth*. In correcting some of the previous scholarship, he points to the legal dimensions of freedom, such as legislation that made blasphemy illegal and Sabbath observation mandatory. At the state level, Protestant "moral establishments" passed laws rooted in Protestant moral precepts that constricted the freedoms of religious minority groups. Chris Beneke, conversely, argues that religious freedom was no myth; rather, the myth was actually religious coercion because, though states passed such laws, enforcement was sporadic, almost non-existent. Both historians are partially correct because

⁴ Thomas E. Buckley, *Establishing Religious Freedom: Jefferson's Statute in Virginia* (Charlottesville, 2014); John A. Ragosta, *Wellspring of Liberty: How Virginia's Religious Dissenters Helped Win the American Revolution & Secured Religious Liberty* (Oxford, 2010); idem, *Religious Freedom: Jefferson's Legacy, America's Creed* (Charlottesville, 2013); Frank Lambert, *Separation of Church and State: Founding Principle of Religious Liberty* (Macon, GA, 2014); Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (New York, 1982); Philip Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State* (Cambridge, 2002); Nicholas P. Miller, *The Religious Roots of the First Amendment: Dissenting Protestants and the Separation of Church and State* (Oxford, 2012); Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith* (Cambridge, 1990); Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, 1989). For radical Protestantism after the adoption of the First Amendment, see Adam Jortner, *Blood from the Sky: Miracles and Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville, 2017). Even scholars of Jewish religious history, generally, have adopted this framework, see *EAJ; CAJ; USJ; JOP*; Sarna, *American Judaism*, 31-61; Sarna and Dalin, *Religion and State*, 1-30. For Jews and race, see Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America* (Rutgers, 1998). For Jefferson and Madison on religious freedom, see Andrew Burstein and Nancy Isenberg, *Madison and Jefferson* (New York, 2010), 118, 316, 639.

various degrees of freedom and coercion stood in unison in early Pennsylvania and the early republic. Religious coercion comes in many forms, such as Christian oaths of allegiance for naturalization, similar religious tests to hold political power or even to vote. Strict boundaries around non-Protestant religious expressions in public life recasts the nature of this debate as it applies to non-Christian groups such as Jews. An examination of how white Jews in Pennsylvania *experienced* freedoms, forces scholars to alter their conclusions because, as Naphtali Phillips shows, the story looks far different from a Jewish perspective. The arguments here offer a middle ground between Sehat and Beneke. Religious freedom existed in limited ways at the outset of William Penn's "Holy Experiment," but malleable boundaries allowed Jews to gradually expand freedom throughout the eighteenth century. American scholars of religion have focused their attention primarily on Protestant attitudes of tolerance and intolerance and legal triumph of religious liberty for most Protestants. Beyond the legal dimensions of freedom, various degrees of liberty for Protestants and other Christians existed in culture and society. Scholars have ignored the roles that Jewish women and men played in a transformation of cultural institutions to serve personal, often religious and political ends, but their story remains largely unknown to scholars of early American religion. This study brings together the literature of Jewish historians with early American historians' body of scholarship regarding the intersection of religion and politics in the colonial period and early republic.⁵ The Protestant

⁵ Beneke explores a cultural revolution that embraced religious toleration and eventually freedom, rather than bloodshed like Europe, a revolution that began decades before the War of Independence. Whereas Beneke celebrates civility and public respect among a diversity of religious denominations, this study shows that non-Christians actually engaged in vitriolic public discourses and political activism with politicized Protestants to achieve a triumphant freedom and emancipation; though, it is true, this dissertation agrees with Beneke in that the eighteenth century witnessed an expansion of freedoms. This study, though, places additional agency upon the only white non-Christian minority group, see the collection of essays on religion and politics, edited by Amanda Porterfield, in the spring 2015 issue of *common-place.org*, Vol. 15, especially Chris Beneke's essay, "The Myth of American Religious Coercion" and David Sehat, *The Myth of American Religious Freedom* (Oxford, 2011); Chris Beneke and Christopher S. Grenda, eds. *The First Prejudice: Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Early America* (Philadelphia, 2011); idem, Christopher S. Grenda, eds., *The Lively Experiment: Religious Toleration in America*

story is worth scholars' attention because those events are intertwined with the Jewish dimensions of the same story. But when historians bestow agency upon Jewish émigrés, whose activism helped to redraw the boundaries around public expressions of non-Christian religions, a fight that culminated in Jewish political emancipation and integration by about 1800, Jews become much more than passive victims whose Protestant neighbors reluctantly extended them natural rights. Indeed, Jews emerge as agents of historical change who paved a practical path toward social acceptance and the attainment of civil rights; they emerge as fundamental to their own slow unfolding of equality, emancipation, and integration.⁶

What did freedom mean to minority religious groups in early Pennsylvania? It meant different things to different people at different times. There are several important components of freedom, each with tremendous cultural baggage attached to them that changed over time and that Jews gradually overcame. But an all-inclusive freedom for Jews maintained two central goals: cultural integration and legal equality. For Anglo-American Jews, though, the economic

from Roger Williams to the Present (New York, 2015); Amanda Porterfield, *Conceived in Doubt: Religion and Politics in the New American Nation* (Chicago, 2012). For excellent treatments of the politicization of religion and its leaders in the early republic, see Eric R. Schlereth, *An Age of Infidels: The Politics of Religious Controversy in the Early United States* (Philadelphia, 2013). Much of the framework of public institutions and voluntary associations in civil society that Schlereth adopts to examine deists after about 1800 also apply to the Jewish experience pre-1800.

⁶ This study brings together conversations among Jewish historians and debates among historians of American religion and political culture. A vast historiography on Jews exists, which is too great to enumerate here, but primarily amateur historians wrote American Jewish history from the 1890s to the 1940s. Their chief aim was to demonstrate that Jews settled in America at the colonial beginnings, and that Jews had always been “good” Americans. They focused therefore on the positive aspects of Jewish religious life, celebrating the anecdotes of triumph and patriotism by Jewish men. Although the scholarship remains questionable, the documents compiled by amateurs are indispensable to professional historians. Beginning in the 1950s, professional historians, led by Jacob R. Marcus, began to build upon the mostly hagiographic material of those earlier historians. Professionals focused on Jewish immigration, economic life, community studies, ideas about a Jewish homeland in Palestine, comparative history, and even engaged the role of Jewish women; they underscored the negative aspects, such as anti-Semitism, and Jewish loyalists and traitors during the revolutionary period. For brief overviews of historiography see the “Introduction” and “Preface” in, Jeffrey S. Gurock, ed., *American Jewish History: The Colonial and Early National Period, 1654-1840* (New York, 1997), vii-xi, and Jonathan D. Sarna, “American Jewish History,” *Modern Judaism* 10 (1990), 343-65. In his discussion of a triumphant religious liberty, Sarna writes, “America’s two thousand or so Jews played no significant role in bringing about these epochal developments,” see *American Judaism*, 36-38. This study complicates that conclusion as it applies to Pennsylvania’s Jews.

dimension of freedom meant full economic equality, without the humiliating Jewish surtaxes and exclusion from certain trades and other petty economic constrictions for their Jewishness, as well as legal protections for their wealth, property, and inheritances, which they attained for the most part in the eighteenth-century Anglo-American world. Freedom also consisted of a corporeal dimension, an unbounded physical mobility, which many émigrés had already embraced in Europe because they moved about the early modern globe with relative ease—across the Atlantic world, Brazil, Mediterranean basin, Middle East, Asia, Africa, and beyond. The social dimension of freedom earned individual Jews their neighbors' acceptance and social validation, but also the opportunity to climb atop the social ladder if one wished to do so. Jews also achieved this lofty goal when elite gentiles welcomed many of them into eighteenth-century polite society, because Jews flourished in their new frontier homes. William Penn's "Liberty of the Mind," or freedom of conscience in private life, afforded migrants enough space to construct their own private faiths, which flourished. Freedom's religious boundaries for Jews, however, constricted their public expressions of Judaism. The mere changeability of freedom, moreover, led them to agitate for expansions to freedom's boundaries. For Jews, freedom in the colonial period was therefore the ability to move freely about the continent and globe, establish their social prestige, reputations, and honor, make a decent living with dignity and respect, accumulate property and wealth, pass that wealth on to their posterity, and to worship however they wished in their own homes.

By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, their successes, though often modest, led Jews to redefine freedom to include their free expressions of Judaism in public life and, for the first time, a robust political freedom that included the franchise, participation in every dimension of political culture, including the wielding of political power directly through patronage

appointments and running for elective offices at all levels of government. Jews achieved public religious freedom with the construction of a public Jewish house of worship in 1782. Yet, they were frustrated in their political ambitions by the 1776 Pennsylvania constitution that placed a Christian religious test as an impediment to would-be non-Christian officeholders. Through political activism and close relationships with patrons of authority, however, Jews achieved legal emancipation with a new state constitution in 1790 that eliminated the Christian language in the oath. Thereafter Protestants, upset at the state's thwarting of their traditional moral authority, refocused their attentions upon drawing new boundaries around undesirable religious opinions in the public square. They wielded anti-Jewish prejudice in newspaper politics to achieve this end. Despite pervasive political anti-Semitism in the early republic, Jews embraced an emergent dissenting party and defended Jews and Judaism in newspaper politics. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Jews had redefined freedom in American culture to include all of its aforementioned constituent parts. This overview of a reinterpreted and much more dynamic vision of freedom lends itself to more complex glimpses into the nooks and crannies of a diverse culture of religious pluralism. Conclusions about the nature of freedom in this study therefore coincides at times and at other times diverges from those of previous scholars of early American religion.

The public sphere was central to Jews' efforts to achieve integration and legal equality. Jürgen Habermas theorized that the public sphere offers open exchange, a free marketplace of competing rational ideas. It consists of public institutions—secular marketplace, social clubs, voluntary associations, taverns, coffeehouses, learned societies, print and political culture—where private life intersects the public square. American historians have found Habermas's analytical tool useful but have made important alterations to its conceptual framework. Whereas

Habermas emphasized rational deliberations, American historians have argued that public discourses are often irrational, emotional, and animated by imbalanced power dynamics. John L. Brooke, for example, defined the public sphere as “a specific space in civil society for discourse, communication, and association, mediating between the state and the people in their private capacities.” Brooke’s reformulation of the public sphere model, then, reconciles a contradiction between rational and irrational deliberations by suggesting that a rational discourse “intermingled...with a much more pervasive, informal cultural persuasion” that was often irrational. More important than rationality, though, the private cultural concerns of early Americans, or how Jews defined themselves and their religiosity in the public square, made a significant impact on public cultural spaces and thus popular debates about the pressing issues of the day. Jews’ increased public exposure altered their neighbors’ perspective toward Jews and Judaism; paradoxically, it also brought upon them anti-Semitic attitudes and behavior.⁷

The six chapters that follow borrow from Brooke’s definition of the public sphere because the private cultural concerns of Jews led them to utilize public institutions to reshape the attitudes of their neighbors, to combat anti-Jewish sentiment, and to achieve cultural integration

⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, 1989). Joanne Freeman and Saul Cornell have explored the public sphere’s functionality, and this study hopes to contribute to this important conversation. Cornell focused on class as a factor of division among Anti-Federalists, arguing that one’s class determined how one interpreted the function of the public sphere. formulates along class lines three orders of American Anti-Federalists: patrician, middling, and plebeian. Freeman emphasizes cultural factors, especially one’s class-based reputation, as a means to unite elites in a common language of honor in political culture. Jews became active participants in a dissenting tradition. The public sphere’s functionality for Jews is the focus of this study, see Joanne Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, 2001), 114-26, 148-58, and Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788-1828* (Chapel Hill, 1999), 74-80, 82, 99-105, 109-20, 173, 196, 217; Robert W.T. Martin, *Government by Dissent: Protest, Resistance, and Radical Democratic Thought in the Early Republic* (New York, 2013); John L. Brooke, “Consent, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere in the Age of Revolution and the Early American Republic,” in *Beyond the Founders: New Approaches to the Political History of the Early American Republic*, eds. Jeffrey L. Pasley, Andrew W. Robertson, and David Waldstreicher (Chapel Hill, 2004), 207, 228; idem, “Reason and Passion in the Public Sphere: Habermas and the Cultural Historians,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29 (1998), 43-67; idem, “To Be ‘Read by the Whole People’: Press, Party, and Public Sphere in the United States, 1790-1840,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 110 (2000), 41-118. For more see, Albrecht Koschnik, “The Democratic Societies of Philadelphia and the Limits of the American Public Sphere, circa 1793-1795,” *WMQ* 58 (2001), 615-36.

and equality. As a result, Jews were fundamental to a transformation of the public sphere in the early republic. The intersection of minority groups' activism and the dominant Protestant culture's reactions to that activism shows the imbalanced power dynamics recognized by Habermas's critics. But it was not insurmountable. Jews utilized the cultural power they gained as participants in the secular marketplace, enlightenment culture, and newspaper politics to build relationships with elites who held the cultural and political power to broaden freedom, citizenship, and even political power for white non-Christians. The intersection of religion and politics offers a glimpse into the relationship between power and freedom. Those important social and cultural spaces gained Jews access to traditional modes of authority, essential for them to widen the boundaries around religious freedom and political participation. In light of these considerations, eighteenth-century Jews assisted in the refashioning of American citizenship boundaries, transformations of the public sphere, and the explosion of religious fervor in antebellum culture because non-Protestants, including Catholics and Jews, benefitted as much as Protestant dissenters, if not more, from such cultural and political transformations.⁸

⁸ Johann Neem, "Freedom of Association in the Early Republic: The Republican Party, the Whiskey Rebellion, and the Philadelphia and New York Cordwainers' Cases," *PMHB* 127 (2003), 259-90. Neem defines civil society "as the realm of autonomous voluntary associations situated between the private life of the household and the institutions of the state." By contrast, the public sphere is non-governmental in nature, but remains a component of civil society. For more see, Michael Walzer, "The Idea of Civil Society," *Dissent* 38 (1991), 293-304; John L. Brooke, "Ancient Lodges and Self-Created Societies: Voluntary Association and the Public Sphere in the Early Republic," in Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Launching the "Extended Republic": The Federalist Era* (Charlottesville, 1996), 273-377. The dominant culture consisted of white men of affluence, mostly of Anglo-Saxon stock, who embraced a form of Protestant Christianity and wielded cultural and political authority. This study defines power as the cultural authority to mold public opinion and the political authority to effect changes in laws. James Kloppenberg examines how progressive and consensus historians, such as Beard, Turner, Parrington, Boorstin, and Hartz focused on individualism and property rights, which they claimed defined American culture. Kloppenberg shows that these historians misunderstood the democratic struggles of minority groups along religious, racial, ethnic, and gender lines. Hofstadter emphasized the relationship between power and ideas and, like Kloppenberg, this study refocuses our attention on Jewish behavior in public life, which altered the power dynamics of the democratic experiment by widening the boundaries that demarcated religious freedom, see James T. Kloppenberg, "In Retrospect: Louis Hartz's *The Liberal Tradition in America*," *Reviews in American History* 29 (2001), 460-78; Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition: And the Men Who Made It* (New York, 1948). Professional historians of Jewish history have focused upon anti-Semitism, and for good reason. But scholars have inadvertently presented Jews as victims. By examining Jews' pursuits of power and integration, this study presents Jews and Judaism as agents of historical change, see, William Pencak, "Jews and Anti-Semitism in Early Pennsylvania," *PMHB* 126 (2002), 365-

In 1782, Hector St. John Crèvecoeur wrote that migrants to North America—“English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes”—had left behind all their “ancient prejudices.” Although Crèvecoeur’s observation was untrue, he never mentioned Jews. In 1830, a half century later, John F. Watson published a popular book, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania in the Olden Time*. Watson’s tome dedicated sections to “Indians,” “Swedes,” “Germans,” “Irish,” “Redemption Servants,” and “Negroes and Slaves.” In almost two thousand pages bound in three volumes, Watson, like Crèvecoeur, never mentioned Jews. Throughout the nineteenth century and half of the twentieth, professional historians continued to ignore Jews. The story that follows demonstrates how Jews transformed their positions in society from “outsiders” on the margins of public life to important contributors to their Anglo-American communities as “insiders,” despite the many obstacles that precluded their full participation in civil society.

Watson’s omission of Jews is at first perplexing because by the time he published his book Jews had resided in Pennsylvania for well over a century. The Mikveh Israel, or “Hope of Israel” synagogue had existed in its physical form since 1782, the year Crèvecoeur published his book. Scholars must not be blamed for their oversights, however, because the Jewish presence remained miniscule until the nineteenth century. Precise numbers do not exist but scholars have guessed. In 1700, between 200 and 300 Jews resided in all of British North America (almost

408; Heather Nathans, “A Much Maligned People: Jews on and off the Stage in the Early American Republic,” *Early American Studies* 2 (2004), 310-13; Frederic Cople Jaher, *A Scapegoat in the Wilderness: The Origins and Rise of Anti-Semitism in America* (Cambridge, 1994); Leonard Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America* (Oxford, 1995); Howard B. Rock, *Haven of Liberty: New York Jews in the New World, 1654-1865* (New York, 2012), 22; *DHJ*, vi-vii; Morris U. Schappes, “Anti-Semitism and Reaction, 1795-1800,” *PAJHS* 38 (1948), 109-37. Jonathan D. Sarna was perhaps the first scholar to scientifically investigate the relationships between Jews and gentiles, see Jonathan D. Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew: The Two Worlds of Mordecai Noah* (New York, 1981), and Pencak followed a similar methodology in *Jews & Gentiles*.

exclusively in New York until about 1720), a number that some have claimed was much larger. By 1776, scholars agree that between 1,000 and 2,500 Jews resided on mainland America. In 1790, the year of the first national census, Philadelphia's population was a bit more than 28,000, of which Jews consisted of between 500 and 1,000. Within the boundaries of what became the United States, the Jewish population remained steady at around 3,000 in the period 1790-1820, after which German-speaking Jews swelled the population to as much as 15,000 by 1840, 50,000 by 1850, and 200,000 by 1860. Continuous immigration in the last half of the nineteenth century increased the numbers to more than one million by 1900 and 5 million by 1950.⁹

Despite the initial small numbers—a tenth of one percent of the total population in 1776 and a bit more than six tenths of one percent in 1860—the cultural impact of Judaism and its adherents remained disproportionate to the numbers. New England Puritans modeled their society on the ancient Hebrew republic and, when individual Jews arrived there, Puritans' curiosity about the Old Testament overcame their bigotry enough to engage Jews in conversation; Tom Paine pulled from the histories of ancient Israel to make a case for American independence; other revolutionaries compared George III to Pharaoh, whose slavery of Jews mirrored the behavior of the British king, which they believed would bring down God's wrath upon the empire. Benjamin Franklin's Judeophilia led him to suggest Old Testament symbolism for the new nation's official seal, specifically an image of Pharaoh's army engulfed by the Red

⁹ Hector St.-John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (New York, 1957), 62-4; John F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania in the Olden Time*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1830); *EAJ*, I, 3. For population estimates, see Ira Rosenswaike, "An Estimate and Analysis of the Jewish Population of the United States in 1790," in Abraham Karp, ed., *The Jewish Experience in America*, 4 Vols. (New York, 1969), I, 393, 402; Sarna, *American Judaism*, 375; Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People: American Jewish Population Data, 1585-1984* (Lanham, 1990); Jack J. Diamond, "A Reader in Demography," *American Jewish Year Book* 77 (1977); 91 (1991); 92 (1992); 102 (2002); Pencak, *Jews*, 1-2; Earl A. Grollman, "Dictionary of American Jewish Biography in the Seventeenth Century," *AJAJ* 3 (1950), 3-10. For more on methods, see Joseph R. Rosenbloom, *A Biographical Dictionary of Early American Jews: Colonial Times through 1800* (Lexington, 1960). For Philadelphia, see Gary B. Nash and Billy G. Smith, "The Population of Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *PMHB* 99 (1975), 366.

Sea, a biblical allusion that tied the new nation's providential destiny to ancient Judaism. Franklin even wrote publicly, "The Jews were acquainted with the several Arts and Sciences long e're the Romans became a People, or the Greeks were known among the Nations." This study shows that it is more than a fanciful proposition to suggest that Franklin's close interactions, fellowship, and friendships with Pennsylvania's Jews before 1776 led him to suggest Old Testament symbology to his colleagues in the Continental Congress. Antebellum Americans considered the United States a "New Israel" and themselves God's chosen, republican people. The Old Testament not only inspired an American biblical imagination but also became an important political text for the development of American republicanism and constitutionalism—what one scholar has called "Mosaic" constitutions. At the outset of colonization, Judaism and the Old Testament flourished in the Anglo-American popular imagination. This study shows that Jews and their faith became even more important in the colonial period and early years of the republic.¹⁰

Through their social and economic activities and political activism, Jews mitigated the impact of ancient stereotypes. Attitudes toward Jews and Judaism in western culture can best be

¹⁰ Franklin quoted *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 15, 1737; Sarna, *American Judaism*, 375. Richard B. Morris argues that small numbers of individuals with access to authority can influence the development of social and cultural trends, see "Civil Liberties and the Jewish Tradition in Early America," *PAJHS* 46 (1956), 20-39; Michael Hoberman, *New Israel/New England: Jews and Puritans in Early America* (Boston, 2011); Arthur Hertzberg, "The New England Puritans and the Jews," in Shalom Goldman, ed., *Hebrew and the Bible in America: The First Two Centuries* (Hanover, NH, 1993), 105-20; Shalom Goldman, *God's Sacred Tongue: Hebrew and the American Imagination* (Chapel Hill, 2004); Eran Shalev, *American Zion: The Old Testament as a Political Text from the Revolution to the Civil War* (New Haven, 2013); Michael Novak, *On Two Wings: Humble Faith and Common Sense at the American Founding* (San Francisco, 2002); Pencak, *Jews*, 1; Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (Philadelphia, 1776); Eran Shalev, "A Perfect Republic": The Mosaic Constitution in Revolutionary New England, 1775-1788," *NEQ* 82 (2009), 235-63; Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Spectrum of Jewish Leadership in Ante-Bellum America," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 1 (1982), 59-67; idem, "The Freethinker, the Jews, and the Missionaries: George Houston and the Mystery of 'Israel Vindicated,'" *Association of Jewish Studies Review* 5 (1980), 101-14; idem, "The American Jewish Response to Nineteenth-Century Christian Missions," *Journal of American History* 68 (1981), 35-51; Snyder, "Place," x-xiii; James H. Hutson, *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic* (Washington, DC, 1998), 50-51. For more on Jewish cultural contributions see the essays in *By Dawn's Early Light: Jewish Contributions to American Culture from the Nation's Founding to the Civil War*, Adam D. Mendelsohn, ed., (Princeton, 2016), and Heather S. Nathans, *Hideous Characters and Beautiful Pagans: Performing Jewish Identity on the Antebellum American Stage* (Ann Arbor, 2017).

observed in popular literature and theater. Shakespeare's anti-Semitic character Shylock from *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1600) tapped into dominant streams of medieval Christians' mythology, which included Jewish character traits such as shrewdness, ambition, slyness, dishonesty, and greed and physical traits such as dirty countenance, protruding nose, and tawny, black skin. Such stereotypes dominated popular culture and folklore for centuries and Shakespeare introduced them anew to an early modern audience. Shakespeare modeled his character on Christopher Marlowe's Jewish character Barabas in *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1590), and both characters endured as symbols of anti-Judaism. In colonial Pennsylvania, for instance, Christian pundits pulled from this large catalogue of Jewish stereotypes. Christians referred to Jews as selfish liars, their complexion as yellow and swarthy, their hair as dark and curly, their noses as large and bulging, and their speech as broken English. They even cast Jews as lascivious, vulgar, foreign agents of atheism and radicalism, contagions in the body politic, and enemies to Christian civilization. In 1752, Shylock became the first Jewish character in fiction portrayed on an American stage at Williamsburg, Virginia. In this performance, Shylock remained the vindictive Jew of popular lore. As late as 1838, Charles Dickens emulated the Shylock trope in *Oliver Twist* with his creation of the filthy and miserly Fagin, a Jewish antagonist worthy of his prototype. The boundaries around Anglo-American racial, ethnic, and religious toleration extended only so far.¹¹

Critics disassociated Shylock from its literary form and tied the character to prevailing cultural assumptions regarding Jews that gave it imaginary power for mass consumption. As a

¹¹ John Gross, *Shylock: A Legend and Its Legacy* (New York, 1992), 9-23; Frank Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes: A Paradigm of Otherness in English Popular Culture, 1660-1830* (Baltimore, 1995); Snyder, "Place," 23; James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York, 1996), 92-110; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 5, 1763, March 26, 1775, and August 21, 1776; Heather Nathans, "A Much Maligned People: Jews on and off the Stage in the Early American Republic," *Early American Studies* 2 (2004), 310-11; Jaher, *Scapegoat*, 117, 128.

result, the character took on a life all its own. Shylock reinforced ancient Christian prejudices against Judaism and became a hated figure in the European popular imagination. Shylock symbolized a popular myth that portrayed Jewish bankers as stereotypical usurers, whose wealth and lack of a moral compass posed a threat to Christendom's self-professed social and moral order, which complicated their expectations of Protestant reformulations of providentialism and millennialism. Depending upon context, the terms "Jew" and "Jewish" connote race, nation, religion, ethnicity, law, and collections of character traits, which Anglo-Americans wielded, sometimes all at once and in positive and negative ways. Fluidity makes it difficult for scholars to define the terms. Because the fluidity of anti-Jewish stereotypes mirrored Jews' own constructions of identities in a strange land dominated by Christian culture it is often difficult to make sense of those manufactured public images of "self." As a result, Jewish identities defy any meaningful categorization. Persistent anti-Jewish prejudice is a reminder of this unfortunate truth. Ancient Christian antipathies toward Jews endured, even among an enlightened audience. "It cannot be denied," observed one eighteenth-century critic of Shylock, "that the sight of this Jew is enough to awaken at once, in the best-regulated mind, all the prejudices of childhood against the race to which he belongs." Jews' increased public participation, though, lessened their marginalization from the dominant culture and its public institutions, even as they contended with Shylock mythology.¹²

In the early eighteenth century, the first generation of Jewish émigrés arrived in Pennsylvania—Philadelphia, Lancaster, and eventually Pittsburgh—with significant financial

¹² Gross, *Shylock*, 9-23, 105-44, quote on 116; Pencak, *Jews*, 2; *LRG*, vii; Nathans, *Hideous Characters*, 9. Christian pundits also made connections to Jewish nationhood and Judaic law, arguing that Jews could never be public citizens because they privileged their own religious law above secular law and nationalism, see Snyder, "Place," 91-140. Providentialism was "a belief in God's intervention in the affairs of mankind," see McBride, *Pulpit*, 13.

means and connections to a larger international network of Jewish merchants, shopkeepers, and entrepreneurs. Like most of the Anglo-American world, William Penn's "Holy Experiment" excluded Jews and other non-Protestants from full citizenship and participation in civil society. Affluent Jews, though, played an active, not passive, role in the gradual unfolding of religious freedom and political emancipation. Some of the cultural tools and resources necessary for Jews to reshape anti-Jewish attitudes, to refashion their public images, and to redraw the boundaries around religious and political freedom in public life derived from their experiences before they landed at Philadelphia's harbor. It is therefore necessary to explore the international and transatlantic contexts of Jewish migrations that shaped their attitudes in the early modern world, as well as the ideas and cultural habits that shaped the colony of Pennsylvania where many émigrés made their new homes.

Chapter One thus examines the experiences of early modern European Jews, especially those who resided in eastern Europe and endured persecutions and pogroms. The Ashkenazim of German lands eventually migrated to London and Amsterdam, where they adopted the cultural éclat of the more socially-acceptable Sephardim, before making the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to the Caribbean and British North America. Jews Anglicized themselves and their behavior but also experienced limited freedoms and anti-Jewish prejudice. As historian Jonathan Israel has shown, however, the imperial political economy diminished the primacy of religious doctrine in decision-making at many European courts, which opened up additional spaces for Jews to participate in civil society. Protestant preoccupations with the Old Testament and their Hebraism in general also mitigated intellectual barriers to Jewish inclusion. Such early modern cultural transformations facilitated Jewish integration into their adopted communities as useful businesspeople, unlike the ghettos of Europe that kept them segregated from dominant cultures.

On the frontier of an empire and on the frontier of the North American continent, Jews transformed their identities and religiosity, which eventually destroyed their traditional cultural insularity, the origins in America of German Reform Judaism that exploded onto the nineteenth-century mainstream cultural scene.

Although William Penn's "Holy Experiment" welcomed Jews, Chapter Two examines how Quakers constructed a "moral establishment" and theocracy that excluded Jews from political culture and constricted their public expressions of Judaism. Such origins show the parameters of proper religious and moral behavior in public life for non-conformists and non-Protestants, including Jews. Unprecedented ethnic and religious diversity led to conflict among disparate religious groups. One group among others, Jews played important roles in a slow transformation that redefined the parameters for minority groups' inclusion in society and culture. But it was a hard, slow transformation, chiefly because William Penn's colony was less accepting of religious outsiders, especially non-Christians and Catholics, than historians have been willing to admit. No Jew naturalized under provincial statutes during the colonial period. A handful of Jews naturalized under the 1740 imperial statute. However, William Penn and Quaker leaders thereafter utilized the institutions of the public sphere to gain and retain their cultural and political authority and to mold historical memory in their favor. Jews utilized the same institutions and methods to gain credibility and to mold public opinion in favor of Jews and Judaism and thus wielded power in popular culture and civil society and eventually in politics.¹³

¹³ For international networks, see Miriam Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation: Conversos and Community in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Bloomington, 1997); Alan F. Benjamin, *Jews of the Dutch Caribbean: Exploring Ethnic Identity on Curaçao* (London, 2002); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, 2009); Pitcock, "Commerce." For imperial mercantilism, see Jonathan Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism* (Oxford, 1985). Reform Judaism originated in response to late eighteenth-century Jewish emancipation and gained momentum in nineteenth-century Germany as a liberal and progressive movement that sought to reconcile Judaism with modernity. It emphasized humanitarian ethics and morality over outdated rituals, cultural practices, and traditions that many Jews came to see as cultural barriers to Jewish assimilation into broader cultures. The chapters that follow show how

Chapter Three explores the secular marketplace that bestowed Jews with professional identities as merchants and traders, fomented friendships and business relationships with partisans of the proprietary faction and imperial and colonial officials who bestowed them with economic patronage. Gentiles of authority patronized Jews' many businesses and rewarded them with government contracts. Gentile patrons and their Jewish friends, usually those with Enlightenment sensibilities, gradually eroded the cultural barriers that impeded inclusion for minority religious groups in civil society. Jews participated in speculation of western lands, the frontier fur trade, supplied armies in times of war, and became important contributors to local, frontier, and metropolitan economies. Their economic ubiquity, though, sometimes drew the ire of Christians—anti-Jewish attitudes, in fact, remained a specter over Jewish heads. Their economic usefulness, however, acted as a counterpoint to prejudice and thus contributed to a reversal of how many Christians viewed them and their faith.

Chapter Four shows that a more positive view of Jews and Judaism allowed Jews entrée into polite society, the upper social circles among powerful and influential gentiles. As cultural elites, they participated in the institutions of enlightenment culture, such as voluntary associations, taverns, coffeehouses, social clubs, learned societies, Freemasonry, institutions of higher learning, and subscription libraries. Enlightened fellowship and friendship normalized Jews and Judaism in public life, which granted Jews enough influence among enlightened elites to demand wider parameters for their public religious expressions and political participation. It also instructed Jews in the proper genteel etiquette that served them so well in their attempts to craft public persona as cultural elites. Although polite sociability was primarily a masculine endeavor, Jewish women at the turn of the nineteenth century increasingly participated in the

German Jews, the Ashkenazim, who migrated to early Pennsylvania had embraced such ideas decades before the late eighteenth century.

public sphere, as writers and as leaders of voluntary associations for example. Female Jews matriculated into academies and colleges which transcended traditional Jewish notions of domestic femininity.

By the late eighteenth century, Jews had facilitated a web of personal and professional relationships with Christian and deist patrons of the moderate Enlightenment. They identified as revolutionary Whigs, Republicans in local and national politics and, as Chapter Five demonstrates, utilized newspapers and petitions to craft honorable reputations that gained them credibility among their neighbors and, for the first time, political patrons, or like-minded political partisans committed to Jews' integration into popular politics. Political patrons wielded the authority to provide Jews with additional public forums to express their faith and other cultural identities. Many Jews fought as soldiers and officers in the revolution. Post-revolutionary politicization of Shylock and other anti-Jewish stereotypes undermined Jews' public manhood. Jews responded by molding popular opinion with newspapers; they emphasized their military service, which projected Jews' public images as masculine defenders of enlightened, revolutionary idealism. Masculinity in relation to their veteran status underscored their humanity as people whose honor made them deserving of basic dignity and equality, which spoke to ancient Jewish traditions of masculine paternalism—one example of how Jews blended their Jewish identities with new-world identities. But the American Revolution did not expand Jewish freedoms. The new state constitution in 1776 required a Christian oath of allegiance to wield political power as public servants. As Whig and Republican partisans, Jews participated in formal political clubs and parties. Their close relationships to Whig and Republican patrons and their own political activism and partisanship led to a revised constitution in 1790, which finally emancipated Jews in Pennsylvania. Jews' partisan battles in newspaper politics thereafter

solidified their important roles in a transformation of the public sphere within civil society that produced a “civil religion” of many personal religious and moral persuasions, which normalized “uncivil discourses” in the public life of the early republic. Partisan Jews thus earned the political patronage of their Republican allies who appointed Jews to public offices at both the state and national levels of government. Although Jews contended with enduring cultural prejudices against them, they achieved religious freedom and political emancipation by the end of the eighteenth century. But those achievements often came with cultural costs.

In eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, Jews merged their “old” cultural habits and identities with the “new” ones they manufactured on American shores. Some old-world cultural habits and institutions remained essentially intact and made cultural impacts, such as patronage networks and some institutions of enlightenment culture. Many others were fundamentally altered, such as migrants’ religious ideas and traditions, among other social and cultural traditions. Jews experienced tension between their traditional religious and moral values and the egalitarian values they found in their new American milieus on the imperial and continental frontiers. Chapter Six examines how cultural integration in such frontier environments fragmented visions of a singular Judaism rooted in ancient traditions of *Halakha* because few émigrés were trained in Jewish Law. They thus depended upon a small cohort of itinerant ministers who performed proper rituals and other cultural practices in the wilderness. This meant that often lay folk performed ritual tasks and prayers according to their own understandings, cultural habits, and needs. Close interactions with Christians also presented many Jews with fresh opportunities for cultural change and even religious syncretism, transformations that reformed Judaism to suit their North American milieus. As a result, more than one version of Judaism emerged in early Pennsylvania because it was often dependent upon personal preferences and tastes that Jews’

developed in a relatively free society, especially when compared to Europe. Some Jews even abandoned their faith altogether, converted to Christianity (or at least gave the public appearance of having done so), married Christians, and raised their children within the Christian fold. Despite their struggles to construct personal identities and uniform cultural traditions, Jews often learned how to maintain commitments to each other and versions of their faith, despite their cultural and religious differences. As a result, various versions of Reform or Progressive Judaism emerged in a culture dominated by Protestant mores and Enlightenment sensibilities. Jews and their many constructions of Judaism, though, became integral components of an increasingly diverse culture of almost continuous immigration.

For all these reasons and more Jews integrated and enjoyed legal equality in early Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER ONE THE LIMITS OF FREEDOM IN THE EARLY MODERN ANGLO-AMERICAN WORLD

A majority of migrants to Pennsylvania hailed from German lands, the Ashkenazim, predominantly rural folk with conservative dispositions. In response to pogroms, persecutions, and expulsion, they migrated west to Amsterdam and London. Smaller numbers of the Iberian Sephardim, or urban Spanish and Portuguese Jews with enlightened worldviews, refined cultural tastes, and elitist attitudes also sought refuge in kingdoms farther west, and some even migrated east to the Mediterranean basin, Italy, and the Middle East. By the early eighteenth century, émigrés migrated to the Caribbean, New Amsterdam, New York, Rhode Island, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Pennsylvania, where Jewish communities arose and flourished. Holland and England developed a new ideology tied to nationalism, which posited that the nation's welfare depended upon the government's support of the economic enterprise of an emergent capitalist class. Both nations had already promoted trade through the elimination of internal geographic barriers and other cultural obstacles that mitigated trade. Neither nation therefore hesitated to break down religious barriers as well. As Jonathan Israel convincingly demonstrates, the rise of imperial mercantilism combined with other scholars' examinations of a Protestant curiosity about the Old Testament and Hebraism in general loosened ancient prejudices enough for Jewish migrants to integrate into the cultural and social worlds of Anglo-America. Nevertheless, Protestant "moral establishments," fearful of political dissidents and religious dissenters, passed religious laws that excluded Jews, save those who converted to Christianity, from full civil participation and sometimes restricted their economic activities.¹

¹ Joyce Appleby, *Economic Thought and Identity in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton, 1978); Morris, "Civil Liberties," 30-31; Pencak, *Jews*, 120; Israel, *Mercantilism*; Hoberman, *New Israel*; Sehat, *Myth*, 286; Snyder, "Place."

As conditions worsened for the Sephardim on the Iberian Peninsula and the Ashkenazim endured similar pogroms in Eastern Europe, the Netherlands opened its borders to Jewish émigrés. Both the Sephardim and Ashkenazim found haven in Amsterdam, an obvious choice because Dutch and Sephardic Jews allied against a common Spanish oppressor. In 1561, Holland won independence from Spain and established a republic, a testament to their progressive mindset. A thriving Jewish community developed there, which built a synagogue, and produced such prominent intellectuals as Baruch Spinoza. By 1650, about ten thousand Jews resided in Amsterdam. The Dutch became leaders of an early modern movement that supplanted religious primacy with mercantilist philosophy. The state placed political economics, in other words, above religious dogma. As a reminder of anti-Jewish attitudes, however, officials banned intermarriage between Jews and Christians, forbade Jews from criticizing Christianity or proselytizing to Christians. In an age of commercial and colonial expansion, nonetheless, Dutch Jews created Jewish strongholds beyond Amsterdam, most notably in London.²

England also embraced mercantilism in the wake of the English Civil War. An expulsion law from 1290 precluded Jews' legal migrations to London, but English imperial officials, like the Dutch, remained largely motivated by political economics and thus ignored the medieval statute. The monetary benefits of allowing Jews—considered racially “white,” but both an ethnic and religious “other”—to migrate to England and its colonies far outweighed the potential for conflict. Most Anglican clergy and other Protestant leaders, however, sought Jewish migration to London to satisfy their curiosity about Hebraism and Old Testament or as a means

² Rock, *Haven*, 8; *EAJ*, I, 14-16; Pencak, *Jews*, 21. For population, see Jonathan Israel, *Empires and Entrepreneurs: The Dutch, the Spanish Monarchy, and the Jews, 1585-1713* (London, 1990), 425; Dutch Attitudes Toward Jews, Oppenheim Collection, Box 14, Folder 3, AJHS; Hoberman, *New Israel*, 9.

to convert them to Christianity, not to grant them religious liberty. English Protestants welcomed Jewish migrants, chiefly because contemporary intellectuals engaged in debates about the nature of Judaism and Jews' spiritual inheritances in relation to Christian theology. English Protestants conversed with Jewish intellectuals to strengthen their hopes of divine favors and Second Coming of Christ, or millennium. The mostly Protestant English laity and Protestant clergy and officials combined economic factors with religious ones to hold religious fanaticism in check, unlike Spanish and French Catholics. But that did not mean that all English Protestants treated Jews with respect. Most viewed Jews with suspicion and employed the word "Jew" to denote a rogue, a cheat, or to convey distrust. Oliver Cromwell, meanwhile, recognized the benefits of incorporating Jewish shopkeepers, merchants, and other businesspeople into the empire. Menasseh Ben Israel, an intellectual who had once claimed to be the Messiah of Old Testament lore, led a diplomatic mission to Whitehall in 1655, which contributed to Cromwell's acceptance of Jews. Cromwell believed that Jewish wealth and commercial acumen might divert some of the Dutch trade in England's favor. He reasoned, correctly, that most Jewish émigrés shared his disdain toward Catholic Spain.³

Before Whitehall, the few Iberian *Conversos* who lived in England did so as masquerading Catholics and resident aliens. After the conference, despite no formal legal

³ British Attitudes Toward Jews, Oppenheim Collection, Box 13, Folder 49, AJHS. For tolerance in England, see Wilbur K. Jordan, *Development of Religious Toleration in England* 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1932-1940); Brodtkin, *White Folks*. Scholars are divided between economic factors on the one hand and religious factors on the other as primary reasons for acceptance of Jews in England and Anglo-America. Both factors played important roles in Jewish acceptance among Anglo-Americans, see Israel, *European Jewry*; Edgar Samuel, "The Readmission of the Jews to England in 1656, in the Context of English Economic Policy," *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 31 (1988-1990), 153-69; Benjamin Ravid, "How Profitable the Nation of the Jews Are: The Humble Addresses of Menasseh ben Israel and the Discorso of Simone Luzzatto," in Jehuda Reinharz and Daniel Swetschinski, eds., *Mystics, Philosophers, and Politicians: Essays in Jewish Intellectual History in Honor of Alexander Altmann* (Durham, 1982), 159-80; David S. Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England, 1603-1655* (Oxford, 1982), 90; idem, *The Jews in the History of England, 1485-1850* (Oxford, 1996); Snyder, "Place," 9-14, 28; Hoberman, *New Israel*, xi-17; Christopher Grasso, *A Speaking Aristocracy: Transforming Public Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut* (Chapel Hill, 1999), 255; *Menasseh Ben Israel's Mission to Oliver Cromwell*, ed., Lucien Wolf, (London, 1901), xi-lxix.

recognition, foreign Jews resettled London in earnest as professing Jews. To assuage concerns of Protestant leaders, Jews could not proselytize, but they rented a house that became a private synagogue and leased land for a nearby cemetery, without significant molestation by the local population. Liberal thought, economic principles, and religious curiosity combined to broaden the acceptance of Jews, and thus the relationship of some (especially wealthy) Jews to the state and its officials. Affluent Jews provided tax revenue, and Jewish banking interests in part financed empires. Monarchs exploited wealthy Jews but discriminated against those less useful—often simultaneously. Despite limitations that impeded Jewish equality, European culture became more tolerant of Jews, allowing Jewish island communities (or communities excluded from larger cultural milieus) to exist, which sometimes flourished.⁴

A 1609 parliamentary law limited citizenship to Protestants who agreed to receive sacraments and to take a Christian oath. Only Parliament could bestow formal citizenship upon subjects, which protected Jews' wealth and other assets and allowed them to conduct trade in the empire. Anglicans dominated this branch of government, thus reserved naturalization to those willing to swear an oath on the Christian sacraments, save few exceptions. The religious oath remained an obstacle to civil equality, one that most Jews, Catholics, Muslims, and other non-Christians refused to breach. As a result, naturalization eluded English-born and alien Jews alike. Jewish wealth and landownership, therefore, remained tenuous at best. In practice, British monarchs (all Anglican after 1688) protected Jews where and when it was feasible to do so, not on religious grounds but political and economic ones. With the passage of the Navigation Act of 1660, Restoration England made it illegal for aliens to conduct business in the empire. English

⁴ Jacob R. Marcus, *The American Jew, 1585-1990* (New York, 1995), 9; *CAJ*, I, 21-31; Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England* (Oxford, 1942), 135, 149-55, 166-67; idem, *Essays and Portraits in Anglo-Jewish History* (Philadelphia, 1962), 86; *EAJ*, I, 16-18; Snyder, "Place," 15-16, 25-29; Katz, *Philo-Semitism*; British Attitudes Toward Jews, Oppenheim Collection, Box 13, Folder 49, AJHS.

Jews born outside the empire applied, purchased, and received denization privileges, guaranteed in letters patent by the king. Under the Navigation Acts, English authorities could seize the goods or property of any merchant without such protections. As denizens of the realm, Jews could purchase land and thus settle in the kingdom, as well as engage in trade and observe their faith, all with royal recognition and credibility. The expensive costs associated with attaining such official recognition, however, excluded all Jews save the wealthy from denization. In 1705, for example, Lewis Gomez, a New York merchant, paid Queen Anne £57 for denization, nearly three times the average artisan's salary per annum—about £20 in 1710. Citizenship provided greater rights of inheritance than denization, but neither bestowed Jews with equality. Voting rights and office holding remained tied to one's birth, wealth, land ownership, race, and ethnicity, and acceptance of the established Anglican religion, regardless of whether one was native-born or alien. Jews could not attend English universities anywhere in the empire, though this restriction was sometimes ignored in practice—in eighteenth-century New York and Pennsylvania, for example. Despite these limitations, Jews enjoyed private tolerance and economic prosperity, aside from double poll taxes and other petty economic limitations. Imperial officials recognized Jews as good for the business of empire building and encouraged Jewish settlement in British North America.⁵

⁵ Samuel Oppenheim, "A List of Jews Made Denizens in the Reigns of Charles II and James II, 1661-1687," *PAJHS* 20 (1911), 109-13; *CAJ*, I, 25-29, 480-82, 491; *EAJ*, I, 38-42; Snyder, "Place," 100; H.S.Q. Henriques, *The Jews and the English Law* (London, 1908), 170, 221, 238, 307; Daniel Statt, "The City of London and the Controversy Over Immigration, 1660-1722," *Historical Journal* 33 (1990), 45-61; Elvira N. Solis, "Note on Isaac Gomez and Lewis Moses Gomez, From an Old Family Record," *PAJHS* 11 (1903), 139-44; idem, "Items Relating to the Gomez Family, New York," *PAJHS* 27 (1920), 295. In 1727, Parliament passed legislation that naturalized particular Jews of affluence without a religious oath, because they had wealth and connections, see Oath by Jewish Landowners, 1727, Oppenheim Collection, Box 13, Folder 49, AJHS. In 1710, the professional classes made about £50 per annum, and artisans and other laborers made between £17 and £22, see Christopher Hibbert, *The English: A Social History, 1066-1945* (New York, 1987).

Although English Jews enjoyed royal protection, their open practice of Jewish rites and rituals in public brought upon them the ire and ridicule of Protestants and Catholics alike. In 1664, the Conventicle Act granted Anglicans alone the right to assemble for religious purposes. On at least two separate occasions, Anglican clergy attempted to indict Jews for conducting religious services in public. In 1684, moreover, Anglicans arrested numerous Jews for refusing to attend the religious services of the established church. Catholic monarchs Charles II and James II defended Jews, hoping to win concessions for their coreligionists. Three years before James II abdicated the throne, he abolished the medieval expulsion law. Jews, finally, could settle in the kingdom legally. Even in the face of popular discontent, Jews maintained a positive relationship with imperial officials, especially merchant-patrons in Parliament. In 1689, Parliament passed the Toleration Act, a landmark law that exempted Christian dissenters of the Church of England from certain penalties if they swore an oath of allegiance to the government. Non-Christians received no such protections. The law set a precedent for religious toleration, not freedom. Following the Glorious Revolution, William and Mary ruled England and the Netherlands, which ensured Protestant primacy. Jewish migration between the countries commenced without difficulty. Nonconformist Protestants and Catholics, conversely, experienced substantive discrimination, which often impacted Jews in negative ways. In 1696, English merchants, who resented Jewish competition, lobbied for legislation that would have forbade all aliens, including Jews, from participating in the merchant trade throughout the empire. As a testament to the influence of London's Jews, a petition to Parliament underscored Jews' economic usefulness to the empire, which led Members of Parliament to exempt Jewish aliens from the law's provisions.⁶

⁶ CAJ, I, 25-26; Roth, *England*, 166-67, 170, 186-88, 193, 283; Henriques, *English Law*, 3-9, 13-23, 33-42, 133, 147, 153-54, 167-69, 170, 177, 183-92, 234; Holly Snyder, "English Markets, Jewish Merchants, and Atlantic

John Locke's treatises written in the period 1689 to 1692 argued for religious *toleration* and civil liberties for all religious groups within the empire, not religious *freedom*, a significant distinction that allowed imperial and colonial officials to limit Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, and other non-Christian participation in civil society, to alter religious behavior in public, and, sometimes to control private religious beliefs. In 1702, Parliament passed a law that forbade Jewish parents from disinheriting their children who had converted to Christianity. In 1723, on the other hand, Parliament eliminated an oath required of landowners that forced Jews to swear "on the true faith of a Christian." In 1744, a London court decision forbade Jews from establishing a religious school (London's Jews remained without one until 1846), and one decade later Jewish marriages gained formal recognition. Although Jews faced discriminatory laws, albeit of a decidedly mixed nature, they also enjoyed the right to practice their religion privately as well as some basic human rights, in stark contrast to the experiences of mid-eighteenth-century mainland European Jews. British officials, though, did not bestow Jews with full civil equality until well into the twentieth century.⁷

1740 marks an important turning point. For more than a century, colonial officials passed their own provincial statutes that regulated naturalization. Legislation therefore differed widely across the Anglo-American world. Eager to pass a universal imperial statute that supplanted those laws, imperial officials acted boldly. Foreign aliens had traded without licenses for decades, thereby eluding taxation. The crown wished to close the loophole by exerting its

Endeavors: Jews and the Making of British Transatlantic Commercial Culture, 1650-1800," in Richard L. Kagan and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Atlantic Diasporas: Jews, Conversos, and Crypto-Jews in the Age of Mercantilism, 1500-1800* (Baltimore, 2009), 54; Pitock, "Commerce," 13-14; Petition to House of Commons, in Max Kohler, "A Memorial of Jews to Parliament Concerning Jewish Participation in Colonial Trade, 1696," in *PAJHS* 18 (1909), 123-27. As early as 1661, Thomas Violet accused Jewish merchants of depriving Christians' of livelihoods, and converting Christians to Judaism, see *A Petition Against the Jewes, Presented to the Kings Majestie and the Parliament* (London, 1661), copy in AAS.

⁷ *CAJ*, I, 27-28; quoted in Oath by Jewish Landowners, 1723, Oppenheim Collection, Box 13, Folder 49, AJHS.

authority through legislation that not only consolidated imperial power but also integrated the colonies into the broader imperial framework. Imperial mercantilism required people, lots of people, with which to bolster trade and commerce. More productive people provided Great Britain a competitive advantage over the Spanish and French in North America, because larger colonial populations established permanent colonies in North America. In 1740, Parliament passed the Naturalization (sometimes Plantation) Act. The preamble—“Whereas the increase of people is a means of advancing the wealth and strength of any nation or country”—underscores the role of imperial mercantilism in Parliament’s decision.

Believing the law would inspire thousands to settle in North America, imperial officials permitted naturalization of both Protestant dissenters and Jewish (but not Catholic) aliens who had resided in the colonies for a period of seven years. Parliament aimed the Naturalization Act at Jewish merchant-traders on the island of Jamaica, chiefly because of the colony’s importance to the empire’s economic prosperity. Yet, it applied to all British colonies. That it required petitioners for naturalization to make their claims in provincial courts, however, ensured that some colonies either ignored it outright or found ways to circumvent it. Nevertheless, the legislation allowed Jews to take an oath on the Five Books of Moses, and Article III declared, “That whenever any Person professing the Jewish Religion shall present himself to take the said Oath of Abjuration in pursuance of this Act, the said Words (upon the true Faith of a Christian) shall be omitted.” Such concessions on the part of imperial officials show not only the widening boundaries of religious freedom in the Anglo-American world but also the importance of Jewish wealth to England’s economic superiority. Imperial officials’ inclusion of Jews, however, went only so far. No alien naturalized under the statute could hold public office in the British Isles or receive a grant of land from the crown. Jews thus held no political authority directly and their

prospects to influence the king remained limited but not impossible. No law in British colonies precluded Jews from holding public office if they swore an oath to Christianity. In practice, many colonial Jews refused to surrender their Jewishness, and thus remained excluded from political culture on American shores.

Wealthy foreign-born Sephardim in London may well have lobbied their merchant friends in Parliament for inclusion of the clauses that addressed Jews specifically; they had done so successfully in 1723 and 1727 to protect their Jewish agents on the island of Jamaica. This explains why 150 out of about 200 Jews who naturalized under the imperial statute did so in Jamaica. After 1740, Jews, probably inspired by the prospects of naturalization, migrated to British North America, which promised their English-born offspring all the rights of naturalized citizens. For businesspeople such as early modern Jews, naturalization secured their wealth and formalized their businesses. This was a promise, though, with major limitations. Although the naturalization statute allowed aliens residing in the colonies to apply for citizenship, no such law existed for alien Jews who still resided in the mother country. English-born Jews still remained excluded from citizenship and political participation and paid additional taxes for their Judaism. In any case, Pennsylvania's Jewish population—the focus of this study—exploded after 1740, in direct response to the law's provisions.⁸

In 1753, Parliament temporarily rectified the discrepancy between colonial and imperial statutes with passage of a second Naturalization Act, the so-called "Jew Bill," which granted professing Jews political rights. It ensured a structured process toward citizenship for all

⁸ Quotes *DHJ*, 26-30; Faber, *Planting*, 17; *USJ*, I, 41; *CAJ*, I, 483-87; Simon W. Rosendale, "An Act Allowing Naturalization of Jews in the Colonies," *PAJHS* 1 (1892), 93-8; J.H. Hollander, "The Naturalization of Jews in the American Colonies under the Act of 1740," *PAJHS* 5 (1897), 103-117; Oath by Jewish Landowners, 1723 and 1727, Oppenheim Collection, Box 13, Folder 49, AJHS; Pitock, "Commerce," 18-20. In 1688, Jamaican Jews paid additional taxes, despite their annual petitions against it, see Snyder, "Place," 102-05.

professing Jews in the empire, alien and native-born alike. London's Bevis Marks Congregation once again lobbied hard for this law and found a capable ally in William Pitt. The Church of England led the opposition against the legislation, arguing that it was unbecoming of a Christian state to extend such rights to infidels. Pamphlet-wars erupted thereafter over the role of Judaism in British society. Supporters argued that the legislation would inspire wealthy Sephardim to settle in British lands, while opponents argued that most wealthy Jews already resided in Britain and that the bill would instead attract poor Ashkenazim. The "Jew Bill" caused such a popular upheaval and subsequent violent mob protests that Parliament repealed it before the end of that year. In response to the popular ire aroused by the 1753 statute, Parliament even attempted to repeal the 1740 law. To the relief of colonial Jews, however, the attempt failed. Some Jews remained naturalized, and in some cases voted (in New York for instance), but mandatory Christian oaths for public officials still precluded their holding public office in most cases. Naturalization, conversely, did not expand Jewish political freedoms, though it widened certain economic advantages. Similar to denization, naturalization granted formal recognition to Jewish rights of settlement, and the privilege to conduct business affairs, without fear of reprisal. After 1740, unfortunately, most British colonies simply ignored the imperial statute and continued to pass their own naturalization laws.

The experiences of the Lopez brothers, Moses and Aaron, underscore both the contradictions between imperial and colonial naturalization laws and the real threat of discrimination faced by migrants. Moses and his brother Aaron fled Portugal early in the 1730s. Like so many Jewish émigrés before them, the brothers had a short sojourn in London before their journey across the Atlantic to New York. At some point, they anglicized their names. José became Moses and Duarte became Aaron. Such Anglicization was but the first step in a long

and arduous process of inclusion in their adopted communities. The Lopez brothers also established themselves as successful merchants in New York, another method of gaining acceptance from gentile neighbors. The limitations of citizenship, though, remained stark by contrast. In 1741, Moses became the first Jewish naturalized citizen in British North America at New York. But Aaron did not, choosing instead to wait until he arrived in Rhode Island. To his surprise once there he was denied citizenship.

Rhode Island had no established church, but no Jew became a citizen in the colonial period. The Rhode Island Assembly essentially reinterpreted the 1740 imperial statute to suit their bigotry. In 1761, three Jews applied for naturalization, including Aaron Lopez, Isaac Elizer, and James Lucena. Colonial officials granted citizenship to Lucena, a *Marrano* from Portugal, only because he had converted to Christianity and took the Christian oath without qualms but denied on technical grounds the applications of Lopez and Elizer. Determined to gain citizenship, Lopez and Elizer intended to take the oath despite their Judaism, but never received the opportunity to do so. Colonial officials reasoned, correctly, that the objective of the 1740 law was to increase the population. But because Rhode Island was overpopulated, they argued, the statute might be lawfully ignored. They also pointed to a revised 1730 law, which limited citizenship to Anglicans alone; the implication, of course, was that provincial laws superseded imperial ones. That Lopez met the seven-year residency requirement made no difference in the outcome. Lopez could “purchase Lands within this Colony,” but because he declared “himself to be by Religion a Jew” he was “not Liable to be chose into any office in this Colony nor allowed to give a Vote as a Freeman in Choosing others.” Lopez thus fled north to Massachusetts, where he was naturalized. Ezra Stiles, who witnessed the court proceedings, empathized with Jews when he remarked, “Providence Seemd to make every Thing to work for

Mortification to the Jews...to prevent their incorporating into any Nation that thus they may continue a distinct people.” Such was the limitations of citizenship in one of the most liberal colonies in British North America.

In 1773, Parliament, prompted by the discrepancies in naturalization procedures, attempted to force colonial officials to abide by a universal naturalization law, but failed again. At a pivotal moment in the imperial crisis, colonial authorities remained resentful of imperial interference, which probably explains why so few Jews naturalized under the terms of the law. Sporadic provincial legislation, meanwhile, legalized the right of native-born children to inherit the property of their deceased alien parents, which assuaged some Jewish concerns for greater economic security. The passage of such laws, though, remained idiosyncratic and contingent on regional location, among many other factors. In the end, the symbolic importance of the Naturalization Act of 1740 mattered most to Jews, who could easily imagine themselves as British subjects and important members and contributors to their adopted communities. The absence of such humiliating features as segregated ghettos and indiscriminate taxation policies indicative of Europe inspired continuous migrations of Ashkenazim and Sephardim. Jewish migrants anglicized their names, learned the English language (most remained multilingual and taught their children as much), and set sail for American shores, drawn there by economic opportunities. The English conquest of New Netherland in 1664 and the French revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 (a blow to religious pluralism there) accelerated Jewish migrations to permanent destinations across the eighteenth-century Anglo-American world.⁹

⁹ CAJ, I, 30-1, 245-57, 290-91, 433-38, 489-903; An Answer to a Pamphlet..., 1753, Aaron Lopez and Moses Lopez, Oppenheim Collection, Box 13, Folder 49, Box 8, Folders 44 and 50, AJHS. For polemical debate, see Felsenstein, *Stereotypes*, 187-214; Roth, *England*, 213; Hollander, “Naturalization,” 108. For passage and repeal of Naturalization Act, see Thomas W. Perry, *Public Opinion, Propaganda, and Politics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1962); James H. Kettner, *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608-1870* (Chapel Hill, 1984), 73-76; Petition for Naturalization by Aaron Lopez, September 9, 1761, Aaron Lopez Papers, Box 2, Folder 2, Moses Lopez Naturalization Certificate, April 13, 1741, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 16, Folder 22, and Box 11, Folders

Jewish émigrés, inspired by Parliament's pro-Jewish overtures, fled London and Amsterdam, and arrived first in the British Caribbean, where Jewish communities developed and thrived. After the English conquered New Amsterdam, New York City became the major entrepôt both of goods and migrants destined for mainland North America. By 1700, around 250 Jews called New York home, the first permanent Jewish community on the British North American mainland. As merchant-traders and shopkeepers, migrants congregated in coastal towns up and down the eastern seaboard. From New York, individual migrants moved as far north as Montreal and Boston and as far south as Savannah. Before 1776, permanent Jewish communities arose and flourished in Jamaica, Barbados, Nevis, New York City, Newport, Charleston, Savannah, and Philadelphia. Freedom varied from colony to colony, and despite the especially restrictive laws in Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Georgia, Jews arrived there anyway. Formal religious establishments in New York, South Carolina, and Georgia maintained religious authority up to the revolution, and informal moral establishments flourished in the cultures of Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. In the colonial period, no Jewish communities developed in New England beyond Newport. Puritan establishments ruled there until after the revolution. Whether official *de jure* or unofficial *de facto* in nature, Protestant Christians denied equality to nonconformist groups, freethinkers, Catholics, and non-Christians.

12 and 13, AJA; Stanley F. Chyet, "Aaron Lopez: A Study in Buenafama," in Karp, *Jewish Experience*, I, 194-208; Lee M. Friedman, *Pilgrims in a New Land* (Philadelphia, 1948), 34-36; Petitions to the General Assembly, Rhode Island State Archives, 1758-61, X, 147, *AJD*, 208-10, 200-01; David C. Adelman, "Civil Rights of Jews in the Colony of Rhode Island," *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 1.2 (1954), 104-18; Abram Vossen Goodman, *American Overture: Jewish Rights in Colonial Times* (Philadelphia, 1947), 43-45, 53, 58; Benjamin H. Hartogensis, "Rhode Island and Consanguineous Jewish Marriages," *PAJHS* 20 (1911), 137-44; quotes in Snyder, "Place," 122-24, 140-46; Marcus, *American Jew*, 9; Henriques, *English Law*, 175-76, 203, 237, 307; Roth, *England*, 206-07, 211-13, 288-89; Perry, *Public Opinion*, 177.

Protestant “moral establishments” in British North America used the instruments of state power to coerce adherence to a Protestant moral ethos and restricted Jewish legal rights, which impeded their full participation in civil society. Although British colonies in North America did not allow Jewish religious expressions in the public sphere, among other civil and economic disabilities that reflected the bigotry of many colonials, Parliament’s pro-Jewish policies and the positive impact of Jewish enterprise in colonial towns and cities altered colonials’ attitudes toward Jews. Drastic changes in their constituents’ views of Jews forced colonial officials to slowly liberalize their anti-Jewish restrictions. Protestant moral establishments, though, fought to ebb the tide of Jewish inclusion, which made the transformation of Jews as outsiders into insiders a slow, arduous process that spanned decades. As a result, Sephardim and Ashkenazim discovered milieus in British North America that allowed them to express their Jewish identity within certain clearly demarcated boundaries, without reprisal. This alone—that Jews could reinvent themselves and live in relative harmony alongside their gentile neighbors—inspired thousands of Jewish migrants to risk their lives and fortunes to begin life anew on American shores throughout the eighteenth century. Economic opportunities, malleable class boundaries, open crafts and retail trade, and few barriers on physical and social mobility, must have been attractive to Anglo-American Jews.¹⁰

Such Anglo-American cultural changes, however, produced a paradox. At the same time that imperial and colonial officials exploited Jewish wealth and business acumen to better compete with other empires in an emergent transatlantic economy, increased economic competition between Jews and gentiles produced anti-Jewish backlashes among competitors and

¹⁰ Max J. Kohler, “Phases of Jewish Life in New York Before 1800,” *PAJHS* 2 (1893), 77-100. For an overview of colonial New York see *EAJ*, I, 34-101; *CAJ*, I, 263-75, 282, 292-96, 390-91; Stanley F. Chyet, “The Political Rights of the Jews in the United States, 1776-1840,” *AJAJ* 10 (1958), 17-20.

conservative Christians. Parliament's pro-Jewish policies and the king's protections ensured that Jews remained integral, and in some cases indispensable, members of their adopted communities. As a consequence, however, Jews also faced prejudice and discrimination from gentile businesspeople who lost profits because of those pro-Jewish policies, and wielded anti-Semitism as a means to silence and discredit their Jewish competitors. So, too, did some disgruntled Christian leaders, who saw the Jewish religion as a threat to their moral authority in their communities. European Jews, traditionally, remained segregated (in ghettos) from the dominant gentile population. But political economics, enlightened thought, and Protestant curiosity about Hebraic learning brought once isolated Jews into mainstream Anglo-American culture, which contributed to increased interactions between Jews and Christians. Close proximity sometimes led to violence and conflict. Over time, though, Jews and Christians forged friendships and business relationships that slowly mitigated anti-Jewish sentiment among elites and middling folk alike. Yet, despite such progress toward the acceptance of Jews and Judaism, anti-Jewish prejudice never disappeared entirely from Anglo-American culture.¹¹

Class dynamics and a growing chasm between conservative Christian thinking and liberal political economics are other ways to better understand the paradox. Most elites, not all, embraced affluent Jews as social peers, welcomed them into polite society, respected and admired Jewish history and the Hebrew Bible, and appreciated their economic productivity to imperial expansion. The middling orders, generally, felt resentment toward Jews, viewed Judaism with suspicion, and at times exhibited anti-Semitic thought and behavior. Conservative Christians, meanwhile, viewed Judaism as a moral liability in civil society and balked at

¹¹ Israel, *European Jewry*; Hoberman, *New Israel*; Snyder, "Place;" David Sorkin, *The Berlin Haskalah and German Religious Thought: Orphans of Knowledge* (Portland, 2000); idem, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, 2008); Frank Manuel, *The Broken Staff: Judaism Through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge, 1992), especially chapters 3-6.

extending equality and civil privileges to “heathens” in a Christian empire, whose *raison d’être*, they believed, was to facilitate the millennium. Enlightenment thinkers and Christian Hebraists, conversely, took a pragmatic approach and argued that profits and colonial expansion mattered more than religious considerations, though Hebraists did converse with Jews about the Old Testament and mystical thought. Philo-Semitism and anti-Semitism, then, occurred simultaneously throughout the British Empire in the eighteenth century, which in many ways depended on geographical location, current events, demographics, among many other factors.¹²

Before 1820, the vast majority of migrants consisted of “Village Jews” of eastern Europe, the Ashkenazim, along with smaller numbers of the city-dwelling Iberian Sephardim. Although Ashkenazim were seen as poor and culturally backward by their haughty brethren, they embraced the social, cultural, and religious *éclat* of Sephardim, especially after having arrived in Amsterdam and London before making the final push across the Atlantic Ocean to British North America. Sephardim remained the primary leaders of Jewish communities in America until about 1820, though Ashkenazim outnumbered them. Jews migrated for economic improvement, like most Christians. Unlike most Christians, Jews did so as individuals or in groups of two or three. Young, educated males of less than affluent means made up a majority of early migrants. Once these ambitious individuals settled themselves in a new world, family members followed them to North America. After 1820, migratory patterns changed significantly. Migrants arrived as family groups, mostly consisting of uneducated rural folk of poverty from the authoritarian lands of central and Eastern Europe. Members of established Jewish communities looked askance at their un-Americanized brethren. Jewish migrations to British North America slowed

¹² Pencak, *Jews*; Jaher, *Scapegoat*.

a bit during the Seven Years' War but picked up again after 1763 and held steady to 1820, when waves of much larger migrations commenced thereafter.¹³

The first cohort of Sephardic émigrés settled in Portuguese Brazil, and many of their descendants migrated to the tolerant English and Dutch Caribbean. So many *Conversos* settled in the Caribbean that Spanish officials had equated the term “Portuguese” with the word “Jew.” Most migrants engaged in business, either as shopkeepers or merchant-traders, and became productive members of their communities. On the island of Nevis, for example, a Jew served as jury foreman. Before the American Revolution, though, such public inclusion remained unusual. Historians know little about Jews' Caribbean cultural experiences, because of a dearth of extant sources. Most of the Jews on Barbados and Jamaica migrated from Brazil, bringing with them extensive knowledge of the sugar industry. The nature of statutes suggests that Caribbean Jews remained an important economic tool for the British Empire throughout the eighteenth century, despite Jamaica's 1692 “Jew tax.”

Jamaica had the largest population of Jewish citizens in the British Empire, which made the island attractive to migrants. About 150 Jamaican Jews naturalized under the Naturalization Act. Only 38 did so in all other British colonies combined. Some Jews voted, despite popular outcries, chiefly because they found protection from the king and prominent merchant-patrons, both Jew and gentile, in London. Regardless of limited public participation and open discrimination, Jamaican Jews worshiped in private quarters. As early as 1661, some Jews equated their economic role in empire building with rights-based nationalism, which inspired some to agitate for natural rights, especially the right to hold public offices—a pattern of activism that did not occur on the mainland until the revolutionary crisis. In 1750, for example, a

¹³ *JOP*, 7-8; *EAJ*, I, xii; *CAJ*, I, 245-57, 263-75, 282, 290-91, 390; Roth, *England*, 206-07.

Jamaican Jew argued that as Englishmen the Naturalization Act secured him and his Jewish brethren political equality from “a free and Protestant government admired for its charity in religious matters, for its lenity, and for the justice and quality of its laws.”¹⁴ Much to Jews’ chagrin, a conservative backlash ensued, as the Jamaican Assembly barred Jews from holding public office, including jury duty, and even contested their right to vote for representatives. In Barbados, meanwhile, a similar reactionary trend occurred. Whereas affluent London merchant-patrons fought for Jewish inclusion in the colonial body politic, the prospect of living alongside Jews as public equals led white, mostly Protestant, Barbadians to violently dissent. In 1739, for example, a mob destroyed a synagogue. In response, the Barbadian Assembly restricted Jewish behavior in public. Such blatant exclusion of Jews from the public sphere shows the pervasive inequality of non-Christians in the British Empire at that time.¹⁵

By 1700, approximately 1,000 Jews called Jamaica home, while 275 and 75 did so on Barbados and Nevis, respectively. Although several generations under British rule had substantially anglicized British Caribbean Jews, who now viewed themselves as British *and* European, most also retained their traditional faith and culture. Jews built synagogues and cemeteries, established networks among families and friends, provided alms to the poor, including gentiles, and conducted other such cultural practices. British Caribbean Jews faced

¹⁴ Miriam Bodian, “Men of the Nation’: The Shaping of Converso Identity in Early Modern Europe,” *Past and Present* 143 (1994), 59-60. For Jews in Brazil, see Walter Max Kraus, “The Arrival of the Saint Charles,” Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 10, Folder 17, AJA; *CAJ*, I, 100; quoted in *CAJ*, I, 100-06. Colonial authorities argued that Jews never became farmers as the Crown had intended, and thus deserved the tax. In 1740, Parliament abolished such discriminatory taxation. Snyder sees this less as medieval anti-Semitism and more about evolving notions of English constructions of race and citizenship, see “Place,” 86, 103-40, and for Jews and Jamaica, see 63-68, 84-87, 108-40.

¹⁵ *Journals of the Assembly of Jamaica, 1663-1826*, Alexander Aikman, ed., 14 Vols. (Kingston, 1800-1829), I, 249; III, 467; IV, 238, 246; XIII, 433; Henry Phillips Silverman, *A Panorama of Jamaican Jewry* (Kingston, 1960), 2-5. Snyder argues that Anglo-Jamaicans excluded Jews and deemed them outsiders because of their dark skin, Jewish law, and non-Christian beliefs, see “Place,” 110-15; George Fortunatus Judah, “The Jews’ Tribute in Jamaica. Extracted from the Journals of the House of Assembly of Jamaica,” *PAJHS* 18 (1909), 149-77; N. Darnell Davis, “Notes on the History of the Jews in Barbados,” *PAJHS* 18 (1909), 129-45; Herbert Friedenwald, “Material for the History of the Jews in the British West Indies,” *PAJHS* 5 (1897), 45-101.

popular stereotypes and prejudices, of course, but they also proudly professed their Judaism alongside their Britishness, and even made some money along the way. Jamaica and Barbados, conversely, represent the beginnings of a worsening trend toward Jewish oppression, as colonial assemblies in the British Caribbean bolstered laws that barred Jews from all judicial and governmental offices. Other laws forbade them from practicing law, and sometimes Jews could own no slaves or hire indentured servants. Such legislation was class-based and intended to undermine Jewish economic clout, which directly benefitted Christian competitors. By contrast, Jews residing on other islands, such as Dutch Surinam, enjoyed far greater political rights than their British counterparts.¹⁶

Unlike the officials of the Inquisition, motivated for the most part by religious fanaticism, British colonial officials in the Caribbean discriminated against Jews because they dominated the Jamaican economy. Caribbean officials used religious rhetoric as justification for anti-Jewish legislation that served economic ends. Officials, for example, levied higher taxes on Jews, forbade them from suing in court without first swearing an oath to Christianity—all the more extraordinary, considering that English Jews had sworn on the Old Testament alone as early as 1667. Colonial Christians disabled Jewish competitors through the passage of provincial statutes, which upset Jewish patrons in London. Imperial officials—mostly merchant-patrons in Parliament—sought to exploit Jewish commercial acumen. Religious language justified economic and political ends. Jews experienced colonial governments' coercion, while they also enjoyed the patronage of the imperial government.¹⁷

Although conditions worsened for Caribbean Jews because of their economic supremacy, the British mainland, with its bountiful space, offered migrants some reprieve, at least within

¹⁶ *CAJ*, I, 106-40.

¹⁷ Henriques, *English Law*, 179; Roth, *Essays*, 108.

legally defined boundaries. In 1654, the first permanent Jewish cohort on mainland North America arrived at New Amsterdam. Much folklore surrounds them, but it is beyond the scope of this study to disentangle these stories. Jewish émigrés from Recife, Brazil—a combination of Dutch Sephardim and Ashkenazim of Spanish-Portuguese and Italian extraction, who had migrated to Brazil in the late 1620s—arrived at New Amsterdam. A settlement of about one thousand people on Manhattan Island, New Amsterdam was established as a stronghold for Reformed orthodoxy, and officials promised strict Calvinist migrants a spiritually pure milieu. Peter Stuyvesant, an anti-Semitic Calvinist, governed the outpost.¹⁸

To pay for their passage from Brazil, these Jews faced indentured servitude to settle their debts, but their kinsman in Amsterdam emancipated them from that fate. They also found sustenance and financial help from sympathetic members of the Dutch Reformed Church. But two men of Jewish heritage assisted them most, an Ashkenazi, Jacob Barsimson, a well-connected scout, probably sent by Amsterdam Jews to evaluate the trading opportunities at New Amsterdam, and Solomon Pietersen, a Jewish convert to Christianity. The Dutch West India Company recognized the value of Jewish businesspeople to their operations. Dutch Jews remained prominent members of the Dutch Stock Exchange, and Jewish shareholders consisted of between four and seven percent in the period 1650 to 1660. By February 1655, the Dutch West India Company neared bankruptcy, and it did not want to lose Jewish financial support to

¹⁸ For the original cohort, see Leo Hershkowitz, “By Chance or Choice: Jews in New Amsterdam 1654,” *AJAJ*, 57 (2005), 1-13; idem, “New Amsterdam’s Twenty-Three Jews—Myth or Reality?,” in *Bible in America*; Sarna, “American Jewish History,” 344-45. For Dutch New Amsterdam see *EAJ*, I, 20-33; Pencak, *Jews*, 22-3; Leon Hühner, “Whence Came the First Jewish Settlers of New York?,” *PAJHS* 9 (1901), 75-85; *CAJ*, I, 209-11; Marcus, *American Jew*, 15; Rock, *Haven*, 11-14; *JOP*, 6; For Brazil, see Arnold Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil* (New York, 1960); Walter Max Kraus, “The Arrival of the Saint Charles,” Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 10, Folder 17, AJA.

British competitors. It therefore allowed the Jews to settle and trade at New Amsterdam, if they agreed to care for their own poor, and not enter craft guilds or commence in retail trade.¹⁹

Despite gestures of kindness, attitudes differed among the company's leaders and colonial leadership. The governor was none too happy about their arrival. The intolerant Peter Stuyvesant, a devout Dutch Calvinist, ensured that Jews, a "deceitful race" and "blasphemers of the name of Christ," paid exorbitant taxes compared to their Christian neighbors. Stuyvesant forbade Jews from militia service, and, most important, from buying real estate or engaging in trade on the Delaware River or Fort Orange at Albany. Jews could not practice their religion in public, vote, or hold public office. Stuyvesant also borrowed from the durable Shylock trope to disable Jewish economic competition with Christian merchants. Jews' "customary usury and deceitful trading with the Christians," Stuyvesant insisted, required their immediate deportation.²⁰

Stuyvesant and the Dutch West India Company, however, agreed on one crucial point, that New Amsterdam Jews must live in close proximity to each other, particularly away from Christians, not unlike the ghettos of Europe. The company's directors made an explicit distinction between private tolerance and public freedom, claiming that New Amsterdam Jews could not "exercise and carry on their religion in synagogues and gatherings," but could "exercise in all quietness their religion within their houses," if they agreed "to build their houses close together in a convenient place." Stuyvesant's bigotry extended beyond Judaism to include

¹⁹ Stephen Birmingham, *The Grandees: America's Sephardic Elite* (Syracuse, 1971), 49-66; Samuel Oppenheim, "More About Jacob Barsimson, the First Jewish Settler in New York," in Karp, *Jewish Experience*, I, 37-50; *DHJ*, 2. For authoritative treatment of Dutch West India Company Papers, see Samuel Oppenheim, "The Early History of the Jews in New York, 1654-1664: Some New Matter on the Subject," *PAJHS* 18 (1909), 1-91, especially 24-25.

²⁰ Quotes *DHJ*, 1-2, 4-6, 11-12. For Amsterdam Jews, see Herbert I. Bloom, *The Economic Activities of the Jews of Amsterdam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Williamsport, PA, 1937); I.S. Emmanuel, "New Light on Early American Jewry," *AJAJ* 7 (1955), 4-5, 12-13, 16-18, 43-44, 47-48; *CAJ*, I, 219-31; Rock, *Haven*, 15-18; Albion Morris Dyer, "Points in the First Chapter of New York Jewish History," *PAJHS* 3 (1895), 41-60; Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America* (New York, 1992), 13-14, quoted on 14.

German Lutherans, Scotch Presbyterians, French Huguenots, and even Quakers. Stuyvesant's ire was fiercest against the newly arrived Jews, though. He found an ally in Reverend John Megapolensis, the leader of the Dutch Church. Megapolensis feared "these godless rascals," who, if given the opportunity, "would build here a synagogue." Whereas Stuyvesant feared Jewish commercial acumen, Megapolensis feared the potential religious threat that Judaism posed. If Stuyvesant allowed Judaism (or any other religion) to flourish, it may well have threatened his own moral power over his neighbors.²¹

Holland's Jewish leaders, wealthy and well-connected elders known as the *Parnassim*, petitioned the West India Company for redress. They explained that Jews in Amsterdam enjoyed the right to "practice their religion in full freedom," therefore New Amsterdam Jews wanted "freedom to exercise their religion as they were permitted in Brazil." New Amsterdam Jews, presumably, wished to construct a public house of worship. Dutch colonial officials refused them that right. Dutch merchant-patrons drafted a second petition on behalf of the Jewish colonists, pointing to a familiar argument, that "many of the Jewish nation [were] principal shareholders" in the West India Company. Their economic argument for equality remained a simple one, because Jewish colonists could not return to Holland due to population growth and scarcity of opportunities, they reasoned; neither could they return to Spain or Portugal for fear of the Inquisition. The petition's peripheral argument was a practical one. Holland held no qualms about allowing the Jews of Amsterdam to worship publicly, chiefly because they remained economically useful. The situation was similar at New Amsterdam. Why, then, did Dutch officials allow Stuyvesant to deny them the same rights?²²

²¹ *CAJ*, I, 215-18, 225, quote on 231; Rock, *Haven*, 9, 11-12, 14-17, 22; Chyet, "Rights," 18; second quote Birmingham, *Grandeas*, 63-64; Wiznitzer, *Brazil*, 90-2.

²² Quote Emmanuel, "New Light," 17, 53-54; Birmingham, *Grandeas*, 59-60. For petitions, see *DHJ*, 2-4, 6-13; Rock, *Haven*, 15; Oppenheim, "Early History," 9-11.

New Amsterdam Jews petitioned Dutch officials numerous times, efforts that gained them the ability to trade in the Delaware River Valley. Their land purchases, by contrast, remained tenuous. Jews still could not engage in any crafts or in retail trade, unlike their dissenting Christian and Catholic counterparts. Public religious worship, too, remained a chimera for non-Christians, Catholics, nonconformist Christians, among other dissenters. Stuyvesant, for example, expressed the thinking of most colonial officials. If imperial officials acquiesced to Jewish demands for equal public expression, Stuyvesant warned, “We cannot refuse the Lutherans and Papists.” He well understood that to extend the rights of public worship to one nonconformist group meant that others would demand that right. In 1659, for example, officials deported a Lutheran cleric who preached to his congregation. Any society with an established church—in this case, the Dutch Reformed Church—must not extend public worship to its rivals, for fear of undermining its own cultural and political authority in the community. Although in some cases Jews earned burgher rights, the full rights of Dutch citizenship eluded them. Those who participated in civil society as full citizens, ostensibly, converted to Christianity. Only one Jew converted under Dutch authority, Solomon Pietersen, the man who assisted the Jewish émigrés. And yet Jewish petitions to Dutch and English officials did not concern political freedom; instead, Jews fought for and eventually won some religious and economic concessions. Asser Levy, for example, prospered; he bought a house and conducted successful businesses, even fought in the militia and owned a slave. Levy, though, was an exception, thus the Jewish community in New Amsterdam did not at first grow; indeed, most Jews fled the colony.²³

²³ Salvador Dandrada petitioned the council but was denied the right to own a house he purchased at auction. Dandrada, Abraham de Lucena, and Jacob Cohen also petitioned for the right to trade. Levy applied for permission to build a slaughterhouse in 1678, see *DHJ*, 1-15; Rock, *Haven*, 17-23; *JOP*, 9-11; *CAJ*, I, 227-32, quoted on 232, 245-57, 290-91; Emmanuel, “New Light,” 53-54, 62; Salo W. Baron, “American Jewish Communal Pioneering,” in

With English conquest of New Amsterdam in 1664, conditions in New York improved, but treatment of Jews depended on the principles of a changing governorship and shared cultural authority of both Dutch and Anglican Churches. Jews could open no retail shops or worship in public, though they purchased a cemetery in the 1680s. After 1700, conversely, New York's Jews voted for members of the assembly, held public office on occasion, owned real estate, and built the Shearith Israel, or "Remnant of Israel," synagogue in 1730. Many became full citizens after 1740. In 1777, New York's constitution bestowed Jews with full civic equality, and thus became one of the models for the U.S. Constitution a decade later. (New York's constitution excluded Catholics, specifically, until 1806, and not until 1822 did New York lift all restrictions on Catholics.) For the first time, Jews became *de jure* citizens in a body politic in North America. So rare and significant was this achievement, it had not happened since 212 C.E., when the Roman emperor Caracalla had bestowed Jews with full citizenship. Jews in colonial New York, then, became the first and only Jewish cohort in the British Empire who could vote and hold public office.²⁴

Between 1658 and 1678, the second Jewish community in British North America arose in Newport, Rhode Island, when Jews from Barbados and New York settled there. Roger Williams lobbied for the readmission of Jews to England, remarking that the English ought "to break down that superstitious *wall of separation*...between us *Gentiles* and the *Jews*." Williams, revealingly, made no arguments for inclusion of Jewish migrants in Rhode Island. In 1663, Rhode Island's charter established liberty of conscience, or the right of individuals to practice their faith in

Karp, *Jewish Experience*, I, 2; Sachar, *History*, 15-16; Oppenheim, "Early History," 16, 52-57, 81-86; Simon W. Rosendale, "An Early Ownership of Real Estate in Albany, New York, By a Jewish Trader," *PAJHS* 3 (1894), 61-71. For Asser Levy, see Leon Hühner, "Asser Levy, A Noted Jewish Burgher of New Amsterdam," *PAJHS* 8 (1900), 9-23.

²⁴ An Act for Settling a Ministry & Raising a Maintenance for them in the City of New York, 1694, Oppenheim Collection, Box 13, Folder 49, AJHS; Chyet, "Rights," 19-33, 49; *EAJ*, II, 530. For early New York, see Rock, *Haven* and Pencak, *Jews*, 19-81.

private without interference from the state or other religious groups. Charles II, officially an Anglican but who remained a Catholic in secret, granted it with his coreligionists in mind, not Jews. But Williams maintained that all who came to Rhode Island would experience “an absolute freedom.” “The Kings Ma[jes]tie wincks at Barbadoes,” Williams noted, “where Jews and all sorts of Christians...are free,” but “Libertie of Conscience” did not apply in Rhode Island. Williams’s “principles of Christianity” even excluded Quakers. In 1665, a provincial statute excluded Jews as citizens, and nearly twenty years later, colonial officials denied a Jewish petition for citizenship. Rhode Island officials, however, acquiesced to the construction of a Jewish cemetery. From 1699 to 1730, Anglican officials strengthened the exclusionary nature of the 1665 statute by requiring all citizens to swear an oath of allegiance to Anglican dogma. That the provision barred other religious groups from citizenship and office holding, not just Jews, suggests that anti-Jewish attitudes played at most a small role in the adoption of the oath. Anglican merchants lobbied for its passage, however, which further ensured their economic advantages over Jewish competitors. The interplay between political and economic power, and Anglicans’ determination to monopolize both, lay at the heart of this discrimination, as it did in other British colonies. The oath was, in sum, aimed at Catholics, a result of pervasive anti-Catholic sentiment in the Anglo-American world.²⁵

²⁵ For colonial Rhode Island, see *EAJ*, I, 116-18, 126, 128-29, 141-57. For New England, see Leon Hühner, “The Jews of New England (Other Than Rhode Island) Prior to 1800,” *PAJHS* 11 (1903), 75-99; Max J. Kohler, “Beginnings of New York Jewish History,” *PAJHS* 1 (1892), 41-5; Williams quoted Katz, *Philo-Semitism*, 186-88; second Williams quote Perry Miller, ed., *Complete Writings of Roger Williams* (New York, 1963), VII, 152-86; Alan Simpson, “How Democratic Was Roger Williams?,” *WMQ* 13 (1956), 53-67. Third Williams quote Maxwell H. Morris, “Roger Williams and the Jews,” *AJAJ* 3 (1951), 24-72. Elsewhere, Williams equated Judaism with Quakerism and Catholicism, see Roger Williams, *George Foxx Digg’d Out of His Burrovves...* (Boston, 1676), copy in AAS. Snyder rejects the notion that Williams extended religious freedom, or even liberty of conscience to Jews. For charter, see Snyder, “Place,” 54-59, note 37, *CAJ*, I, 314-20, 427-35; Goodman, *Overture*, 34-39; Roth, *England*, 247; Chyet, “Rights,” 39, 66. Few Connecticut, see Jacob R. Marcus, “Light on Early Connecticut Jewry,” *AJAJ* 1 (1949), 3-52; Timothy Dwight Bozeman, “Religious Liberty and the Problem of Order in Early Rhode Island,” *NEQ* 45 (1972), 62-64; Max J. Kohler, “The Jews in Newport,” *PAJHS* 6 (1897), 61-80. Ezra Stiles wrote extensively about Jewish life in Newport, see W. Willner, “Ezra Stiles and the Jews,” *PAJHS* 8 (1900), 119-126; Morris Jastrow, Jr., “References to Jews in the Diary of Ezra Stiles,” in Karp, *Jewish Experience*, I, 143-174.

By 1800, Rhode Island and Connecticut remained the only two states without constitutions, operating instead under their colonial charters, both of which excluded all non-Protestants from the body politic. (In 1818, Connecticut disestablished the Congregational Church, but a Jewish congregation received no recognition until 1843.) Not until the adoption of a new constitution in 1842 did Jews receive full civil equality in Rhode Island. No professing Jew served in an elective office until the 1880s. Jews, however, made some progress, despite these limitations. In 1764, for example, Rhode Island recognized marriages other than Christian in nature. A decade later, Newport had a Jewish population about half that of New York City, and like its sister polity allowed Jews to construct a public cemetery. The revolutionary war, however, ended Jewish life in Newport, not to be revived again for another one hundred years.²⁶

The third Jewish community in British North America developed in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1665, Members of Parliament created the colony of Carolina (it was not divided until 1712) to harbor Christian dissenters. Written by John Locke and Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury, Carolina's 1669 Fundamental Constitutions accepted "Jews, Heathens, and other Dissenters from the purity of the Christian Religion" and allowed them to worship publicly. But it also established the Church of England, which ensured that Anglican mores dominated the social order. Carolina's proprietors well understood that Jewish entrepreneurs and merchants bolstered England's political economy. But Anglican leaders impeded Jewish inclusion fully into Carolina's body politic. Jews could not legally formalize marriages, and Protestant Christian religious tests forbade them the right to hold office. In 1729, the crown assumed control of the Carolinas, which ensured the primacy of the established Anglican Church. Anglican superiority reigned for the next five decades, until the constitution of 1776

²⁶ Chyet, "Rights," 17, 39-42; Goodman, *Overture*, 30; *EAJ*, II, 519; Morton Borden, *Jews, Turks, and Infidels* (Chapel Hill, 1984), 13; *USJ*, I, 505.

eliminated both compulsory attendance and tithes, and protected dissenters' intellectual freedom. Jews, Catholics, and non-Protestants did not receive equal political rights in North Carolina's constitution of 1776, though no Jewish community arose there until much later. In 1835, North Carolina amended the constitution to include all Christians, including Catholics. Not until 1868, however, did individual Jews become full citizens in North Carolina.²⁷

South Carolina, meanwhile, passed a naturalization law that protected intellectual freedom only for Protestants. In practice, though, Jews naturalized, and privately practiced their faith. Founded in 1670, Charleston became home to many Jews (most of whom hailed from Barbados and Germanic lands), drawn there by economic prospects and the warm welcome they received. One of the earliest Jewish inhabitants of Charleston was Simon Valentine Van der Wilden, a relative of Asser Levy of New York. He arrived in 1696, after having spent time in Jamaica. In 1703, Valentine served as police commissioner in Charleston. From that point forward, however, conditions worsened for non-Christians. In the years after 1696, only four Jews naturalized. Jews probably voted before 1704, but thereafter Anglicans forbade all Protestant dissenters and non-Christians from voting and holding office. The imperial wars of the period stimulated trade, thus after about 1740 Jews increasingly bypassed New York for Charleston, which became a major market for the southern backcountry and Georgia. In 1749, Jews dedicated a synagogue, the Beth Elohim congregation, and a cemetery followed in 1764. By the 1770s, Charleston became a major shipping harbor in North America, thus Jewish merchant-traders steadily migrated there. In 1759, the exclusion of Jews and all non-Protestants was reaffirmed in a law that allowed only Protestants to vote and hold office. Anglicans

²⁷ Quoted in Pencak, *Jews*, 117; Henriques, *English Law*, 166-71, 224, 308; *CAJ*, I, 458-63; Leon Hühner, "The Struggle for Religious Liberty in North Carolina, With Special Reference to the Jews" *PAJHS* 16 (1907), 37-71; Chyet, "Rights," 49.

reaffirmed twice more such restrictions in the Constitutions of 1776 and 1778, the latter of which declared, “The Christian Protestant religion shall be...the established religion of this state.” The civil restrictions indicative of the new constitutions, however, focused on excluding “the Roman Catholic religion...subject to arbitrary power,” chiefly because Parliament’s Quebec Act of 1774 had bestowed Canadian Catholics with religious freedom. In 1790, finally, non-Christians in South Carolina received equality before the law, when a new constitution eliminated all religious tests for officeholders.²⁸

In 1733, the fourth British colonial Jewish community developed in Georgia. Like the Dutch émigrés who arrived in New Amsterdam from Brazil, and unlike the individual Jews who populated other regions, more than forty Jewish migrants arrived en masse in Savannah. Another thirty or so arrived later in the year, thus Jews constituted about twenty percent of early Savannah’s population. The Prussian Sheftalls (of Ashkenazim extraction) arrived with them, and soon played a prominent role in Savannah’s Jewish life. London Jews of the Sephardic Bevis Marks congregation invested in the colony’s development. Georgia’s founders envisioned a haven for the productive poor, as well as a buffer to the Spanish in Florida and to the French farther north and west. London Jews, though, viewed Georgia as haven for the numerous Sephardic émigrés who continued to flee the Iberian Peninsula, as well as Ashkenazim who migrated westward in the eighteenth century. Between 1720 and 1735, the population of Bevis Marks doubled. Three Jewish leaders served as commissioners to the trustees and lobbied for

²⁸ CAJ, I, 342-46, 463-68; Goodman, *Overture*, 154-65; Barnett A. Elzas, *The Jews of South Carolina* (Philadelphia, 1905), 17, 20-24, 34, 41, 68; Chyet, “Rights,” 19, 32-35, 45, quote on 33; Pencak, *Jews*, 117-40, especially 122; second quote *South Carolina Constitution* (1776), in Francis Newton Thorpe, ed., *The Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies Now or Heretofore Forming the United States of America* 7 vols. (Washington, 1909), VI, 3241-42. Francis Salvador, a Jewish planter and slaveholder, served as delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses, but he was an exception to the rule, see, Leon Hühner, “Francis Salvador: A Prominent Patriot of the Revolutionary War,” in Karp, *Jewish Experience*, I, 276-91. For Carolinas, see *EAJ*, II, 226-76.

Jewish residence in Georgia. Before the trustees made the decision to exclude Jews, commissioners had arranged passage of the émigrés to Savannah. When trustees learned that Jews had arrived in Savannah, they instructed Colonel James Oglethorpe to deport them. One trustee, Thomas Coram of Massachusetts, fought to keep Jews out of Georgia, because he, like Stuyvesant, feared Jews might well dominate their Christian competitors in the marketplace. Unlike gentile settlers to Savannah, Jews brought servants with them, symbolic of their affluence.²⁹

The physician, Samuel Nunez gained Oglethorpe's attention. When yellow fever broke out in the summer of 1733, it killed the only Christian doctor in Savannah. Nunez, a Lisbon émigré, saved many lives gratis, which altered his neighbors' views of the émigrés. The combination of social status and usefulness earned Jews cultural acceptance in Savannah. Oglethorpe, on several occasions, defended Jewish presence in the colony before the trustees. Oglethorpe's first inclination, not unlike Stuyvesant's, was to rid the colony of the new arrivals. Unlike Stuyvesant, however, Oglethorpe was no enemy to Jews. In 1753, when Parliament debated the "Jew Bill," he supported it. Oglethorpe, moreover, was a Mason and sponsored Savannah's first lodge in 1734. This fraternal order represented the apex of enlightened religious tolerance and boasted a large number of Jewish members. Masonry provided Jews participation in a cultural organization that strengthened the bonds between Jews and non-Jews through close fellowship; it also further established Jewish credibility and reputations in communities throughout the Anglo-American world. It may well be that Oglethorpe was sympathetic to Jewish interests, precisely because he was a fellow Mason. Regardless of his reasons,

²⁹ *South Carolina Gazette*, August 4, 1733. John Pitts Corry, "Racial Elements in Colonial Georgia," *GHQ* 20 (1936), 38-39; Malcolm H. Stern, "New Light on the Jewish Settlement of Savannah," *AJHQ* 52 (1963), 169-99; David T. Morgan, "Judaism in Eighteenth Century Georgia," *GHQ* 58 (1974), 41-54; Snyder, "Place," 47-53; Goodman, *Overture*, 178, 180-83; *CAJ*, I, 349-58.

Oglethorpe deported no Jews; rather he bestowed fourteen land grants to Jews and approved a Jewish burial ground.³⁰

Savannah's Jewish community grew, and many years later dedicated a synagogue. The trustees, though, imposed draconian economic restrictions on the colony, which impeded growth. In 1739, imperial wars between Great Britain and Spain led to a Jewish exodus from Georgia. They feared the Spanish in Florida, who they believed would unleash the Inquisition in Savannah if given the opportunity. Such fears of persecutions underscore the unique Jewish position in Anglo-American life, despite their rising influence and acceptance in western culture. The specter of fear always hung over Jewish heads. Over the next sixty years or so, Jews returned to Savannah sporadically. Jewish migration to Georgia intensified in the 1760s, for example, but, similar to Newport, the American Revolution disbanded the community again. Jews did not establish permanent residence again in Savannah until 1790.³¹

In Georgia, Jews experienced freedom of conscience and worship, and fought and earned economic freedoms, but political rights remained limited. Georgia's Jews may well have voted but did not hold office because of the Christian oaths required of officeholders. Even if Jews agreed to the oath, however, the Anglican trustees appointed officeholders, none of whom supported a Jewish presence in Georgia. Colonial officials, though, went even further. In 1761, the colonial assembly forbade all non-Protestants from holding any office, and in 1777 Georgia's constitution required state representatives to "be of the Protestant [*sic*] religion." In 1789, Georgia's constitution removed the Protestant religious test, and the constitution of 1798

³⁰ By 1743, the trustees had granted four more land grants, see Snyder, "Place," 79, 88-90, 191; *DHJ*, 24-26; Samuel Oppenheim, "The Jews and Masonry in the United States before 1810," *PAJHS* 19 (1910), 1-94; Albert M. Friedenberg, "A List of Jews Who Were Grand Masters of Masons in Various States of this Country," *PAJHS* 19 (1910), 95-100; *CAJ*, I, 356-69.

³¹ The Sheftall Diary in Keith Read Manuscript Collection, University of Georgia, ed. by Malcolm H. Stern, "The Sheftall Diaries: Vital Records of Savannah Jewry (1733-1808)," *AJHQ* 54 (1965), 243-77; Roth, *England*, 211; *CAJ*, I, 356-69; Goodman, *Overture*, 178-79, 195.

widened religious freedom to include freethinkers and atheists. Until then, only Jews who abandoned their Judaism experienced full freedom. For instance, Joseph Solomon Ottolenghe, an Ashkenazi from Northern Italy, converted and enjoyed a prominent political career. In 1735, he moved to London, where he explored Christian ideas, and eventually accepted an Anglican baptism. In 1751, he arrived in Savannah to instruct slaves in silk manufacturing and to proselytize among them. Ottolenghe became a planter and slaveholder and rose to prominence in Georgia's silk culture. As a Christian, he earned the patronage of the trustees, who appointed him collector and assessor of taxes in Savannah, justice of the peace, and judge. In 1752, his election to the Assembly allowed him to spearhead the passage of a bill that established the Anglican Church in Georgia. In 1762, colonial officials forced Jews to purchase the land where they had built the cemetery, land that Oglethorpe granted to them gratis. Protestant dissenters experienced similar treatment, but when met with protests, colonial officials relented. They stood firm against Jews. Two of Dr. Samuel Nunez's sons served as customs officials, but they probably did so by taking Christian oaths. Some Jews converted to Christianity altogether, as did several members of the Lucena family. Jews who refused to abandon their faith remained aloof from public affairs in Georgia. Just one professing Jew received a political appointment. In 1768, Mordecai Sheftall served as inspector of tanned leather.³²

Pennsylvania, the focus of this study, produced the fifth Jewish community that developed in colonial British North America. As early as 1655, Sephardic Jews from New Amsterdam had traveled south into the lower Delaware River Valley. Eight years later, a Jewish entrepreneur from New York obtained a license for a trading post on what became Philadelphia. Before 1720, Jewish merchant-traders from New York, Jamaica, and Barbados conducted

³² Quote Chyet, "Rights," 31; *CAJ*, I, 469-74; *CAJ*, I, 469-74; Chyet, "Rights," 45; Goodman, *Overture*, 195. For more on Georgia, see *EAJ*, II, 277-373, and Pencak, *Jews*, 141-73.

business in Pennsylvania with Quaker merchants, Thomas Coates and Jonathan Dickinson. Jews may well have settled Pennsylvania before 1720, but much evidence contradicts that conclusion. In 1666, Connecticut Congregationalists settled in New Jersey and established authority through such laws as Christian oaths for naturalization, public office, and suffrage rights. When the colony was divided into East and West, Quakers gained control of the territory that became Pennsylvania. William Penn developed the colony as a reprieve for his fellow Quakers who experienced persecution in England. After 1698, only Protestant Trinitarians who met certain financial thresholds could naturalize, vote, and hold public office. When Sephardic émigré Isaac Miranda arrived in the 1710s, he was forced to convert to Christianity, which allowed him to buy land (including a farm in Lancaster), hold public offices, and participate fully in civil society. Like London, Anglo-Americans in British North America encouraged Jews in their midst to convert to Christianity. As late as 1764, a Christian assumed the guise of “Jonathan the Jew” when he related to his readers the positive effects of his “conversion.” After 1740, Jews migrated to Pennsylvania in greater numbers, drawn there by the promises of the Naturalization Act, an emergent commercial economy, and general acceptance among the local population.³³

After 1732, in the wake of Miranda’s death, Jewish migrants arrived from New York City by way of London, Amsterdam, and Germany. In about 1735, the Levy brothers, Nathan and Isaac, made Philadelphia home, followed thereafter by their brothers, Samson, Joseph, and Benjamin, and sister, Esther or Hettie. In 1740, the Franks brothers, David and Moses, arrived. Two years later, Mathias Bush migrated from Germany. At about the same time, Joseph Simon

³³ Benjamin Franklin suspected the Jewishness of Samuel Keimer, his predecessor at the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, but no extant evidence supports Franklin’s suspicions, see Rosenbach, *Jews*, 5; Morais, *Jews*, 10-11; *JOP*, 14-16, 384; Judah, “Jews’ Tribute, 153-56; Oppenheim, “Jews made Denizens,” 111; *CAJ*, I, 439-44; Chyet, “Rights,” 27; Schwartz, “William Penn and Toleration,” 284-312; Cadbury, “Persecution and Religious Liberty,” 359, 365-67; Charles J. Stillé, “Religious Tests in Provincial Pennsylvania,” *PMHB* 9 (1885), 377, 393; Mr. Sandeman, *Some Thoughts on Christianity in a Letter to a Friend; The Conversion of Jonathan the Jew As Related by Himself* (Boston, 1764), copy in AAS.

and his nephew Levy Andrew Levy settled in nearby Lancaster. In the 1740s and 1750s, a second wave of Jewish migrants arrived in Pennsylvania. Migrants arrived in small groups, the vast majority of them Yiddish-speaking émigrés from German and Polish lands, such as Emden, Hamburg, Berlin, Koenigsberg, Bonn, Frankfort, Mannheim, Langendorf, Fuerth, Oldenberg, Prussia, Upper Silesia, Hanover, Hesse, Bavaria, Bohemia, among many others. It did not take long for Philadelphia to surpass in size New York City. By 1755, Philadelphia was the largest city in British North America, and boasted a sizable Jewish community of several hundred individuals. Some migrants did not stay long in Philadelphia before migrating elsewhere. With German heritage, many Ashkenazim settled at New Hanover, a German town a few miles north of Philadelphia, while others, including the Etting family, settled on the western side of the Susquehanna River at York. As the numbers of émigrés increased, migrants settled northeastern Pennsylvania at Easton, a small town established by the Penn family at the confluence of the Tulpehocken and Schuylkill Rivers, such as Michael Hart and “Rabby Israel.” Sampson Lazarus settled in Lancaster, and Israel Jacobs opened a shop in Hickorytown. David Levi did so in New-Goshenhoppen, as did Myer Hart in Easton and Jacob Levi in Heidelberg. Reading, and eventually Heidelberg, became home to Barnard Jacob (sometimes Jacobs), who owned a shop there, as did Moses Heyman, a small shopkeeper who hired Myer Josephson and taught him the trade. That so many Jewish shopkeepers had settled in frontier towns shows a burgeoning commercialism in the region. The large German population facilitated amiable relations between Jewish and German migrants, because they shared many cultural assumptions and backgrounds and spoke similar languages.³⁴

³⁴ CAJ, I, 444-45; JOP, 259-60, 396; Chyet, “Rights,” 28; Stillé, “Religious Tests,” 387-95; David A. Brener, *The Jews of Lancaster, Pennsylvania: A Story With Two Beginnings* (Lancaster, 1979), 4; Pitcock, “Commerce,” 80.

In the 1750s, Solomon and Jacob Henry fled Germany for London, Amsterdam, New York, and Philadelphia, and encouraged their cousins, Barnard and Michael Gratz, to follow them abroad. The Gratz brothers fled Germany, traveled the world including stops in India, Berlin, Amsterdam, and London, and made Philadelphia home. The more adventurous among them pushed toward the western frontier at Fort Pitt. Levy Andrew Levy, for example, lived for months at a time at Fort Pitt, conducting business for his associates back east. In 1758, after Fort Pitt became Pittsburgh, migrants settled there permanently. Despite the aforementioned obstacles Jewish migrants faced in the New World, the experiences of these families, which make up the bulk of the chapters that follow, show the ways in which Jews became active participants in the unfolding of religious freedom in Pennsylvania.

The British colonies on mainland North America built Protestant moral establishments up and down the eastern seaboard, which institutionalized religious discrimination in the form of laws that reflected the Protestant majority's cultural mores and moral ethos. Sunday, Sabbath, or Lord's Day laws became the most pervasive ordinance of this kind. In 1610, Virginia adopted Sabbath laws, a trend replicated in nearly every colony thereafter. Such laws impacted Jewish life. That labor was forbidden on Sundays ensured Jews lost two days of work each week, because Jews observed the Sabbath on Saturday, thereby providing their Christian competitors with an economic advantage. A Jew in colonial Pennsylvania, for example, closed his business on both Saturday and Sunday, chiefly because, even if he defied the law and worked on Sunday, he could not lawfully force his hired servants to do so. In 1668, colonial officials in Massachusetts arrested a Jewish trader for carrying his goods to market on a local road to New Hampshire. Gentiles utilized religious laws to disable their Jewish economic competition, but

also to impose moral conformity within their communities. Punishments, moreover, ranged from imprisonment and fines to death and flogging. The mere threat of enforcement and cultural reprisal ensured compliance among non-Christians. Legislation and Protestant dominance served as a constant reminder that Anglo-American Jews remained a religious and ethnic “other” in society, despite having made some significant progress toward Jewish inclusion.³⁵

Blasphemy laws forced one to accept Christian doctrines, such as the Trinity and divine inspiration for the Old and New Testaments, as prerequisites for full participation in civic culture. Colonial officials found precedence for blasphemy statutes in the Blasphemy Acts of 1648 and 1650, buttressed by the legal theories of Sir William Blackstone. In some cases, blasphemy laws applied only to professing Christians. But in more than half of the British North American colonies, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Hampshire, Virginia, and Maryland, religious laws applied to everyone. Some historians have argued that state coercion sanctioned through religious laws did not in practice constrict the freedoms of non-Christians, chiefly because colonial officials rarely applied them. That colonial governments did in fact indict Jews, however, illustrates that punishment always remained a real possibility, which altered Jewish behavior to conform to predominant moral values.

Although Jewish migrants to British North America before the revolution remained excluded from political culture, they enjoyed economic successes, purchased lands and started businesses; they worshiped in private quarters unmolested and sometimes in public without grief; they sometimes naturalized as citizens, entered crafts and trade guilds, and experienced no mandatory ghettos or systemic violence for being Jewish; they experienced few unfair taxes and took advantage of a (more) fluid social order and almost unbounded physical mobility. Anglo-

³⁵ *CAJ*, I, 260, 325-31, 444-45, 496-99; *JOP*, 259-60; Stillé, “Religious Tests,” 387-95; Henriques, *English Law*, 2-3, 50-51, 153-54.

American Jews became important to the economic prosperity of the British Empire, thus British kings and queens bestowed them with denization—royal protection that allowed Jews to obtain significant wealth. Less than 200 Jewish aliens naturalized under the terms of the 1740 statute, but neither citizenship nor denization guaranteed them equality. In London, religious freedom was a chimera until the twentieth century, when British officials granted English-born Jews full citizenship. The repeal of the “Jew Bill” ensured Judaism a secondary role in Anglo-American life. The 1740 statute, however, spurred Jewish migrations, especially to Pennsylvania. Nowhere in North America did Jews enjoy full equality, save those who converted to Christianity. But opportunities for Jews as inclusive members of their adopted cultures on the mainland, though sometimes less tolerant than London and Amsterdam, were far better than the worsening conditions in the British Caribbean and mainland Europe. Jamaica and Barbados experienced fierce economic competition and anti-Jewish attitudes, which led Christians to restrict Jewish freedoms. Numerous Jewish islanders therefore relocated to New York City, Philadelphia, Newport, Charleston, and Savannah. Unlike Europe, these were no Jewish “island communities,” a euphemism for ghettos; rather Anglo-American Jews integrated into the cultural fabric of their adopted communities and flourished as merchant-traders and shopkeepers. But as the example of Pennsylvania shows, where we now turn our attention, this inclusion was contingent upon Jews’ agreement to remain aloof from the public square or abandon their Judaism. Pennsylvania’s Jews learned that they must reshape their neighbors’ attitudes toward Jews and Judaism before they could participate in the public sphere and achieve full emancipation.³⁶

³⁶ CAJ, I, 499; Henriques, *English Law*, 13, 167; Beneke, *Beyond Toleration*; Sehat, *Myth*; Snyder, “Place,” 83-87.

CHAPTER TWO LIBERTY OF THE MIND: THE ORIGINS & LIMITS OF WILLIAM PENN'S MORAL ESTABLISHMENT

The English historian Thomas Babington Macaulay once described William Penn as a “mythical” person. Penn’s contemporaries celebrated his sense of justice and fairness, which only contributed to Penn’s mythical posthumous persona. Modern historians, too, have celebrated Penn’s “Holy Experiment” as the birthplace of religious freedom and political egalitarianism. Some hagiographers have championed him as an American hero, and have even credited Quakers with the “invention” of America. Recent scholars have challenged such mythology, claiming it fostered half-truths and falsehoods in popular culture and in academe alike. Penn’s Quaker successors, these scholars contend, mythologized Penn’s legacy to further their own claims to positions of power. Such dominance ensured both a theocratic state controlled by Friends and almost continuous conflict among diverse groups, not harmony as often assumed.¹

¹ Quote Paul Douglas Newman, “Good will to all men...from the King on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill”: William Penn, the Roman Catholics, and Religious Toleration,” *PHJ* 61 (1994), 457. Voltaire appreciated Penn’s benevolence toward the Delaware Indians in a treaty that was not only hailed as enlightened progress but also gave rise to the mythical moniker “Peaceable Kingdom.” David Hume referred to Penn as the American Confucius, and Montesquieu described him as Lycurgus. Later, Thomas Jefferson concurred with his enlightened peers, hailing Penn the great American lawgiver. Other Whig revolutionaries celebrated Pennsylvania as a land of freedom worthy of emulation, see J. William Frost, “Wear the Sword as Long as Thou Canst: William Penn in Myth and History,” *Explorations in Early American Culture* 4 (2000), 41; Jack D. Marietta and G.S. Rowe, *Troubled Experiment: Crime and Justice in Pennsylvania, 1682-1800* (Philadelphia, 2006), 3; John Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers: The Making of a Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 2010), 2. For an excellent treatment of conflicts with natives, see Kevin Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost: The Paxton Boys and the Destruction of William Penn’s Holy Experiment* (Oxford, 2011). In the hands of Romantics, such as Benjamin West and Edward Hicks, early Pennsylvania history was glorified in literature and art as a haven for peaceful coexistence between Euro-American migrants and natives. The legend derives from Penn’s treaty with the Delaware in 1682 but is belied by the “Walking Purchase” in 1737 that cheated the Lenape, and the Paxton Boys’ Conestoga massacre in 1763, see William A. Pencak and Daniel K. Richter, eds, *Friends and Enemies in Penn’s Woods: Indians, Colonists, and the Racial Construction of Pennsylvania* (University Park, 2004); Mary Maples Dunn, “William Penn, Classical Republican,” *PMHB* 81 (1957), 138-56; Frost, *Perfect*; Schwartz, *Multitude*; Allan Tully, *William Penn’s Legacy: Politics and Social Structure in Provincial Pennsylvania, 1726-1755* (Baltimore, 1977); idem, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, 1994); Mary Maples Dunn, *William Penn: Politics and Conscience* (Princeton, 1967), vii, 133-36; Schwartz, “William Penn and

An examination of the origins, limitations, and legacies of William Penn's statecraft and visions for religious freedom in Pennsylvania illuminates the boundaries of religious freedom for non-Protestants. A brief overview of early Quaker history, a discussion of the rise of William Penn to a position of authority in Quakerism and his commitment to "Liberty of the Mind," an analysis of the origins and development of a Quaker moral establishment and, finally, an exploration of Penn's thoughts on Catholicism and Judaism show that Quaker leaders used the instruments of state power to coerce others to conform to their moral values. That Quakers operated from a position of dominance meant that the end result for the first waves of Jewish migrants, like so many others, was limited inclusion in the body politic. But the participation of minority groups in civic culture expanded over time. Population increases, cultural conflicts with neighbors, and tensions within Quakerism steadily eroded Quakers' authority. Quakers passed religious statutes that limited non-Christians' and Catholics' liberties, which also

Toleration;" Mary M. Dunn and Richard S. Dunn, eds., *The World of William Penn* (Philadelphia, 1986); David Yount, *How Quakers Invented America* (Lanham, MD, 2007). Schwartz argues that an unstable consensus, not conflict, reigned supreme in early Pennsylvania, and Frost concurs with her assessment, see Schwartz, *Multitude*, 1-11, and Frost, *Perfect*. Numerous scholars have disagreed, see Smolenski, *Friends*, 2; Jane E. Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson* (New York, 2012), 2-3. Calvert rejects the notion that all Quakers remained indifferent to public life, following their intense focus on political matters early in the movement. For a discussion of Pennsylvania's contentious political culture, see Gary B. Nash, *Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton, 1968), 48-88, Frederick B. Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Pennsylvania, 1682-1763* (Chapel Hill, 1948), and James H. Hutson, *Pennsylvania Politics, 1740-1770: The Movement for Royal Government and Its Consequences* (Princeton, 1972). Jack D. Marietta argues that Quaker withdrawal from public life was voluntary and commenced after 1748, see *The Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748-1783* (Philadelphia, 1984). Other scholars have suggested that Quakers were "quietists," or "withdrawers" from civil society to maintain their own values, see Garry Wills, *A Necessary Evil: A History of the American Distrust of Government* (New York, 1999). Bauman examines Quaker political behavior, emphasizing the differences between factions among Friends, but also underscoring a central unity predicated upon the creation of government and civil society rooted in Quaker principles, see Richard Bauman, *For the Reputation of Truth: Politics, Religion, and Conflict Among the Pennsylvania Quakers, 1750-1800* (Baltimore, 1971). Theocracy, as it is used here, derives from the definitions of Perry Miller, Edmund Morgan, and Jane Calvert. A theocratic state takes its form from a specific religious theology, in this case Quakerism. Civil leaders, moreover, simultaneously served as leaders of a specific church. In Pennsylvania, the established Church of England did not control the government; instead, Quakers dominated the colonial assembly and magistracy, because Friends' numerical majority ensured Quaker political superiority, at least until about 1748, according to Marietta, see Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 100-76; Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, 1956), 148-52; Edmund Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma* (Boston, 1958), 95-6.

contributed to the activism of minority groups. But conflicts and negotiations among members of a pluralistic society offered cultural and social spaces for religious minority groups to flourish.²

In England, Quakers earned a reputation as political dissidents and religious dissenters. In the middle of the seventeenth century, George Fox, a visionary and religious iconoclast who once claimed to have been not only the Son of God but to have also raised the dead, had a spiritual awakening in the form of visions that led him to form the sect known as the Friends of God. Critics referred to them as Quakers, a pejorative slight drawn from their religious enthusiasm, which manifested in the form of uncontrollable shaking. Friends willingly adopted it as a badge of piety, not scorn. Friends challenged the vices and vanities of this world and rejected violence of all kinds. They challenged Calvinist notions of predestination and attacked the hierarchical forms of established ecclesiastical authority. They embraced gender equality, at least in the spiritual and theological senses. Friends, of course, never agreed unanimously on the prudence of such doctrines, despite the insistence of popular mythology to the contrary and the efforts of leaders within the sect to enforce conformity to a specific set of religious beliefs.³

Quakers espoused unorthodox ideas freely and often. They attacked the crown, used odd and unconventional speech ways, such as thou and thee, rejected class distinctions, and refused

² Scholars have studied the impact of migrations on groups of individuals, particularly the assessment of cultural traditions brought by charter groups and the investigation of how those traditions impacted later immigrants, see Louis Hartz, *The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada, and Australia* (New York, 1964), 6-7, 10; Bernard Bailyn, *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction* (New York, 1988), 112-14; Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill, 1988), 165-69; T.H. Breen, "Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures," in *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era*, eds. Jack P. Green and J.R. Pole (Baltimore, 1984), 204-5.

³ Revolutionary England inspired an Anglo-American dissenting tradition and the rise of radical sectarianism, such as Baptists, the Ranter movement, and Millinarians. Radicals believed that a political revolution would usher in its concomitant religious counterpart, or the establishment of Christ's Earthly reign, the millennium. Such notions led to the emergence of numerous radical sects, see Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford, 1978); A. L. Morton, *The World of the Ranters: Religious Radicalism in the English Revolution* (London, 1970); Smolenski, *Friends*, 15-16, 22, 33; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 13.

oaths of all kinds. Friends withheld deference from established officials and elites, which upset the Anglican majority. Quakers, moreover, openly questioned the institutions and traditions of established authority, the glue that held together English civil society. Not only did Quakers join with other dissenters in a campaign against tithes, but they also experienced firsthand the limited religious freedom of post-Restoration England. Friends borrowed ideas selectively from other religious groups and yet claimed their unique access to Truth. Their success was bountiful and immediate, for Friends boasted between 40,000 and 60,000 followers by the Restoration in 1660. Less than one hundred itinerant preachers created a network of local meetings in the countryside, which ensured piety and discipline among members of the movement. In response to Quakers' high-handed proselytizing and questioning of established ideas, Anglicans retaliated, chiefly because most outsiders viewed the movement as a challenge to the prevailing social order and moral ethos in England. In an age of dramatic upheaval, Quakers represented a disturbing threat to traditional modes of authority and ways of life. Friends, the largest dissenting sect that questioned Anglican conventions, thus bore the brunt of the brutal condemnation doled out by their Anglican neighbors.⁴

That the Society of Friends critiqued the injustices of English society at the same time that they emphasized the spiritual and very much individual nature of Christianity ensured continual problems among Quakers, Anglicans, and Presbyterians. Whereas Anglicans focused on traditional earthly and corporeal doctrines, such as preaching, ecclesiastical authority, sacraments, and the important relationship between church and state, Friends focused on the spiritual and abstract dimensions of their personal faith, an introspective religion rooted in individualism. Because Quakers believed that God had bestowed Adam with a smattering of

⁴ Smolenski, *Friends*, 23-30, 35-37; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 12, 27, 34-37; Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (New York, 1985), 27.

Christ's essence in the Garden of Eden, they believed individual descendants of Adam could look within themselves for communion with God. Friends rejected the physical aspects of religion and fought to lessen the control of religious orthodoxy and orthopraxy espoused by all institutions and individuals, secular and religious. By focusing on the *Inner Light* of individuals, or the idea that Christ dwelt within every descendant of Adam, Friends emphasized their direct conduit to God's revelation within their souls, which gave individuals the ability to interpret the will of God, or Truth, without any organized clergy acting as intermediaries between believers and Providence.⁵

With no clergy, Friends depended on the revelations from God that each member received to guide their collective worship, not a strict liturgical regimen. The nature of meetings among Friends, in fact, became a primary pillar of Quaker identity, as individual Friends shared their personal revelations, while others incorporated elements of other faiths into a coherent theology. A major reason for the extraordinary growth of Quaker conversions was the belief that those who cultivated the essence of Christ within their souls experienced a regenerative rebirth, both in body and mind manifested in a state of spiritual and carnal perfection. Such universalism, redemptive inclusion, and spiritual egalitarianism must have been appealing to people whose immediate past and present was dominated by the disillusionment fomented by continual political turmoil and religious intolerance rooted in the exclusionary impulses that dominated England's Interregnum. Friends espoused a powerful sense of optimism, for they believed that Fox's visions portended the dawning of a new age, the thousand-year reign of Christ and his chosen people. Friends' doctrine of the millennium, however, replaced the ancient Israelites as God's chosen people with Quakers. Such latent anti-Jewish attitudes did not

⁵ Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 27, 33-35; Reay, *Revolution*, 49-78; Frost, *Perfect*, 13-29; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 13; William Penn, "The Author's Life," in *A Collection of the Works of William Penn* 2 vols. (London, 1726), I, 1-4.

dissipate. Early Quakers' identity, and the cultural practices that produced and sustained it, played a decisive role in the formative years of Pennsylvania's development, and thus the origins and evolution of religious freedom.

Quakers needed intellectuals, so called "public Friends," to espouse their theology and collective definition of religious freedom. For a sect that championed direct individual revelation as a core principle, deciding on who was authorized to speak publicly on matters of faith and practice became an acute problem. By the late 1660s, though, leaders such as George Keith, Robert Barclay, and William Penn emerged and slowly consolidated power in the hands of cultural elites, such as ministers and elders, whose job it was to manage the spiritual dimensions of Meetings among Friends. They argued, revealingly, that not every individual correctly interpreted their inner revelations; only those with authentic divine knowledge did so. Without having to say so directly, Penn and other leaders asserted their own spiritual authority. They claimed that spiritual equality within the Society did not exist, because only those with proper educations could properly interpret the Word of God. As a result, only official ministers could formulate and espouse doctrine for the group as a whole. The Meeting therefore served the same purpose as scriptural exegesis did for other sects—it determined a standard by which doctrine was judged. That elites dictated theology meant they also controlled the legacies and histories of early Quakerism. Most important, if Friends could not bestow spiritual equality upon each other whilst still residing in London, how could they possibly do so for their non-Quaker neighbors, especially Jews, in Pennsylvania?⁶

⁶ Calvert wrote, "In the early years, the preponderance of power and the use of coercion resided with the minority of de facto leaders of the meeting," see *Constitutionalism*, 12-30, 31-33, 40-43, quote 42; Smolenski, *Friends*, 20-23, 38-44.

Friends found their most ambitious and charismatic spokesman in William Penn. The son of Admiral Sir William Penn, whose naval service had earned him royal patronage that culminated in an Irish estate, young William disappointed his father by converting from Anglicanism to Quakerism at the age of 22. Penn the elder hoped that his son's charismatic intelligence—Penn had gained a classical education at Essex—would gain the attention and patronage of Charles II, much like he did. At the age of 11 Penn heard an itinerant Quaker minister's sermon that kindled his own religious passions. Five years later, Penn matriculated at the University of Oxford, but was expelled two years later for his refusal to conform to Anglican doctrine. Penn's father thus sent him abroad to the European continent. Although Penn studied in France, he completed his formal education reading law back in London. Penn thereafter arrived in Ireland again, where he crossed paths with the Quaker minister who had inspired him years before. Penn embraced the religion and the authority thrust upon him by his Quaker brethren, and developed into an erudite leader who not only championed Quakers' notions of liberty of conscience but also gained the attentions of his contemporaries, the leading intellectuals of an emergent revolution in religious thinking and commitment to rationality indicative of the early Enlightenment.⁷

Penn, despite his own financial troubles, was well connected and had little trouble financing his new colony through land sales and securing investments in a joint-stock company to further finance the enterprise. Quakers of affluence invested in his scheme of colonization. Penn rewarded his friends-turned-investors with positions of authority and influence in Pennsylvania, which ensured from the outset that a small circle of Quaker merchants and officials dominated the development of both Pennsylvania's social order and political

⁷ For overview of Penn's early life, see William I. Hull, *William Penn: A Topical Biography* (New York, 1939).

organization. Friends argued that legislation must protect individuals' right to private "Liberty of the Mind," or Penn's formulation of intellectual liberty, and religious nonconformity in London's public life. Penn defined religious freedom in ways that allowed Quakers to focus their attention on personal spiritualism, both at home and in the public square, without fear of reprisal by their neighbors. Quakers believed that every individual in civil society, regardless of their faith, deserved to think about religious matters without fear of state interference or their neighbors' bigotry.⁸

Penn, whose education and social position gained him clout in the Quaker community and among public officials in London, turned to print culture as a means to espouse Quaker ideas and to establish his reputation among his peers. Early Quakers such as George Fox had shown Penn the importance of the printed word, for it had facilitated the construction of Quaker identity (and thus cohesion) beyond the meetings among Friends through the circulation of oral traditions copied almost verbatim into printed materials. Print culture thus created a corpus of Quaker thought and mechanism for mass dissemination, the foundation of which allowed Quakers to fashion an "imagined community" of common religious language, doctrine, and symbols. Penn also utilized print culture as a platform to promote Pennsylvania, not only as a haven for religious malcontents but also as a transatlantic commercial center, particularly Philadelphia—a major reason why colonial Pennsylvania became both an agricultural and mercantile hub. Penn thus entered an ongoing debate between religious and political leaders in the Atlantic world that

⁸ Nash, *Quakers*, 11-28, 50-56; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 31-43; Penn, "The Great Case for Liberty of Conscience," (London, 1670), *Select Works of William Penn* 8 vols. (London, 1825), I, 447; Melvin B. Endy, Jr., *William Penn and Early Quakerism* (Princeton, 1973), 315-16; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 13-15; Smolenski, *Friends*, 8-9.

revolved around individuals' right to freethinking in private quarters and their free expressions of faith in public life.⁹

Before Penn embarked for Pennsylvania, he wrote numerous pamphlets across a broad range of topics. His central argument remained consistent, that the government or its officials must not use the instruments of state power to coerce one's religious thoughts. The regulation of conscience by the government was a usurpation of God's authority, Penn believed, which impeded one's spiritual fulfillment. Penn pointed out to his readers, that to persecute individuals for critically thinking about religion was not only unreasonable but went against the principles of Protestantism. He therefore linked freethinking to a common Protestant history and burgeoning reliance upon rational inquiry, reflective of Enlightenment discourses widely disseminated in the late seventeenth century. By concentrating, not on differences but on Protestants' common beliefs, such as the supremacy of Scripture and proper moral behavior in public life, Penn sought solidarity among Protestants. This line of thinking met resistance, chiefly because neither Anglicans nor Presbyterians viewed Quakers as Christians. When the Anglican-Presbyterian majority achieved unity in the wake of the Restoration of Charles II, Quakers, along with many other sects, remained excluded from recognition and influence. As a result, most Friends dissented through protests, in action and in print, which hastened their exile to North America, a solution satisfactory to Quakers and Anglicans alike.¹⁰

⁹ Kate Peters, *Print Culture and the Early Quakers* (New York, 2004), 26-31; Smolenski, *Friends*, 30-32. For the classic study on the importance of print culture in the formation of nationalism, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, 1983), 37-46. Calvert demonstrates the importance of "Speech-Acts," or how both words and actions contributed to Quaker theology, see Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 12, 29, 34-36; Hope Frances Kane, "Notes on Early Pennsylvania Promotion Literature," *PMHB* 63 (1939), 144-68; Jordan, *Toleration*; William Wistar Comfort, "William Penn's Religious Background," *PMHB* 68 (1944), 341-58.

¹⁰ Penn, "Liberty of Conscience," "An Address to Protestants," *Works*, I, 448-451, II, 135, 142, III, 126, 148-9; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 14-15; Hugh Barbour, "William Penn: Model of Protestant Liberalism," *Church History* 48 (1979), 156-73. For more on Penn's intellectual vision, see Edward Beatty, *William Penn as Social Philosopher* (New York, 1939) and Hull, *William Penn*. For dissemination of enlightened texts in the Atlantic World, see

Penn's personal experiences inspired his greatest intellectual achievements. His writings earned him a stint in prison in the late 1660s and subsequent exile to Ireland, where his prolific output continued unabated. In 1670, officials arrested Penn again for leading a Quaker meeting on the streets of London. Such treatment led Penn to reconsider the value of non-coerced religious thinking and public pronouncements of Protestantism. A nonconformist meeting in public was not a disturbance of the peace, Penn argued to a court, because the act was one of conscience, not law. The jury agreed, and he was released. Thereafter, Penn emphasized that "morall uniformity" was unnecessary to maintain harmony among Protestants, and concluded, "Liberty of the Mind" would "improve or advantage This Country." After about 1670, Penn's thinking matured. He borrowed widely from theology, constitutional theory, and history. Penn's pamphlets in this period, which included *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience* (1670), *England's Present Interest* (1675), *An Address to Protestants of All Perswasions* (1679), and *A Perswasive to Moderation* (1686), moved beyond arguments that benefitted Quakers alone. He contended that *all* Protestant Christian religious beliefs ought to be tolerated, at least in an abstract sense. Penn, however, in good conscience could go only so far. Protestant dissenters deserved intellectual protection, Penn reasoned, but not Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and certainly not atheists, agnostics, or other freethinkers.¹¹

Penn refused to grant Catholics the honor of being fellow believers in Christ, ironic because Anglicans and Presbyterians did the same to Quakers. By 1678, however, Penn stood before Parliament and defended Catholics' right to worship privately however they wished. Catholics who renounced the political authority of the Church of Rome, Penn argued, should

Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America* (Chicago, 2007).

¹¹ Quotes Schwartz, *Multitude*, 14; Dunn, *Penn*, 4-5; Penn, "The Author's Life," "Liberty of Conscience," *Works*, I, 2, 447; Barbour, "Penn," 163-67; Beatty, *Penn*, 122-62.

enjoy “Liberty of the Mind.” Penn, unsurprisingly, feared state coercion in matters of individuals’ personal salvation. Penn asserted, the “Christian Religion intreats all, but compels none,” and concluded, “Force may make an Hypocrite; *t is Faith grounded upon Knowledge, and Consent that makes a Christian.*” Pulling from the epistemology of contemporary theorists, especially John Locke, Penn asserted that God had bestowed individuals with natural abilities, not only to gain information through sensory inputs but also to process that data with reason and logic. Such exercises in scientific inquiry and methods, sensory perceptions, and use of one’s ability to reason, Penn believed, ensured a variety of legitimate paths to God and salvation. Therein lies the reason why individuals must assuage their personal consciences and make their own way to Providence. Penn insisted that if Catholics remained loyal to the state, they too deserved such liberty of conscience, for “I am far from thinking it fit, that *Papists* should be whipt for their *Consciences.*” Penn thus made a clear distinction between political dissidents and religious nonconformists, but he also insisted that one’s ability to formulate original and uncensored ideas in matters of religion was the most important natural right reserved to individuals, provided by Nature’s God and protected in law. In a more pragmatic sense, Penn argued that religious bigotry was counterproductive to an empire whose prosperity relied upon the productivity of its disparate peoples—a line of argument repeated again and again by imperial and colonial officials in the eighteenth century.¹²

England’s Quaker community experienced systematic persecutions, official and unofficial, that often mirrored those experienced by European Jews. Such oppression had

¹² Penn, “Liberty of Conscience,” *Works*, I, 443-67, quote on 447; Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community* (University Park, 2001), 179-80; second quote Schwartz, *Multitude*, 19, 21; Penn, “Two Speeches to a Committee of Parliament,” in Richard Dunn and Mary Dunn, eds., *Papers of William Penn* (Philadelphia, 1981), I, 535; idem, “Liberty of Conscience,” “An Address to Protestants,” “England’s Present Interest,” *Selected Works*, II, 133, 284, 291, 295, 303-07III, 132.

hardened by the time Penn converted to Quakerism, which led some within the fold to halt their evangelicalism. Others, meanwhile, petitioned Parliament for reprieve. In 1671, at the height of Quaker repression, Penn traveled beyond the English Channel on a missionary journey to Holland and the Rhineland. While abroad he advocated for intellectual freedom, but the primary purpose of the trip was the recruitment of potential colonists to a new Quaker-led colony across the Atlantic Ocean, the “Holy Experiment.” The trip introduced Penn to Benjamin Furly, a man of Anglo-Dutch extraction, who spearheaded plans that eventually relocated German, Dutch, French, and other European migrants to Pennsylvania, thereby ensuring a diverse population from the outset.¹³

Religious persecution defined the Quaker experience on the British Isles, but Restoration England offered reprieve to Penn and his coreligionists in Pennsylvania. In 1681, King Charles II approved a charter for the establishment of Pennsylvania, which Penn not only envisioned as the embodiment of Quaker moral values but also as the seat of Christ’s millennial reign. The Delaware River Valley had long been a region of vast diversity, which complicated Penn’s visions for the “Holy Experiment.” Across the Atlantic, Quakers evolved from persecuted minority in England—or migrants with an identifiable cultural identity apart from the majority—to oppressive colonial majority—or settlers who sought to establish a colony that reflected their cultural mores and moral ethos. Penn’s ideological visions for Pennsylvania championed intellectual freedom for individuals in private quarters, but not an unfettered religious freedom for all faiths in public life. By 1730, the Quaker majority had created an informal moral

¹³ Frost, *Perfect*, 10-28; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 19-21; Julius F. Sachse, “Benjamin Furly,” *PMHB* 19 (1895), 277-306. For Quaker origins and persecutions, see Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (New York, 1972), 186-207. For ethnic diversity, see Alan Tully, “Ethnicity, Religion and Politics in Early America,” *PMHB* 107 (1983), 491-536, and for Scots-Irish, see Judith Ridner, *A Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior* (Philadelphia, 2010).

establishment and a formal theocratic political organization, both of which promised religious freedom and civil equality for all Protestants, but not Catholics, non-Christians, atheists, or other freethinkers. The failures of Quakers to institutionalize religious freedom and political equality for all colonists left the door open for future leaders to further constrict the freedoms of others. Quakers used their positions of cultural influence and political power in the maintenance of religious conformity through state coercion. For Pennsylvania's Jews and Catholics, Protestant moral norms defined and limited their natural and civil rights.¹⁴

Penn, Algernon Sidney, Benjamin Furly, among others, collaborated in the development of a government for Pennsylvania, a constitutional scheme developed in London before the colony officially opened for settlement. But the wealthy and influential investors demanded an authoritarian political organization led by them, an oligarchy of affluent Friends. Penn, like most elites of his day, feared the licentiousness of the mob, but he was also an economic pragmatist, and was thus persuaded to acquiesce to the wishes of his financial backers. Penn also shared his patrons' assumption that elites, especially Quaker elites, must maintain leadership positions in the colony. As a result, Pennsylvania was born as a colony ruled by a landed aristocracy and merchants of Quaker extraction—rarely did men of humble means or other faiths gain election to the assembly before the 1750s—all of whom demanded wide-ranging provincial powers, befitting their social positions, moral authority, and investments in a provincial experiment. Although Penn embraced some Whiggish sentiments, such as the belief that rulers' authority derived from citizens, an important counterpoint to remember is that before the revolutionary

¹⁴ Carl Bridenbaugh, "The Old and New Societies of the Delaware Valley in the Seventeenth Century," *PMHB* 100 (1976), 145-63; Sally Schwartz, "Society and Culture in the Seventeenth-Century Delaware Valley," *Delaware History* 20 (1982), 98-122; Smolenski, *Friends*, 57; Nash, *Quakers*, 3-126; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*; Sehat, *Myth*. Sehat's formulation of informal, and sometimes formal, moral establishments ignores the colonial period. This chapter examines the origins and formative development of one such Protestant moral establishment in Pennsylvania.

period Pennsylvania's citizens were, almost exclusively, members of the colonial gentry or merchant class. By mid-eighteenth century, Friends composed from half to two-thirds of the membership rolls in the colonial assembly.¹⁵

Penn sought to institutionalize the cultural acceptance of all Protestant religious thinking, the legal foundations for which derived from the *Frame of Government, Laws Agreed Upon in England*, and the Great Law. Among other things, these laws forbade the government from defining religious faith in the colony, which ensured that individuals could believe and worship freely in the privacy of their homes. If any doubt remained, Penn made the motivations explicit when he wrote that all persons shall “freely and fully Enjoy his or her Christian Liberty without any Interruption [sic].” Because states ensured the greatest security for individuals by allowing the free exchange of intellectual discourses in a competitive marketplace of ideas, Penn argued, all Protestant Christians deserved to participate. Truth, Penn asserted, must derive from dissent in the form of persuasion, not coercion. In England, Quakers, he insisted, would have won that competition if they had been given equal opportunity. Non-Christians, infidels, and Catholics, conversely, remained excluded in such public debates, in Pennsylvania as in England. Penn and his successors assumed that religious dissent and persuasion extended only to Protestant Christians—he alluded to “Christian Liberty,” after all—which allowed future generations of Pennsylvanians to craft and interpret laws in such ways that precluded non-Christians from lawful protections in public life. Pennsylvanians enjoyed freethinking in private quarters, chiefly due to the extraordinary diversity of the colony, but only Protestants enjoyed state-sanctioned expressions of faith in public.¹⁶

¹⁵ Smolenski, *Friends*, 23-24, 49-51, 62-5; Nash, *Quakers*, 28-47, 54-57; Frost, *Perfect*, 32; Marietta, *Reformation*, 150-68.

¹⁶ For laws, see William Penn to Jasper Batt, February 5, 1683, in Dunn and Dunn, *Papers of Penn*, II, 135-238, 348, and Marietta, *Troubled*, 10, 16, 23-24, 55; Gail McKnight Beckman, ed., *Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania*,

In the *Frame of Government* and *Address to Protestants of All Perswasions*, Penn delineated a formulation of public and private spheres of religious life buttressed by moral considerations. He argued for a positive role for the government in the regulation of public mores because he believed that, like most of his contemporaries, Protestant Christian morality was the foundation of civil society. Penn also underscored the differences between the abstractness of intellectual freedom on the one hand and the practice of proper moral behavior in civic culture on the other. Regardless of their moral convictions at home, once migrants entered the public square, Penn reasoned that a Protestant Christian moral code must regulate public behavior, which maintained the social order along proper moral lines. The government must regulate crimes of action, not thought, because the regulation of opinion was not only impractical, Penn believed, but impossible. If the end of government was to ensure civil harmony, eradicate sin, and produce virtuous members of civic culture—and Quakers believed in such assumptions—it was beyond subversive to that end for officials to coerce citizens' religious beliefs with force through the powers of the state. Persuasion, the tool of ecclesiastical authority and a burgeoning print-capitalism, was the best method to mold opinions. Anglicans' commitment to religious uniformity disturbed Penn, chiefly because conscientious dissenters did not upset the social order. But those who sinned publicly did.¹⁷

Penn was no anarchist, for he saw instruments of state power as tools to refashion citizens, and thus to transform the nature of civil society for the better. Government, Penn believed, fostered virtuous citizens and other members of society, but only if its laws remained rooted in a Protestant interpretation of biblical morality. Thus, he could claim, “let the Scripture

1682-1801 (New York, 1976), I, 124, 128; Marvin W. Schlegel, “The Text of the Great Law of 1682,” *PHJ* 11 (1944), 276-83; quote Beatty, *Penn*, 126, 157; Penn, “A Perswasive to Moderation,” (1686), *Works*, II, 727-49; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 16-17; Dunn, *Penn*, 67-9; Frost, *Perfect*, 1-28.

¹⁷ Penn, “A Perswasive to Moderation,” (1686), *Works*, II, 729; Smolenski, *Friends*, 46-53; Frost, *Perfect*, 1-43.

be our *Common Creed*, and *Pious Living the Test of Christianity*.” In Quakers’ hands, the government became a tool designed to shape peoples’ civil conscience, much as the Quaker Meeting had shaped Friends’ spiritual conscience, a relationship that his Quaker successors took literally. By using the government to craft a common Quaker language of public morality in civic culture, though, Penn and his successors could never quite reconcile Quakers’ moral ethos with a meaningful commitment to religious freedom for all colonists. Friends’ formulation of religious freedom rejected “Irreligion” and “Atheism” in public life, as well as any moral values that conflicted with their own. Sabbath observation, a decidedly public act coerced by the state, was legitimate in Penn’s vision of proper public behavior and mandatory of everyone in the colony, regardless of citizenship status. Penn concluded that “Christian and Civil Liberty” remained one and the same. Pennsylvania was to be a Protestant Christian colony with Protestant Christian laws, a recipe for a gradual expansion of Quaker-sponsored moral coercion, cemented by their majoritarian status and nearly unbounded access to state power. In Pennsylvania, such an outcome laid the foundations for a Quaker moral establishment, which regulated public values and cultural practices. Penn rejected the Anglican majority’s insistence that religious uniformity was necessary for good government, but morality remained the foundation of civil society. Those who wished to participate in the body politic must conform to Quakers’ moral vision. Penn focused on the immediacy of persecuted Quakers, though, which meant he failed to deeply consider the long-term ramifications of his formulation of “Liberty of the Mind,” which ignored the fundamental rights of all colonists and failed to address the sinfulness of persecution or oppression of minority groups. He did not advocate the separation of church and state, or for an absolute religious freedom in civic culture for non-Christians,

freethinkers, and atheists. Such limitations meant only modest assurances for members of these groups to freely worship freely.¹⁸

Penn's views of England's Anglican Church suggest that he viewed as legitimate the moral authority of his Quaker brethren in Pennsylvania. After 1688, Penn and other Quakers in London sought to modify the tithe law to grant exemptions to non-Anglicans. Penn, significantly, did not wish to disestablish the Anglican Church in England, assuming, of course, that it did not use its authority to coerce other Protestants. Quakers believed that one should not pay taxes involuntarily to support a faith they themselves did not worship. But Friends believed that religious institutions served useful purposes in civil society. Proper moral behavior in civil society held together the social order, Quakers agreed, which was far more important than an absolute religious freedom. In Pennsylvania, then, Penn believed that a moral establishment and "Liberty of the Mind" could stand together, chiefly because the former was a public responsibility and the latter was of private concern. "To be *Drunk*, to *Whore*, to be *Voluptuous*, to *Game*, *Swear*, *Curse*, *Blaspheme*, and *Profane*," Penn asserted, "are Sins against Nature; and against *Government*, as well as against the *Written Laws* of God." Notice that Penn equated natural law, civil government, and morality as the bedrock of social order in civil society. Behavior that disrupted that order required both church and state—together or independently—to eradicate sin from civil society and produce virtuous citizens. Sinful behavior, Friends argued, led to vice, licentiousness, and idleness among the populace, all of which weakened the civic virtue of Pennsylvania's citizens. Penn's *Pennsylvania Charter of Privileges* declared,

I do hereby grant and declare, That no Person or Persons, inhabiting in the Province or Territories, who shall confess and acknowledge One almighty God, the Creator, Upholder and Ruler of the World; and profess him or themselves

¹⁸ Quote Penn, "An Address to Protestants," (1679) *Works*, I, 717-818; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 15-16; Smolenski, *Friends*, 52-3; Sachse, "Furly," 302; second quotes in Beckman, *Statutes*, I, 113, 117, 128; Sehat, *Myth*, 16-35, 54, 62, 171-76; Marietta, *Reformation*, 203-79.

obliged to live quietly under the Civil Government, shall be in any Case molested or prejudiced, in his or their Person or Estate, because of his or their conscientious Persuasion or Practice, nor be compelled to frequent or maintain any religious Worship, Place or Ministry, contrary to his or their Mind, or to do or suffer any other Act or Thing, contrary to their religious Persuasion.

One must “profess to believe in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the World,” Penn argued elsewhere, “to serve this Government in any Capacity, both legislatively and executively.” Penn’s successors agreed, and institutionalized Christian tests and Protestant morality in the form of laws.¹⁹

Quaker ministers served as assemblymen and justices of the peace. By the 1690s, Anglicans arrived in greater numbers and challenged Quaker hegemony. That ministers did not receive a salary, Friends argued, meant that there was no conflict of interest for clergymen to simultaneously conduct businesses in the community and hold public offices. Penn himself saw no contradiction, for instance, between his duties as proprietor of the colony and minister in the Society of Friends. Penn was not alone, for many other Quaker ministers served the state in various capacities and rewarded their professional associates with patronage and favors. Quakers enjoyed both a numerical majority and secular power, thus they passed laws that reflected their own moral assumptions, such as laws that regulated dress codes for all colonists. Another such law demanded a set of clothes for summer and another for winter. Other laws demanded that constituents conform to Quakers’ moral values, such as the requirement that all individuals must attend Quaker meetings (rarely enforced), or another that established a system of independent meetings among Friends, both ministers and laity.²⁰

¹⁹ Penn, “Liberty of Conscience,” *Works*, I, 447; quotes Penn, “Address to Protestants,” *Select Works*, III, 27-8; Frost, *Perfect*, 11-16; quotes Pennsylvania Charter of Privileges, 1701, Sarna and Dalin, *Religion and State*, 52-53; Chyet, “Rights,” 27-29, 46.

²⁰ Thorpe, *Constitutions*, V, 2576-78; “Minutes of the Provincial Council,” *PMHB* 11 (1887), 156-59.

Such moral reasoning, institutionalized in the Great Law of 1682, laid the foundations for a theocratic society in Pennsylvania, one rooted in the moral values of Protestant Christianity in general and Quakerism specifically and one that excluded religious “undesirables.” Central to Quaker hegemony, though, was the control of political, cultural, and legal institutions, not religious ones. This allowed other religious groups just enough space to coexist. The Society of Friends remained officially disestablished, and other denominations flourished, but Quaker ministers controlled the assembly and magistracy. A theocracy thus provided the institutional organization, which allowed future civic leaders to encroach upon the very freedoms of others in society that Penn had fought so hard to attain for Quakers. Quaker elites thus relied upon complex cultural practices, such as the formulation of mythology in the popular imagination, to normalize their authority. Anglo-Americans understood that for civil society to function properly, social superiors must enact codes for proper civility that regulated the public behavior of their social inferiors. By 1700, the colonial assembly had passed most of the provisions in the Great Law. After Queen Anne vetoed them in 1705, the assembly made some minor changes and passed them again. A much wider legal standing for Protestant morality thus gave the Quaker majority the means with which to limit the freedoms experienced by all non-Christians and Catholics.²¹

Early Pennsylvania jurisprudence and lawmaking therefore undermined religious freedom. Quakers disliked, for example, that the days of the week and months sported pagan names. The Quaker-dominated colonial assembly thus replaced them with biblical names. Quakers also made drunkenness illegal and recognized only Quaker marriage procedures as legitimate. For good measure, other laws required religious tests in courts of law, such as

²¹ Schlegal, “Great Law,” 276-83; Smolenski, *Friends*, 23; Beckman, *Statutes*, I, 18; James T. Mitchell and Henry Flanders, eds., *Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from 1682 to 1801* (Harrisburg, PA, 1896-1909), II, 360-63.

testimony in trials, and required Protestant religious tests for citizenship and office holding. Statutes forbade churches from owning property, and the clergy received no special treatment before the law. That Quakers sat in a position of political dominance ensured that Pennsylvania had no militia and no military installations or fortifications. Quaker pacifism, then, remained the law of the land, which became a liability in maintaining their cultural and political hegemony by the middle of the eighteenth century. In the first several decades of Pennsylvania's existence, Quakers welcomed other religious groups, but Friends undermined non-Quakers' freedoms to such an extent that some migrant groups fled north to New York and New Jersey, south to Virginia and the Carolinas, or east to Delaware and Maryland. Other laws ensured that only Christians, including Catholics (at least for a brief time), enjoyed the fruits of full freedom. A law passed in 1682, for example, required all civil officers to "profess and declare that they believe in Jesus Christ to be the Saviour of the world." In 1693, imperial officials annulled the law, but the colonial assembly reenacted it. In 1705, Pennsylvania passed a law that required for citizenship a renunciation of Roman Catholicism and an oath of loyalty to the British monarch. *Laws Agreed Upon in Chester* required all public officials to swear oaths on the divinity of Christ and the divine origins of the Old and New Testaments, as well as the doctrine of the Trinity, which was aimed at the exclusion of Socinians. Only Protestant Christian Trinitarians who met certain financial thresholds could naturalize, vote, and hold public office in early Pennsylvania.²²

²² Mitchell and Flanders, *Statues*, II, 128-33; Frost, *Perfect*, 15-25, 29-43; Stillé, "Religious Tests," 365-406; Thorpe, *Constitutions*, V, 2576-8; Marietta, *Reformation*, 150-86; quoted in Chyet, "Rights," 19; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 100-76; Beckman, *Statutes*, I, 39-42, 128, 212; Frost, *Perfect*, 22-27; *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, Colonial Records of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: 1838), I, 318, 324, 359-60, II, 30 (hereafter cited as *Colonial Records*); *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Archives*, Eighth Series (Harrisburg, PA: 1931-5), I, 402 (hereafter *Pennsylvania Archives*). Faustus Socinus (1539-1604), an Italian theologian, rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, or the belief in a singular Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, first posited by Bishop Athanasius at the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E.

Both Anglicans and Quakers agreed that blasphemy statutes remained necessary to maintain stability in colonial society. They disagreed, though, on the specifics of such laws. London's Anglican imperial officials demonstrated their primacy by disallowing a host of Quaker provincial laws. One foisted mandatory marriage upon those guilty of fornication, another promised castration for those convicted of rape, and still others forbade sports, plays, and other games. Quakers exhibited a more progressive mindset. They sanctioned divorce, for example, but it too was repealed because it did not conform to the ecclesiastical laws of the Church of England. In 1705, Quakers' most liberal statute allowed *all* Christians to worship freely, including Catholics, but it still excluded non-Christians and freethinkers. The greatest threat to religious freedom in Pennsylvania, though, derived from Anglican bishops in London. Without oaths, Anglicans argued, the truthfulness of testimonies remained uncertain, which undermined the state's pursuits of justice. In London, Anglicans dubbed Friends non-Christians at best, papists at worst, and allowed them to worship in private, but precluded their holding public offices, serving on juries, or testifying in courts of law. In Pennsylvania, conversely, Quakers maintained their privileged status and access to authority, but not without detractors who sought to undermine Friends' cultural and political positions of authority in society.²³

Quaker leaders first implemented patterns of religious *toleration*, or their acquiescence to non-Quaker religious groups' privileges, not rights. Quakers' *toleration* granted non-Quaker groups the right to participate in society in limited ways, but only with the expectation that members of those groups would eventually assimilate and conform to Quakers' values, beliefs, and mores. Quakers' toleration assumed "that all are not equal," that their own form of religion

Athanasius's opponent, Bishop Arius argued that the three entities were not one and the same, but instead three separate entities. At stake in the debate was the divinity of Jesus. Unitarians adopted similar ideas.

²³ Frost, *Perfect*, 22; Mitchell and Flanders, *Statutes*, II, 465, 489-90, III, 529; *Colonial Records*, II, 229; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 42-6.

had a greater right to modes of authority than others, but “for the sake of peace” granted minority religious groups enough space to exist, often unmolested. A dominant culture exhibited *tolerance*, conversely, if it not only allowed all religious groups to exist but also allowed them to decide to conform, or not to conform, to the mores of the majority. One historian has argued that religious *tolerance* prevailed in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania. Cultural conditions, however, allowed both concepts to coexist, for Quakers’ majoritarian status afforded them political dominance, with which they attempted to coerce religious uniformity. Some religious groups obliged; yet, others vehemently dissented.²⁴

In the 1690s, George Keith was one Quaker who rejected the stringent morality foisted by his coreligionists upon early Pennsylvanians. The “Keithian Controversy” demonstrates the potential for state coercion of religious belief in a theocratic society, the possibilities for religious dissent in public life, and thus the boundaries of religious freedom in early Pennsylvania. The Quaker assembly passed censorship laws and other moral legislation meant both to maintain Friends’ political authority and to establish moral uniformity in the public square. Keith, a respected Quaker minister who rose to prominence alongside Penn, publicly questioned the colonial assembly’s attempts to utilize the instruments of state power to pass moral legislation. As evidence of its imprudence, Keith pointed to English history, particularly Quakers’ experiences of persecutions. Keith found an ally in Andrew Bradford, the only Quaker-sanctioned printer in the colony under the new censorship statutes—one example, among many, of Quakers in the assembly who bestowed patronage upon their coreligionists in secular culture. Bradford shared Keith’s disdain of censorship statutes that regulated individuals’ religious ideas and thus abandoned his patrons in defense of Keith. Keith, armed now with Bradford’s press,

²⁴ Quoted in Sanford H. Cobb, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America: A History* (New York, 1902), 8; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 8-9; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 1-135.

publicly attacked prominent magistrates, in speech and in print, for using governmental compulsion to force everyone to accept specific religious doctrine. Keith argued that individuals' must be able to craft their own forms of theological *opinion*. He erred by taking those private religious disputes into the public square. Because most of those who Keith attacked remained well-connected leaders, in both religion and politics, he found himself in a sticky situation. Quaker leaders had passed a censorship law, which shielded from public criticism all Quaker magistrates and other office holders; the nature of pundits' criticism of colonial officials mattered not. Keith's public pronouncements against Quaker civil officials culminated in the state's seizure of Bradford's press. Although the dispute centered on differences in Quaker theology, the affair was waged in the public domain. Officials therefore charged Keith with seditious libel. They argued that Keith's words disrupted the social order regulated by Friends' moral ethos.

In his defense, Keith emphasized that Pennsylvania lawfully protected his religious opinions, which was true, at least in private quarters. Keith also argued that neither the state nor its servants could lawfully interfere in a religious dispute over doctrine, even if the ministers of the Society of Friends simultaneously served as public magistrates, which was also true, if he had kept the affair private. Keith, undaunted, maintained that his words rang true, and that a private religious dispute was of no public concern. The prosecution, by contrast, argued that Keith's public comments amounted to a political attack on Pennsylvania's magistrates, an offense punishable by law. Keith was charged for those public remarks, officials maintained, not

for his private religious views or debates over Quaker theology. Keith was essentially charged for having brought personal religious disputes into the purview of the public.²⁵

Therein lay the contradiction for Keith, and the lesson for posterity. When members of a private institution—in this case, the Society of Friends—also served public institutions as public functionaries, and intertwined the responsibilities of the two, to the point where both institutions remained indistinguishable apart from the other, how was it possible for individuals in society to distinguish between them? The ways in which Quaker leaders answered this question, of course, determined the limitations of religious freedom for future colonists. A kangaroo trial ensued, chiefly because the same Quaker ministers Keith had attacked also served as the judges, jurors, and prosecutors in the proceedings against Keith and Bradford. Officials did not recognize, or chose to ignore, conflicts of interest. Even Friends in London balked at such blatant inequity exhibited by Pennsylvania’s civil court. Nevertheless, Keith was convicted and fined £5. Although the court acquitted Bradford, the state refused to return his printing press, the instrument of his livelihood. In the end, Keith and Bradford fled Pennsylvania. The “Keithian Controversy” raises an important question. If devout Quakers like Keith rejected the moral suasion of their coreligionists, how would non-Christian immigrants react to such demands for moral uniformity in public affairs later in the eighteenth century? The lesson for migrants, including Jews, was clear. To keep silent about religious matters in the public square was also to remain clear of the coercive arms of state power.²⁶

Keith’s plight underscores the limitations of Penn’s moral establishment in early Pennsylvania. Through passage of moral legislation, Quakers censored public religious

²⁵ Frost, *Perfect*, 15-23; “The Tryals of Peter Boss, George Keith, Thomas Budd and William Bradford,” reprinted in J. William Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania* (Norwood, PA: 1980), 170-3, 180-81, 268-81.

²⁶ Frost, *Keithian*, 175-79.

expressions that deviated from official Quaker doctrine, even among Quakers. And Friends used political power to silence dissent in the public square, both religious and secular. In sum, the “Keithian Controversy” set an important precedent in drawing a distinction between private thought and public behavior, which sanctioned Penn’s vision of “Liberty of the Mind.” If Keith had kept his missives private, he would not have been charged. That fact underscores the constraints placed on members of the body politic, who attempted to shape public opinion. If pundits and partisans utilized arguments that conflicted with Quakers’ moral assumptions, state coercion could silence them.

That elites decided theology and politics meant they also controlled the legacies and histories of early Quakerism, which allowed myths to flourish in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania that cemented Quaker cultural and political superiority. Newspapers and magazines had not yet exploded onto the Anglo-American cultural scene in great numbers, as they did a century later. In the main, the few that existed remained predominantly the official organs of provincial governments and its leaders. Late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century writers aimed pamphlets and books at enlightened Anglo-American elites. Although Penn wrote for an elite audience when he contributed his pamphlets on religious freedom, his ideas resonated with common folk, especially when Quaker populists mythologized and grossly exaggerated Penn’s legacy to justify their monopoly on power. In the face of repressive policies in London, the cultural strategies that had once sustained Quakers’ religious movement and common religious identity broke down in Pennsylvania. Friends attempted to cultivate and maintain solidarity, ultimately to sustain a common political identity and access to authority. Migrant groups, whose members facilitated unique processes of cultural mixing, reacted against Quakers’ claims to moral supremacy. Over time, migrants rejected Quaker leadership. As a

result, pervasive conflict, and eventually factionalism, prevailed, chiefly because Quakers shaped the patterns of inclusion and exclusion in civic culture for migrant groups. Penn provided the ideological foundations for private intellectual freedom, a diminished role for the state in religious matters, and a benevolent attitude toward non-Quakers and natives. Such open-mindedness, despite Quakers' state-sponsored moral coercion in public life, ensured the continual arrival of diverse migrants to Pennsylvania, including Jews.²⁷

Far from political egalitarianism, Pennsylvania's government, dominated by Friends, mirrored that of London, dominated by Anglicans, in more ways than one. Friends determined patronage, for example, and bestowed favors upon their personal and professional associates, usually their Quaker brethren. Quaker merchants benefitted the most. They received the choicest and most lucrative appointments in civic culture and enjoyed governmental favors that provided them an economic advantage over their competitors. Despite this preferential treatment for elites, there was little distance in both appearance and wealth between the lower orders, middling folk, and the upper ranks in an emergent society in the wilderness. The widest degrees of differences did not run along class lines; rather cultural divisions derived from differences of religion, ethnicity, political allegiances, and race. In the first half of the eighteenth century,

²⁷ Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, 1985); idem, *Censors at Work: How States Shaped Literature* (New York, 2015). For print culture in the Anglo-American world, see Charles E. Clark, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740* (Oxford, 1994). Numerous native tribes populated the region, when the arrival of Dutch and Swedish settlers ensured cultural pluralism, and thus conflict. European immigrants hoped to coexist in relative harmony with Quakers and each other, in addition to native inhabitants of the region. Although disputes between colonists became pervasive, settlers of European extraction found ways to coexist with each other, whereas the relationship between natives and colonists deteriorated over the course of the eighteenth century. As disparate groups came together and interacted, a diverse culture was forged in private life, which allowed migrants to decide to conform to Quaker values or not. But Quakers fought hard to ensure moral uniformity in public life. Once Friends gained majoritarian status in Pennsylvania, they dominated both culture and politics. With such access to power, Quakers could define the meaning of moral authority in early Pennsylvania's civic culture, see Smolenski, *Friends*, 6-9, 215-85, and chapters 2-4; Tully, *Legacy*, 3-50; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 1-7, 13-19, and chapters 1 and 2; Frost, *Perfect*, especially chapter 1; Endy, *Penn*, 315-16. Also helpful are the essays in Zuckerman, *Friends and Neighbors*. Kenny argues that Penn's benevolent attitude toward natives ensured relative harmony, but conditions gradually disintegrated over the eighteenth century to the detriment of natives in the region, see *Peaceable*, 41-122, 130-46, 205-16; Pencak and Richter, *Friends*, 167-257.

constant immigration produced cultural differences and additional sources of conflict. European migrants extended a reluctant deference, if deference existed at all, to Quaker cultural and political authority. In this period, Pennsylvania experienced rapid population growth, which produced diversity that mitigated Friends' influence.²⁸

Meanwhile, a rigid and unequal social structure emerged for “others” in colonial society, with indentured servants and slaves on the bottom, along with other religious and ethnic “undesirables.” Thousands of individuals, both free and unfree, immigrated to Pennsylvania; most ended up in Philadelphia. Some sought greater economic opportunities and an independent lifestyle in North America. Others had no choice in the matter. Servitude, but not slavery, often served as a vehicle for upward social mobility for migrants, who fulfilled their indenture, purchased land, and flourished. By 1750, the majority of servants hailed from Scotland, Ireland, and Germany. Imperial mercantilism and, in Pennsylvania, the cultivation of wheat, demanded cheap labor. Servants and slaves provided not only labor but also contributed yet more diversity to an already pluralistic society. Settlers of artisan and yeoman origins made up the middling ranks, while the professional classes—clergy, merchants, physicians, lawyers—made up the ranks of the provincial ruling elite. Not unlike the British Empire as a whole, this class of individuals dominated the economic landscape. Ten percent of the purchasers of land in the early years of settlement, the colonial gentry, owned more than half of the total lands sold, a trend that reversed itself somewhat by the dawn of the eighteenth century because of immigration. Yet, the reality of life in Pennsylvania remained far from the egalitarianism and harmony celebrated in origin-mythology. Pennsylvania's Quaker moral establishment ensured religious conflict among Protestant immigrants. Quaker leaders soon discovered that

²⁸ Nash, *Quakers*, 28-47, 54-57; Smolenski, *Friends*, 23-24, 49-51.

maintaining civic order through moral legislation was untenable, but that did not shake their resolve. Friends redoubled their efforts. Quaker leaders assumed that immigrants would assimilate to Friends' moral assumptions, and thus continued to use legislation as a form of moral coercion. Many migrant groups, of course, refused to conform, which fomented staunch factionalism. State-sponsored moral suasion produced a major crack in the foundations of Pennsylvania's civil society.²⁹

Quakers fought against the implementation of mandatory oaths to specific forms of Christianity, arguing instead for (presumably, unofficial) affirmations of honesty. Before 1720, the oath-versus-affirmation controversy paralyzed Pennsylvania's court system, because Quaker rivals challenged its legal basis. Opponents of the Quaker establishment asked if Quaker witnesses, jurors, and judges could legally implement justice in Pennsylvania, without first having been sworn to uphold an Anglican moral ethos. As a result of Friends' insistence upon the use of affirmations, the legitimacy of court proceedings, and Quaker authority in general, remained in question. For four decades after 1682, court conflicts and the advent of political factions—proprietary and anti-proprietary, or Quaker party—ensured conflicts between the proprietary Council, allies of proprietary governors who also earned the loyalty of the judiciary, and the anti-proprietary Assembly, which consisted of Quaker leaders in the main. In 1724, Quakers, finally, won the right of affirmations. Anglicans, in exchange, obtained a requirement that every colonist *not* a member of the Society of Friends must swear Anglican oaths, yet another roadblock for full equality in public life for non-Anglicans. Despite Anglican attempts to stifle Quaker dissent, Quakers' authority flourished. Churches could not legally own land in

²⁹ For indentured servants, see Sharon V. Shalinger, *"To serve well and faithfully": Labor and Indentured Servants in Pennsylvania, 1682-1800* (Cambridge, 1987), 1-4, 23, 30-34, 82-114, 172-85. For the relationship between slavery and bound servitude, see David Waldstreicher, *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution* (New York, 2004); Nash, *Quakers*, 11-28, 50-56; Smolenski, *Friends*, 64-5.

early Pennsylvania, which led to conflict between Anglicans and Baptists. Quakers found ways around this legal inconvenience. In 1705, Penn, for example, granted a special charter for the establishment of a Quaker school in Philadelphia. By 1730, the Quaker-led colonial assembly vested Protestant groups with property ownership rights, thus all Protestants remained equal before the law in Pennsylvania; every other religious group was treated differently, in law and in practice. That non-Christians could not collectively own property meant that individual Jews would have to purchase or rent space for religious services.³⁰

Penn's Pennsylvania had no ecclesiastical courts, and Protestant churches and clergy received equal treatment in law. But a Quaker moral establishment attempted state coercion in the form of provincial statutes to achieve and maintain cultural homogeneity. Debates over morality in the public square have never dissipated; rather, such debates have remained pervasive in American culture. The Quaker-Anglican controversies widened religious freedoms for other groups, because such conflict ensured that neither side gained the upper hand. Foreign-born (and other non-British) Catholics and non-Protestants such as Jews could worship freely at home, but could not legally hold property, vote, naturalize, or hold office, among a host of other disabilities. British Catholics, freethinkers, atheists, infidels, and non-Christians received no legal protections whatsoever. Quaker ideas regarding marriage, war and peace, stringent moral codes designed to regulate belief and behavior, and affirmations—not oaths—became law. If absolute freedom had been implemented in Pennsylvania at the outset, it would have ensured *all* religious groups, including natives, blacks, and other minority groups full civil and cultural

³⁰ Marietta, *Troubled*, 28-29; Frost, *Perfect*, 7, 17, 23-35; Nash, *Quakers*; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 53-4; Marietta, *Reformation*, 32-45; Deborah Mathias Gough, "Pluralism, Politics, and Power Struggles: The Church of England in Colonial Philadelphia, 1695-1789," (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1978), 78-92; Mitchell and Flanders, *Statutes*, II, 424-5, III, 37-8, 41, 448, 462, IV, 208-10; *Colonial Records*, II, 626, 649; Beckman, *Statutes*, I, 175, 195, II, 91, 161; Papers of Governors, *Pennsylvania Archives*, Series 4, I, 317; *Pennsylvania Archives*, III, 2068, 2081-4.

equality, physical and social mobility, private liberty of conscience, public expressions of faith, and full citizenship rights. But it was not to be.³¹

The Quaker moral establishment discriminated against Catholics and Jews. Pervasive anti-Catholic attitudes throughout the Anglo-American world demonstrate the limitations of Penn's ideology for non-Protestants. Penn's views of Catholics differed—at times he attacked them, while at others he defended them. Penn's religious hatred toward Catholicism was not absolute, for he befriended the Catholic monarch, James II. Above all, Penn feared the spiritual and civil authority of the Pope, who he believed undermined the authority of the British monarchy. Penn's rationale for the exclusion of Catholics in the body politic was not only rooted in fears of devout Catholics' faith in ultramontanist, or the uncompromising belief in papal authority, but also Catholics' long history of persecuting dissenters, especially Protestants. In sum, Penn and his Quaker brethren feared the Catholic Church far more than the Church of England. Penn was not alone in espousing such fears. Anti-Popery was tied to anti-Catholic sentiment that emanated from the religious turmoil and political upheaval, indicative of seventeenth-century England's Civil War, Interregnum, Restoration of the monarchy, and subsequent Protestant Glorious Revolution. Anti-papist paranoia also arose from England's historic conflicts with Catholic nations, namely Spain, France, and Ireland. And, finally, anti-Catholicism was both a symptom and a cause for the rise of an intense national consciousness

³¹ Frost, *Perfect*; Sehat, *Myth*, 1-12, and chapters 3 and 12, 205-291. Sehat examines how and why state-level Protestant moral establishments emerged, arguing that states established Protestantism or limited the free exercise of other religions, and endured into the twentieth century, when liberal-minded challengers such as Louis Brandeis dismantled them by using the Fourteenth Amendment to federalize the First Amendment. Thereafter, Protestant moral crusaders continued to put pressure on the federal government to force conformity to their values, especially on issues such as abortion, contraception, marriage and divorce laws, gay rights, etc. For similar treatment on the national level, see Gaines Foster, *Moral Reconstruction: Christian Lobbyists and the Federal Legislation of Morality, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, 2002). For the fate of natives, see Kenny, *Peaceable*; Edward J. Larson, *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion* (Oxford, 1997); Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York, 2010).

among Anglo-Americans, which made Catholics an easy scapegoat for social and political problems. Animated by intense religious animosity and hatred in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Parliament passed the Test and Corporation Acts. The use of state coercion to compel conformity to Anglican doctrine through religious tests, oaths, and other civil disabilities had been common since Henry VIII; these laws thus demanded oaths that excluded non-Anglicans from political participation. Although directed at Catholics, such legislation excluded from civic culture all nonconformist Protestants, such as Quakers and Baptists, and non-Christians, such as Jews. Anglican Members of Parliament accused hundreds of Quakers as Catholic sympathizers, and even accused some of embracing Catholic dogma, including Penn. Officials sometimes confiscated the property of the accused and tossed them in jail.³²

British nationalism became a harbinger of anti-Catholicism in British North America, brought there by migrants and the printed word. Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, imperial conflicts intensified, as traditional popish enemies beset British colonists from all sides, especially France to the north and Spain to the south and west. In Pennsylvania, foreign migrants arrived in ever-larger numbers, which frustrated Quaker efforts at cultural homogenization and moral uniformity. Although few Catholics migrated to Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century, Quakers and other Protestant sects brought such anti-Catholic ideas along with them across the Atlantic Ocean. A wide degree of religious pluralism in early Pennsylvania fomented bigotry beyond anti-Catholic sentiment alone, chiefly between war-torn Protestants. Anti-Jewish attitudes also flourished. Yet fear of Catholics in particular endured and intensified into the 1750s and beyond. Anglo-American Protestants feared the authoritarian organization of the Church of Rome, both its physical and mental manifestations of power. The Pope not only

³² Schwartz, *Multitude*, 17-19; Casino, "Anti-Popery," 279-309; Newman, "Good will," 457; Hill, *Upside Down*, 231-68; Reay, *Revolution*, 64-78.

duped Catholics into obedience, they believed, but controlled their thoughts and behavior too. That Catholics had surrendered their freedom to think in exchange for physical security and promises of posthumous awards compromised their ability to function freely as individuals in civil society. Because of this, Catholics could not be trusted, neither in Pennsylvania nor elsewhere in the empire.³³

Jews hardly entered into Penn's calculations for his Holy Experiment. What, then, did Penn think about Jews and Judaism? Contemporary Christian Hebraists, including Cotton Mather, articulated an interest in Jewish conversion to Christianity as a means to fulfill the biblical promise of the millennium. If Jews converted to Christianity, many Protestants believed, Christ would return for his thousand-year reign on Earth. Hebraism also became an avenue for Christians to better interpret the Old and New Testaments. Increase Mather, for example, wrote "there is a multitude of places in the New Testament (and in the old too) which no one can clearly understand, except he be acquainted with the notions, customs, phrases, &c. which were formerly in use amongst the Jews." Another popular theory, the legend of the "Lost Ten Tribes of Israel," reinforced these notions. According to Old Testament lore, in the eighth century B.C.E., Assyrians had exiled ten tribes in Judah, north of Israel. Israelites never learned the fate of their brethren, which fomented legends that endured for millennia. Many Jews and Christians, who yearned for the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, both Old and New, believed the tribes survived somewhere. The most probable explanation was that the émigrés assimilated to host cultures and converted to the religion of adopted homes. The Old Testament promised that God would send the Messiah to Earth once the lost Israelites were found; the New Testament promised a second coming to Earth of Jesus Christ. The Messiah, Jews believed, would

³³ Smolenski, *Friends*, 61-177; Jaher, *Scapegoat*; Casino, "Anti-Popery," 279-309.

spearhead the reunification in Palestine of all descendants of ancient Israelites. Christians, conversely, believed that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah and would reign for 1,000 years. Biblical promises, however, remained unfulfilled generation after generation, which gave tremendous cultural power to the legend among Jews and gentiles. After 1492, when reports of natives in America reached Europe, Spanish clergy theorized that they must be the lost Hebrew tribes of antiquity.³⁴

This Jewish/Indian theory, debated by Protestant and Jewish intellectuals across the Atlantic World, inspired intense debate and speculation about both natives and Jews. Penn and many of his contemporaries, including Roger Williams, Menasseh Ben Israel, John Eliot, and Cotton and Increase Mather, believed that indigenous populations in Pennsylvania resembled Jews. Christian Hebraists thus refashioned native culture and Jewish history to suit their Millenarian worldview. Natives, they reasoned, must have been the descendants of the lost Israelites. The notion persisted well into the nineteenth century, though most serious intellectuals rejected its validity. In Pennsylvania, an ethno-racial association of natives with Jews underscored for Jewish migrants their “otherness” as much as the problematic nature of their ethno-religious Judaism. This ethnic and racial link to an excluded group also implied that Jews, like natives, had unfavorable inheritable characteristics, of which skin color was but one manifestation. If the fate of natives was any indication, many Jews believed, their association with a group ostracized for their physical distinctiveness, odd religious convictions, and

³⁴ Scholars have traced Protestant theological interest in Judaism to the English Reformation and creation of Church of England, see Snyder, “Place,” 8-16, 16-25; Shapiro, *Shakespeare*, 133-46; Manuel, *Broken Staff*, 115-18; *CAJ*, I, 40-43, 321; Cotton Mather, et al. writers, *A Compendious, but Entertaining History of the Darkness Come Upon the Greek Churches in Europe and Asia, Appendix Containing CONVERSION of a Jew* (Boston, 1701), copy in AAS; quoted Increase Mather, *The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation, Explained and Applied: A Discourse Concerning the General Conversion of the Israelitish Nation...* (Boston, 1669), copy in AAS. For more, consult the following Old Testament books, II Kings 15:29, 17:6, 18:11; Daniel 12:7; Ezekiel 37:21.

perceived character flaws would end poorly for them. Most American Jews thus distanced themselves from such legends.³⁵

English Millenarians argued that Catholics' extreme cruelty toward Jews during the Inquisition had impeded Jewish conversions, and if treated better, Jews would embrace Christianity. Penn agreed. He was steeped in Hebrew literature and Jewish history, and most of that knowledge he focused toward the formulation of arguments aimed at converting Jews to Christianity. John Tomkins, a fellow Friend, composed *The Harmony of the Old and New Testament* (1694), a tome providing methods and advice for proselytizing among Jews. Penn agreed to write an appendix to the volume. In "A Visitation to the Jews" (a nod to George Fox's famous work of the same name), Penn made both novel and unoriginal arguments to make his point. His most unusual claim was that Jews should accept the New Testament because Christians had accepted the Old. Miracles, after all, occurred in both. Penn argued that because Jesus performed miracles in front of Jewish audiences, Jews ought to be convinced by the testimony of their brethren and thus convert. Penn also utilized allusions to classical antiquity and suggested that Jewish critics of Christianity had lost the polemical battle to early Church Fathers. (He ignored bishops' access to modes of authority in the Roman Empire, which allowed them to dictate the contours of theological debates, especially those with non-Christians.) Penn also drew from the unoriginal argument, that God allowed the destructions of the Jewish Temple and Jerusalem, as well as the many Diasporas in Jewish history, as punishment for Jews' role in

³⁵ For contemporary examples, see Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (London, 1702); Thomas Thorowgood, *Jews in America, or Probabilities that the Americans are of that Race* (London, 1650); Gabriel Thomas, *An Historical and Geographical Account of Pennsylvania* (London, 1698). Others disagreed, see Hamon L'Estrange, *Americans no Jewes* (London, 1652), copies in AAS. For legend, see Edmund S. Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan: A Life of Ezra Stiles, 1727-1795* (New York, 1983); Snyder, "Place," 15-33, 126-34. Rebecca Gratz claimed the lost tribes had "mixed" with host cultures, see Rebecca to Maria Gist Gratz, February 23, 1840, *LRG*, 274-77; Katz, *Philo-Semitism*, 89-95, 127-30.

Christ's crucifixion. He even rebuked Muslims and other infidels for not accepting Christ and warned them that if they persisted in their stubbornness the fate of the Jews awaited them, too.³⁶

Penn came closest to exhibiting empathy toward the plight of Jews when he compared the experiences of Quakers with Jews. The Anglican oaths required under the Test Acts, Penn correctly reasoned, restricted religious freedom for Quakers and Jews. The similarities, though, ended there, for Penn utilized the comparison to underscore Quakers' inequality, not that of Jews. Penn pointed out, again correctly, that Quakers experienced far greater persecutions than did British Jews. Penn himself was imprisoned for the public espousal of his religious beliefs. In 1668, Penn suggested that Jews had "crucified the Lord of Life." A decade later, Penn asked a correspondent, "why could Jews pass just before us, that have crucified" Christ, but "not Quakers that never crucified him?" Quakers, Penn suggested, deserved full civil equality and religious freedom in the British Empire, more so than the murderers of Christ. In 1683, Penn made his anti-Jewish sentiments explicit when he visited his colony. In Pennsylvania, Penn compared the Delaware to "the *Jewish Race*," because both were "of like *Countenance*" with eyes that were "little and black, not unlike a straight-look't *Jew*." Pervasive comparisons of Jews with natives remained a common feature of the Anglo-American imagination, as was descriptions of Jews with unfavorable characteristics.³⁷

Penn wrote nothing more about Jews or the prospect that Jews might settle in Pennsylvania. Penn never attacked Jews outright or exhibited anti-Jewish attitudes beyond the

³⁶ Penn, "A Visitation to the Jews" (1694), Edwin B. Bronner and David Fraser, eds., *Papers of William Penn*, (Philadelphia, 1986), V, 41, 424-27. In 1656, George Fox, Penn's mentor and friend, penned a famous treatise, *A Looking-Glass for the Jews* (London, 1674; reprinted Philadelphia, 1784), copy in AAS.

³⁷ Penn, "Petition to the House of Commons" (1673), in Dunn and Dunn, *Papers of Penn*, I, 260, 225-26, 488; quotes Penn, "Truth Exalted" (1668), Bronner and Fraser, *Papers of William Penn*, V, 90-5; Penn to the Graffe of Bruch & Falchensteyn (1677), idem, I, 463; quotes Penn, *A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governor of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders of that Province...* (London, 1683), cited in Snyder, "Place," 23-24.

aforementioned remarks. Yet, Penn did not view them as social equals or his intellectual peers and saw Judaism as a moral liability in civil society. Penn's successors therefore allowed Jews to settle in Pennsylvania but did not condone their moral postulations and religious expressions in public life. They, like Penn, expected Jews to convert to Protestant Christianity to enjoy full equality. The first generation of Jewish migrants thus remained on the fringes of Pennsylvania's mainstream culture. Two generations before the first Jews arrived in Pennsylvania, Penn envisioned that his coreligionists would lead the colony toward the widest degree of religious freedom for all Protestant Christians, not Quakers alone. He wanted natives treated fairly and nonviolently, befitting his Quaker-instilled commitment to pacifism, and he wanted peaceful coexistence among peoples of wide-ranging backgrounds. Penn attempted to institutionalize respect and tolerance for religious others in the form of laws for Pennsylvania's posterity. Penn succeeded in the establishment of productive relations between European migrants and natives, and his *Frame of Government* laid the foundations for the colony's first laws. It did not last. Natives and others experienced dishonesty and bigotry at the hands of Friends and other migrants, and religious freedom—or “the equality of all,” and the assumption that “in matters of religion all...are equal before God and the law”—remained unfulfilled in Pennsylvania.³⁸

Petty political squabbles between Friends fragmented solidarity and ensured that no singular moral vision endured, even among Quakers. Continuous immigration ensured a culture of diversity, which at times fomented conflict and other times cooperation among European migrants. Natives proved intractable and violent, and the Quaker ruling elites could not govern efficiently enough to control Friends, much less a plural society. Native Americans, individuals of African descent (both free and slave), most non-propertied artisans and merchants, and all

³⁸ Kenny dispels the myth of peaceful relations between Pennsylvania colonists and natives, see *Peaceable*. Also helpful are the essays in Pencak and Richter, *Friends*; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 12-13; quote in Cobb, *Liberty*, 8.

non-Protestants, including Jews, remained excluded from civic culture at best, and cheated or murdered outright at worst. In reality, Penn’s “Holy Experiment” and “Peaceable Kingdom” never existed, despite the many “posterity letters” and popular mythology to the contrary. But the conflicts and interactions between such disparate groups of people, perhaps with not a little tinge of irony, produced a society of unprecedented inclusion and acceptance, at least over time. One student of early Pennsylvanian culture put it succinctly, “William Penn prescribed novel ideas in founding his province, but his colonists discovered that it was easier to plan a pluralistic society devoted to liberty than to live in one.” A colony of diversity, plurality, and equality did not spontaneously arise; it arose slowly, the result of both conflict and consensus, through the efforts of various migrants, many of whom remained excluded for decades from the first pluralistic society in North America.³⁹

Penn’s legacy remains hotly contested and disputed. Yet, his legacy of religious freedom—defined by his notions of “Liberty of the Mind” and the importance he placed upon a public morality rooted in Quaker mores—was not a *perfect freedom*. Exclusion from politics became a significant liability to minority migrant groups, such as Jews, to say nothing of the political and socioeconomic disadvantages those limitations leveled upon them. In the colonial period, one’s home remained sacrosanct, a safe-haven for original religious ideas to flourish independently from the coercive powers of the state and its officials. The limitations became stark by contrast once an individual fled the protections and privacy of the home and entered the public domain. Penn envisioned a social order rooted in a Protestant moral ethos. To maintain that vision, Quaker officials instituted moral legislation, which they believed desirable and

³⁹ Smolenski, *Friends*, 2-5; Kenny, *Peaceable*; Nash, *Quakers*, 3-10, 49-56; Pencak and Richter, *Friends*, ix-xii; quoted in Schwartz, *Multitude*, 11; Several helpful essays in Zuckerman, *Friends and Neighbors*.

lawful, that limited what minority groups said and how they behaved beyond the friendly-confines of their homes.⁴⁰

In exchange for non-Protestants' silence regarding public morality and expressions of their faith, Friends granted them enough space to privately worship to the dictates of their consciences. For the first generation of Jewish arrivals, this was enough, because most of them recognized the possibilities that such a space afforded them in terms of maintaining their traditional identities, cultural practices, and moral ethos. This was especially so when compared to the oppressive milieus from which many had fled in Europe. Their limited civic participation and cultural prejudices against them did not much matter to European Jews, who had experienced systematic persecutions for thousands of years. But, the limited spaces for the cultivation of private Jewish identity-constructions and other cultural practices became much less tenable for second and third generations of Jewish immigrants. Later generations embraced American values and combined them with their own customs and demanded a public outlet to express those identities and cultural practices. Such boundaries around religious freedom in the public sphere, in sum, fomented activism among Anglo-American Jews.

Penn's "Liberty of the Mind" had specific boundaries, which became even more rigid in the years after Penn's death in 1718. Friends sought to preserve their authority and maintain a stable civil society. They failed. Conflict resulted in the rise of factions. After 1748, Quakers had tired of political leadership, because Friends' dogma emphasized the spiritual dimensions of faith, not corporeal ones. As a result, reform-minded Quakers began a movement to reevaluate central aspects of doctrine and moral imperatives laid out by Penn and others. Reformers withdrew from Pennsylvania's public life altogether, a process that quickened during the

⁴⁰ Frost, *Perfect*; Schwartz, *Multitude*; Tully, *Legacy*; Smolenski, *Friends*; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*; Marietta, *Reformation*; Nash, *Quakers*; Kenny, *Peaceable*.

revolutionary crisis. Some Friends even refused to conform to the stringent moral code of their brethren, and members of other religious groups joined them in rejecting public moral uniformity. Internal and external conflicts among Quakers and other groups of migrants opened opportunities for more and more non-Quakers in Pennsylvania society to fill the power vacuum vacated by Friends. Such an outcome ensured that religious freedom would steadily unfold for those denied equality at the outset of colonization, such as Jewish migrants. As the boundaries of religious freedom loosened, minority groups increasingly agitated for greater participation in the body politic. That the nature of religious freedom in Pennsylvania transformed in the years after 1681 made the prospects for change in culture and politics a real possibility for non-Quakers, especially Jews. In practice, the malleability of freedom combined with cultural diversity led to religious conflict that expanded freedom for minority groups. Such unintended consequences allowed many religious groups to contribute in various ways to cultural and social developments in early Pennsylvania. When Jews arrived in the Delaware River Valley, their economic activities in the secular marketplace reshaped gentiles' attitudes toward Jews and Judaism, the first substantive step toward an unfolding of religious freedom in early Pennsylvania.⁴¹

⁴¹ Smolenski, *Friends*, 64-5; Marietta, *Reformation*, 150-279; Chyet, "Rights," 14-15.

CHAPTER THREE MARKETPLACE JUDAISM: POWER & PATRONAGE ON THE IMPERIAL FRONTIER

Once Jews arrived and settled into their new provincial communities, the economics of empire-building and the popularity of frontier expansion among colonials encouraged the most enterprising and adventurous among them to move farther west into the interior of the North American continent. Colonial and imperial officials patronized Jewish businesses, and economic patronage of Jews among prominent gentiles increased throughout the eighteenth century, which allowed them to define themselves as members of an emergent merchant class, a first step toward their integration. Their economic patrons and associates back east, in urban centers such as Philadelphia and New York City, sent goods to their associates in frontier towns and, together, they reaped the benefits of near-untouched markets. This cohort of Jews, Pennsylvania's Ashkenazim business community, maintained professional, imperial, colonial, and familial connections in London and across the Atlantic world and beyond. This multi-family network of Jews allowed members and associates to establish nodes in North America, in particular New York, Pennsylvania, and the Ohio River Valley. Pennsylvania's Jewish businesspeople cultivated economic patronage networks among non-Jews and Jews alike, solidified by frontier warfare and trade.

In hundreds of newspaper advertisements in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, Jewish entrepreneurs celebrated their associations with merchants, traders, shopkeepers, and other businesspeople. In Europe, Jews obtained few titles of any kind and congregated in island communities, or ghettos aloof from dominant cultures. Cultural prejudices perpetuated by Shylock mythology led Jewish entrepreneurs to downplay their keen business acumen, which impeded their upward social mobility and polite respectability. In Pennsylvania, where

hereditary and honorary titles did not exist, and where frontier expansion was a positive force in the popular imagination, they wore the labels of “merchant” and “trader” as badges of honor, respect, and personal ambition. As geopolitics in the Anglo-American world transformed the global economy from imperial mercantilism to liberal capitalism, such identification along professional lines encouraged the slow, gradual reversal of the Shylock trope. No longer denigrated as usurers, Pennsylvania’s Jews touted their merchant-trader statuses as markers of social prestige and frontier expansion, thereby strengthening their credibility and reputations in their adopted communities. How they presented themselves within a shared, secular marketplace influenced how Anglo-Americans viewed them. Because most British colonials supported frontier expansion, Jewish merchant-traders could portray themselves as harbingers of the westward march of Anglo-American civilization. Jews’ movement into mainstream culture therefore first began through their substantive contributions to transatlantic, metropolitan, and frontier economies.¹

¹ There are too many newspaper ads to enumerate here, thus the following are representative. *American Weekly Mercury*, May 14, 1741; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 3, 1738, October 25, 1739, October, 2, 1740, April 16, 1741, May 7, 1741, March 26, 1745, March 22, May 26, August 11, 1748, November 23, 1749, January 23, September 6, 1750, May 9, June 27, and November 14, 1751, March 17 and September 28, 1752, August 2, 1753, March 4, 1755, November 18, 1756, August 2, 1759, May 29, 1760; *Pennsylvania Journal*, July 26, 1759; *Pennsylvania Journal*, June 8, 1782; *Independent Gazetteer*, October 22, November 9, 12, 1782, December 6, 1783, November 10, 1787; *Pennsylvania Evening Herald*, August 13, 1785. Scholars have shown that the term merchant included a group of large and small traders, factors, brokers, petty merchants, shippers, distributors, hucksters, and hagglers, and their trade networks functioned to minimize risk and foment opportunities and credit, see Pitcock, “Commerce,” 22-27; Cathy Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore, 1998). Scholars have defined the term frontier as a region where disparate peoples converged, which impeded the sovereignty, or cultural hegemony, of any one group. Scholars, likewise, have defined borderlands as a region where empires and/or nation-states converged and struggled to define national boundaries. Western Pennsylvania, Ohio River Valley, Great Lakes region, Indiana, Illinois, etc., exhibited the features of both a frontier and borderland. For purposes of simplicity, this study uses the term frontier, see Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, “From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and Peoples in Between in North American History,” *American Historical Review* 104 (1999), 814-41. Scholars have assumed that most eighteenth-century economic production occurred in private households, but Habermas has shown that commodities markets brought economic activities within households into the purview of the public sphere by mid-eighteenth century, see Habermas, *Public Sphere*, 18-30. For Jews, this transformation became essential to their integration in Pennsylvania, and thus access to authority. Pencak argues that a new anti-Semitism arose beginning in the 1750s that transcended Jews as greedy and nefarious and lumped them instead with pacifist Quakers and violent Indians, see Pencak, *Jews*, 191-96.

Jews sought friendship and favors from ruling elites, and thus identified as elitist members of polite society. Patronage contributed to Jewish acceptance, as patrons bestowed them with favors that strengthened bonds between Jews and their neighbors. For Sephardim and Ashkenazim, their entrepreneurship functioned as a mode of economic advancement and inclusion. At times of imperial warfare, for example, Jewish merchant-traders supplied armies with much needed provisions, which earned the respect of Christians. Their collective economic experiences, which included proprietorships of shops and warehouses, ship-ownership, ship-captaincy, slave- and indenture-trading, peltry-trading, silver-forging, military-supplying, and land speculation, testified to their transatlantic versatility and new opportunities for self-reinvention. Material exchanges, the buying and selling of British goods among Jewish merchant-traders, fomented a common Anglo-American identity and shared commitment to frontier expansion among colonials, many of whom could now imagine Jews as equals. Although they could not yet vote, Jews identified with the proprietary faction as a counterpoint to Quaker dominance and pacifism, because Jewish interests often aligned with their staunchest patrons—Franklins, Logans, Hamiltons, and Penns among them. Mutual economic interests and common social and political allegiances surmounted differences of nationality, ethnicity, religion, and class. Jewish economic activities therefore refashioned public images of Jews as useful members of Pennsylvania’s society and culture.²

² T.H. Breen has shown the relationship between consumption of British goods and formulation of British identity, and how easily that consumer identity was transferable to an emergent national consciousness in British North America. Breen also shows that public articulation of economic interests—say, in secular print and marketplace—fomented solidarity and eventually nationalism, see *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford, 2005); idem, “Baubles of Britain: The American and Consumer Revolution of the Eighteenth Century,” *Past and Present* 119 (1988), 73-104; idem, “Narrative of Commercial Life: Consumption, Ideology, and Community on the Eve of the American Revolution,” *WMQ* 50 (1993), 471-501. Snyder shows Habermas’s theory in action by examining the economic activities among Jews of Newport, Savannah, and Jamaica, see Snyder, “Place,” 156-77.

Despite such positive gains toward a practical social acceptance for Jewish migrants, colonials reformulated Old-World prejudices to suit their New-World environments. Jews therefore found it difficult to overcome anti-Jewish sentiment, which frustrated their efforts toward full integration and acceptance. In the aftermath of the Seven Years' War, Jews experienced conflict with Quakers, failed in their attempts to recoup the losses they incurred during the war and, following the revolution, lost most of their tenuous claims to frontier lands to colonial leaders who controlled the revolutionary governments of Virginia and Pennsylvania. To make matters even worse, Jews saw their status as outsiders reaffirmed by Pennsylvania's 1776 state constitution, which instituted Christian religious tests for public servants. Acceptance of Jews as social peers among gentiles was one thing. Acceptance of Jews who directly wielded political power as equal citizens of an emergent republic was quite another. Yet, the lessons regarding economic patronage that Jews had learned during the colonial period formed the bedrock for their political activism in the early years of the republic.

Between 1710 and 1715 the first stage of Jewish migrations began with the first permanent Jewish settler, Isaac Miranda, a Sephardic Jew who fled London and arrived in New York, before migrating to Pennsylvania. His experiences point the way for future generations of Jews who built their wealth and status through trade with Indians on Pennsylvania's frontier. Pennsylvania's growing economy attracted merchants and fur traders. Miranda, unlike most migrants, arrived with his immediate family in tow, but similar to other migrants he left his extended family in Europe. That Miranda's surname derived from the Iberian Peninsula suggests Isaac's family was probably of *Maranno* extraction. Persecutions forced the family to move to Tuscany, where they practiced their Judaism openly, without fear of persecution. Miranda

probably had connections to the Sephardic-led international network of businesspeople, essential contacts beyond those he had made in London, New York, and Pennsylvania. Miranda settled on Conoy Creek, later Lancaster County, and abandoned his Jewish faith to better succeed as a merchant-trader and, surprisingly, as a farmer. As a Christian he was allowed to buy land without restrictions. (European Jews could not own land, which is why most arrived as merchants and shopkeepers.) Miranda built a sizable farm and established himself as a fur trader and land speculator.³

By the 1710s, Pennsylvania was second in the fur trade to New York. The abundance of deer in Pennsylvania attracted frontier-types to the region, including Miranda. Fascinated by British guns, rum, and blankets, natives exchanged furs for such commodities. Miranda's shrewd dealings with Indians earned him respect in Lancaster and Philadelphia. He conducted business with Quaker merchants, and partnered in frontier peltry and land speculation with James Logan, perhaps the highest profiled Quaker not named Penn. Miranda opened a trading post near Campbell's Inn in Lancaster and built two houses in Philadelphia in addition to his 500-acre farm. Miranda advertised as "Shopkeeper over against the Sign of the George in Second Street" in Philadelphia. His wealth included silver house wares, large Hebraic library, a farm, and several tracts of land, which totaled more than 5,000 acres in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Miranda transacted important business affairs for Pennsylvania Governor William Keith. His conversion to Christianity allowed him to hold positions in the law, including public office, a profession closed to Jews in British colonies. Miranda probably had no legal training, but his wealth, social status, and conversion to Christianity allowed him to hold multiple public offices.

³ CAJ, I, 188, 322, II, 624-25; Pitcock, "Commerce," 55-65; JOP, 18-22; Pencak, *Jews*, 175; Trivellato, *Strangers*. A *Maranno* was a term coined by Spanish and Portuguese Christians that described Jewish converts to Christianity, or a crypto-Jew who hid their Judaism.

In 1727, Pennsylvania Governor Patrick Gordon appointed Miranda, “Agent to Receive and Collect the Perquisites and Rights of Admiralty,” and he served as deputy judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty. Miranda, whose family was conditioned to hide their Judaism, swore Christian oaths without reservation as requirements to serve in public offices. James Logan and Miranda crossed paths in western land speculation and the fur trade. Born in Ireland to Scottish parents, Logan arrived in Pennsylvania with Penn and thereafter held numerous important legal and political positions in Pennsylvania. Logan and Miranda made fortunes in frontier expansion and fur trade. In partnership, they protected their investments by securing titles to lands on the western side of the Susquehanna River. Miranda understood that the friendship of the likes of Logan and Penn brought him closer to colonial authority and potential favors, which refashioned his public image as a man of polite society and a politician with substantial means to widen frontier expansion. Miranda’s frontier bona fides earned him participation in every dimension of civil society and the respect of Anglo-Americans. But it cost him his Jewishness.⁴

After Miranda’s death, the second wave of permanent Jewish settlers to Pennsylvania, almost exclusively German Ashkenazim, continuously arrived, drawn by Philadelphia’s urban commercialism, fertile soil in the countryside, and fur trade. This period was a time of turmoil for German Jews, as imperial decree banished them. Benjamin Franklin’s *Pennsylvania Gazette*

⁴ Bernard Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York, 1986); Judith Ridner, “Relying on the ‘Saucy’ Men of the Backcountry: Middlemen and the Fur Trade in Pennsylvania,” *PMHB* 129 (2005), 133-62; A.T. Volwiler, “George Croghan and the Westward Movement, 1741-1782,” *PMHB* 46 (1922), 273-311; Pencak and Richter, *Friends*, 18-40; *EAJ*, II, 3-4; *CAJ*, I, 259, II, 724-25; Isaac Miranda, Will, June 30, 1732, Register of Wills, City of Philadelphia, Will No. 401, Book E, 320-25, copy in *AJA*; Nicholas B. Wainwright, “An Indian Trade Failure: The Story of the Hockley, Trent and Croghan Company, 1748-1752,” *PMHB* 72 (1948), 343; quote in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 25, 1739. Maryland and North Carolina, amazingly, forbade Jewish lawyers until well into the nineteenth century, see Leon Hühner, “Jews in the Legal and Medical Professions in America Prior to 1800,” *PAJHS* 22 (1914), 149-50; idem, “The Struggle for Religious Liberty in North Carolina, With Special Reference to the Jews” *PAJHS* 16 (1907), 37-70; “Acquisitions,” *AJA* 5 (1953), 59-60; *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, IX, 738, 632; quoted in *JOP*, 18-29; *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1852), III, 160-61.

reported the plight of these Germanic Jews throughout the decade of the 1730s; indeed, many of them ultimately settled in Philadelphia. With the arrival of small farmers, which included Dutch, Swedes, Finns, Germans and Scots-Irish, the hinterland flourished. From 1731 to 1770, Pennsylvania's exports increased three-fold, while imports increased six-fold. Mindful of their religious and ethnic "otherness," most Jews did not invest in land to farm—Miranda was an exception. Émigrés wished to maintain ties to their coreligionists congregated in urban centers, and most lacked sophisticated husbandry and agricultural skills. As merchant-traders, though, they stimulated economic growth, and they had little trouble interacting with German farmers, because they shared common ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Eighteenth-century migrants were mostly young male bachelors, who arrived alone or in small family groups of two or three individuals. They found wives from members of established communities in New York and Newport, or, like Miranda, intermarried with Christians. Farmers and fur traders sent to Philadelphia's port dozens of goods, commodities, and natural resources from the western frontier and hinterland. In the city, meanwhile, cosmopolitanism, cultural institutions, and social clubs attracted intelligent, cultured, and enterprising people to the city, including Jews, the future leaders of the Jewish communities that developed in Pennsylvania. As westward expansion commenced, these Jewish leaders prospered in business and forged fruitful friendships and business relationships with elite gentiles. They paved an essential pathway to social acceptance for their coreligionists, whose migrations continued unabated throughout the eighteenth century. New arrivals looked to their established brethren for leadership and guidance when they arrived in a strange land. From Philadelphia, New York City, and other urban centers, hundreds of

migrants followed their more adventurous coreligionists west to such frontier towns as Lancaster, Easton, York, Reading, Carlisle, and Pittsburgh.⁵

In 1734, Nathan Levy arrived in Philadelphia, followed thereafter by his brother Isaac. Two years later, the Levy brothers opened a store on Front Street. Sometime between 1735 and 1740, Joseph Simon and his nephew Levy Andrew Levy fled London for New York City. Simon made his way to Philadelphia; later he and Levy settled in Lancaster, a village founded in 1730, situated about 80 miles west of Philadelphia, and colonial Pennsylvania's most important inland city. Simon purchased lands and operated a store. An Ashkenazi of German extraction, Simon naturalized in Pennsylvania, and fit right in with local Germans. Lancaster became home to more than 3,000 people by mid-century, including Barnard Jacob, a fur trader and shopkeeper who also served his brethren as itinerant rabbi and circumciser. Nathan's family, like Simon and Jacob's, hailed from Germany, the *Dorfjuden* or "Village Jews" of Ashkenazi extraction.⁶

In the seventeenth century, much of the Levy family migrated to Amsterdam and London. Some members of the Levy clan remained in Europe, while others journeyed to Brazil, the Caribbean, and New Amsterdam. Nathan was born and raised in New York but traveled far and often. In 1734, Nathan traveled to London, where he learned the merchant trade from the

⁵ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 27, 1729, September 9, 1731, October 21, 1736, September 8, 1737. Larger numbers of Jews may have arrived earlier, but the historical record remains silent save references to Jews in the *American Weekly Mercury*, such as October 27, 1719, November 10, 1720, August 24, 1721, May 10 and 31, 1722, November 8, 1722, March 7, 1723, and October 17, 1723; *CAJ*, I, 251-92, 290, 322, II, 532, 670; Goodman, *Overture*, 125; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 24, 1733; *Pennsylvania Journal*, January 29, March 19, and April 4, 1754.

⁶ David Brener, "Lancaster's First Jewish Community, 1715-1804: The Era of Joseph Simon," *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* 80 (1976), 211-12; Pitock, "Commerce," 55-65; Indentures, March 8, 1750, June 3, 1751, February 14, 1752, and August 10, 1753, Lancaster County Records, SC-6574, Barnard Jacobs, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 9, Folder 28, AJA; Hollander, "Naturalization," 117; *BMG*, 102; Monroe B. Hirsh, "The Early Jewish Colony in Lancaster County," *Papers Read Before the Lancaster County Historical Society* 5 (1901), 91-94; *CAJ*, I, 328-31. As early as 1734, Isaac was in Philadelphia, probably scouting the economic prospects for the Levy-Franks family complex, see Abigaill Franks to Naphtali Franks, December 25, 1734, in Gelles, *Letters*, 32-35; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 27, August 3, 10, September 1, 14, 1738, and October 2, 1740.

Franks family. Members and associates of the Franks-Levy families comprised one component of a well-connected and influential multi-family complex of Jewish businesspeople in the Atlantic world. They gained connections, reputations, and much needed credit. Nathan's father, Moses Levy, was a wealthy merchant-trader, pillar of New York's Jewish community, and an important agent in the transatlantic Levy-Franks family network.⁷

In the mid-seventeenth century, members of Moses Levy's immediate family fled Hanover (Lower Saxony), Germany for Spain. Either born in Spain or London, Moses lived in London for a time, where he learned the merchant trade from his relatives, the Franks clan. The Franks family had also migrated west from Germany. Moses Levy and Jacob Franks, who clerked for Levy, migrated together with their families from London to New York, where they partnered in business. With family members in Amsterdam, New York, and London, the Levy-Franks partnership solidified the family's business contacts in the three most important Anglo-American commercial hubs. Moses was the patriarch of a family that included seven sons and four daughters. Two of his sons, Isaac and Michael Levy, controlled the Levy-Franks business in Jamaica and Barbados. One of his daughters, Bilhah Abigaill (sometimes Abigail but she preferred Abigaill) Levy, married Jacob Franks, which solidified their kinship alliance. As family agents, Nathan and Isaac moved to Philadelphia and expanded the multi-family network.⁸

⁷ Abigaill Franks to Naphtali Franks, December 25, 1734, *LFF*, 33-35; *CAJ*, I, 260, 278-79, II, 580-81, 597-98; Leo Hershkowitz, "Wills of Early New York Jews (1704-1740)," *AJHQ* 55 (1966), 319-63. For more on Franks family, see Misc. Franks Genealogy, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 17, Moses Levy Business Records, January 2, 1710, July 1711, Levy Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, AJHS. Most recent scholarship has focused upon Jewish economic enterprise and cross-cultural trade of Sephardim, see Cornelia Aust, "Commercial Cosmopolitans: Networks of Jewish Merchants Between Warsaw and Amsterdam, 1750-1820," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2010); Noah Gelfand, "A People Within and Without: International Jewish Commerce and Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries Dutch Atlantic World," (Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, 2008); Trivellato, *Strangers*. New studies have emerged that emphasize the Ashkenazim and Philadelphia, see Pitock, "Commerce," and idem, "Commerce and Community: Philadelphia's Early Jewish Settlers, 1736-76," *PMHB* 140 (2016), 271-303; Fish, *Gratz*, 16-17.

⁸ Pencak, *Jews*, 175-81; N. Taylor Phillips, "The Levy and Seixas Families of Newport and New York," *PAJHS* 4 (1896), 189-96; Lee M. Friedman, "Wills of Early Jewish Settlers in New York," *PAJHS* 23 (1915), 158-59; Pitock, "Commerce," 39-44; Matson, *Merchants*, 139, 188-90. In London, both families attended the Ashkenazi Great

In about 1740, the sons of Abigaill and Jacob, David and Moses Franks migrated to Philadelphia from New York City. A third son Naphtali arrived with them but soon moved to London and worked closely with uncles, Isaac and Aaron Franks. Jacob Franks, like Moses Levy, sent his sons to Philadelphia with substantial financial means, reputation, and credit to learn the merchant trade from Nathan and Isaac and to broaden the family's commercial activities. Jacob was heir to the fortune of Abraham Franks, one of the wealthiest, most well connected and influential individuals of late seventeenth-century London. Abraham was a founding member of the London Stock Exchange, one among only twelve Jews allowed to join this exclusive club. That Abraham was a member of the founding cohort demonstrates that Anglo-American acceptance of enterprising Jews was on the rise, as much as it underscores the clout of the family complex. Abraham sent Jacob to New York for the same reasons that Jacob and Moses had sent their sons to Philadelphia: to broaden their transatlantic patronage network and economic interests. Jacob's brother, Aaron, lived in Madras, India, where he became a linchpin in the coral and diamond trade. Back in London, he became a notable broker of fine jewelry and gems. Known for his philanthropy, Aaron loaned jewelry to the Princess of Wales, dined with such aristocrats as Horace Walpole, and was a personal friend of the king. Aaron also assisted his brethren in Germany, which demonstrates the potential empowerment of patronage and friendship with powerful gentiles. Aaron not only offered the court at Vienna large sums of money but also appealed to King George II on behalf of his Ashkenazim brethren expelled from Prague. Jews in Amsterdam and The Hague made similar appeals. From 1671 to 1779, Bevis Marks synagogue paid an annual tribute of £50 to London's Lord Mayor to ensure his favors. A

Synagogue, but attended New York's Sephardic congregation, Shearith Israel, see Cecil Roth, *The Great Synagogue: London, 1690-1940* (London, 1950). Moses Levy's brother, Samuel, migrated to New York with Moses and Jacob Franks, see Levy II, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 11, Folder 5, AJA.

day after Franks's appeal, King George interceded on behalf of Prague's Jewish community. Although some émigrés fled Prague, most of them remained in Bohemia and even received royal protection thereafter, chiefly due to Franks's influence. The Levy and Franks families and their associates held substantial capital and credit; they also enjoyed the respect and patronage of their Christian neighbors. Such efforts demonstrate the power of well-connected Jews in London who had earned the patronage of British leaders. Jews sought to emulate those efforts in British North America.⁹

Born in Germany, Jacob Franks was raised in London, where he gained an impressive Hebrew education in Jewish Law, became multilingual, and was known among London's Ashkenazim as a learned rabbi. But his powerful family sent him to New York. He arrived with substantial capital and solidified his reputation as a no-nonsense businessman. Jacob's experiences demonstrated to his son David and other migrants that one's education, reputation, and keen business sense gained them status and opportunities in Anglo-American society. Jacob, Moses, and David became members of New York's militia, which earned them respect among neighbors. Jacob utilized his reputation to make important connections and to widen his other activities in civil society. He became the King's fiscal agent for New York and northern colonies, distributed royal revenues to colonial officials, and supplied British troops in North

⁹ The brothers traveled around before settling Philadelphia. In 1735, for example, David explored the economic potential of Boston, and even considered London and Jamaica, see Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, December 12, 1735, July 6, 1740, April 26, 1741, and June 21, 1741, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 1 and 2, AJHS; Pitock, "Commerce," 52-56; Roth, *Synagogue*, 47-65. Jews petitioned for additional broker positions in 1723, 1730, and 1739, but the Alderman denied them, see Snyder, "Place," 69. Aaron's reputation in that trade was made possible through his aunt Abigail, Jacob's sister, who married Benedictus Salomons, a scion in India's diamond trade, see Petition to the King on behalf of the Bohemian Jews (Moses Hart and Aaron Franks), December 27, 1744, and Lord Chesterfield to Sir Thomas Robinson, February 24, 1745, Oppenheim Collection, Box 24, Folder 36, AJHS. Instructions from Lord Harrington, December 28, 1744, Gentleman's Magazine, 1745, Oppenheim Collection, Box 24, Folder 36, AJHS; Todd Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714-1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society* (Philadelphia, 1979), 21-24. American Jews kept a close eye on the plight of their European brethren, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 25, 1745 and *New York Weekly Post Boy*, April 22 and 29, 1745. Moses Franks married his cousin Phila, Aaron's daughter. When Aaron died in 1777, his will canceled £40,000 that Moses owed him, see Aaron Franks Will, September 2, 1777, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA.

America during the War of Jenkins' Ear (1739-48) and King George's War (1744-48). As General James Oglethorpe prepared to invade Spanish Florida, Jacob and Moses Franks obtained a contract to supply troops and prepared a cargo of supplies in London destined for Savannah. At his death in 1769, Jacob remained an agent to the contractors supplying the Royal Navy. Abigaill and Jacob cultivated friendships with prominent families, earned their patronage, and frequented New York Governor George Clinton's mansion as guests. David and Moses, then, hailed from a Jewish family with deep connections to Anglo-American elites, which provided them with not only a web of trusted associates, mentors, and patrons but also with capital, status, and credit. The multi-family complex expanded to Philadelphia, in addition to established nodes in New York, London, and Montreal, where Abraham Franks, Jacob's eldest son, served as family agent.¹⁰

In Philadelphia, the Levy brothers located their business on the waterfront at "Front-Street" near "Pemberton's Wharffe." That the Levy business was located close to the Pemberton family's business is significant. Israel Pemberton, Jr., whose estate was the largest in colonial

¹⁰ Recognizance of Abraham De Lucena, Regarding Jacob Franks, November 10, 1711, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 7, AJHS; Franks Family Notes, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA; Phillips, "Levy and Seixas Families," 189-190; *CAJ*, I, 279, 284; Matson, *Merchants*, 135, 168, 188-90. Aaron's brother, David, became Burgess of the Madras Corporation, which controlled much of the diamond trade at Fort St. George at Madras. Another brother, Isaac, held stock in the Hudson Bay Company, and upon his death in 1736 left an estate worth £300,000. The brothers married the daughters of Moses Hart, their wealthy uncle with close ties to Queen Anne, see Oppenheim Collection, Box 2, Folder 83, AJHS; Stern, *Franks*, 6-10, 25; Pitock, "Commerce," 43, 77-78; Endelman, *Georgian England*, 138, 251. For more on the Hart family, see the many sources gathered in the Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 8, Folders 3-14, AJA. The ship sank en route. From New York, Jacob asked David to travel to Georgia and settle their affairs. David's absence made no difference in the day-to-day operation of his firm because agents in Philadelphia prepared and shipped goods to Naphtali in London. The coordination of multiple transactions from four cities in the Atlantic world—London, New York, Philadelphia, and Savannah—became the rule rather than the exception. Such efficiency strengthened the reputations of Jewish members of the consortium, see Jacob Franks to Naphtali Franks, November 22, 1743, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 7 and 9, AJHS; Leo Hershkowitz, *Wills of Early New York Jews, 1704-1799* (Philadelphia, 1967); *New York Weekly Journal*, April 12, 1739; Pitock, "Commerce," 1-46. Trivellato shows similar marriage patterns in Livorno, see Trivellato, *Strangers*. There has been some confusion about Abraham Franks, because Malcolm Stern listed Abraham as Jacob's brother in his *Americans of Jewish Descent*. In 1782, David Franks wrote a letter to Tench Coxe and Andrew Hamilton, in which he states that Abraham Franks of Montreal was his brother, see David Franks to Tench Coxe and Andrew Hamilton, May 10, 1782, Herbert H. Franks to Malcolm Stern, May 26, 1987, Stern to Franks, November 21, 1987, David Franks File, Small Collections, SC-3644, AJA.

Pennsylvania, was known as “King of the Quakers.” An influential politician and merchant, Pemberton served in the assembly. The Levy brothers hoped to gain favors that the likes of Pemberton might bestow upon the family. That they located their business next to the “King of the Quakers” and publicized their proximity to Pemberton in newspapers must have lent credence to the name Levy in the eyes of consumers. Nathan and Isaac Levy taught David and Moses Franks the basics of the merchant trade and introduced them to business contacts in Pennsylvania. Quick learners with substantial financial resources, David and Moses partnered in a joint venture, and opened a store on “Front Street” in Philadelphia’s central marketplace.

Moses returned to New York for a brief sojourn, before joining Naphtali in London, where they worked with their uncles Aaron and Isaac. In Philadelphia, Nathan and David partnered to form the trading firm, Levy & Franks. Veteran merchants imparted commercial expertise and provided already-established relationships to novice family members. Cross-cultural cooperation facilitated the financial successes and social validation of the Levy-Franks family complex. When Moses returned to London, Abigaill reminded him to “be Gratefull to his friends,” and to “regulate his Conduct in Such Sort As to Deserve and keep wath is Soe well begun.” Relationships with friends and patrons, like reputations, had to be nurtured and respected. Moses heeded his mother’s advice and became his family and friends’ most trusted patron. By the 1760s, he emerged as a polite socialite, enjoyed access to both king and Parliament, and hobnobbed with the Prime Minister, Edmund Burke, Lord Rockingham, and colonials, such as New Jersey Governor William Franklin and the ubiquitous Benjamin Franklin.¹¹

¹¹ Nathan and Isaac Levy found success in the transatlantic slave trade and contracted with European indentured servants for safe passage to New York and Philadelphia. In the Mid-Atlantic colonies, the slave trade was never strong and diminished in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 3, August 17 and 24, September 7, 14, and 21, 1738, October, 2, 1740; *CAJ*, II, 697-705; Marietta, *Reformation*, 98-99; Eli

David Franks understood his mother's advice as well, and thus cultivated relationships with important patrons. David "Indorst over to Thomas Hyam" a "Bill Exchange of £150" sterling, he wrote Naphtali, and alluded to two more transactions between Thomas Hyam and Lynford Lardner. Thomas Hyam was a prominent merchant and served as personal business agent to the Penns. Lynford Lardner was a founding member of Philadelphia's Dancing Assembly and served as its first manager. David joined this exclusive club once he had established himself as a leading merchant. Lardner also served as an officer in Philadelphia's Independent Troop of Horse, a private cavalry brigade formed to protect the city during the Seven Years' War. Alongside fellow Jew, Moses Mordecai, David joined its ranks as well. David's association with elites led him to model his public self-image on their examples, such as his use of "Esq.," a designation that British "gentlemen" were wont to do. Margaret Evans Franks, David's wife, appeared on the "List of Belles and Dames of Philadelphia fashionables," a list of notables attending the "ball of the City Assembly." Levy and Franks partnered with Thomas Hopkinson to purchase the schooner *Drake*. In 1731, Hopkinson arrived in Philadelphia from London, and became a notable intellectual. A close friend of Benjamin Franklin, Hopkinson worked with Franklin on scientific experiments, and introduced Levy and Franks to

Faber, *Jews, Slaves, and the Slave Trade: Setting the Record Straight* (New York, 1998); Jay Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade, 1700-1807* (Philadelphia, 1981), 239-85; Pemberton Family Papers, 1641-1880, Collection 484A, HSP; Marietta, *Reformation*, 42-44; Theodore Thayer, *Israel Pemberton, King of the Quakers* (Philadelphia, 1943), idem, "The Pemberton Papers," *PMHB* 67 (1943), 280-86; Jaher, *Scapegoat*, 54; Franks quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 16, 1741 and May 7 and 21, 1741; *American Weekly Mercury*, April 23, May 14, 1741; Stern, *Franks*, 13, 39-45, 90-101; Court of Common Pleas, Docket 1746-1747, 34; Bill of Exchange, Levy and Franks on Lynford Lardner, Penn Accounts, Large Folio, 1, 81, HSP; David Franks Account Book, 1760-1767, Am 0684, HSP. For partnership, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 26, 1745; Pitock, "Commerce," 35-116. For familial connections, see *EAJ*, I, 50-7, II, 6; Nathan and Isaac Levy Business Records, 1739, Levy Papers, Box 1, Folder 9, Accounts of Treasurer of Colony of NY, August 11, 1740, Franks Imported 5 Heads Rum, August 26, 1740, Oppenheim Collection, Box 2, Folder 88, quoted, Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, December 12, 1735 and November 20, 1738, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, AJHS. Moses was also acquainted with James Parker, a New Jersey inventor, lawyer, mayor, and councilor under Governor Franklin, see James Parker to Moses Franks, March 1762 and [illegible] 1762, Lord Rockingham to Moses Franks, December 13, 1767, DeLancey to Moses Franks, January 4, 1775, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, AJHS; *CAJ*, III, 1151.

Franklin, whose friendship offered them access to cultural institutions, such as the Library Company, favors, influence, economic opportunities, and social prestige.

At Franklin's request, they contracted with indentured servants for passage across the Atlantic Ocean. Newspaper advertisements announced the services of such "likely servants, chiefly tradesman; such as ship carpenters," "joiners," "barbers," "bakers," "coopers," "painters," and other "labourers." Franks later partnered with Thomas Riche and Daniel Rundle to import "A Cargoe of Likely Negroes...directly fromm...Guiney." Franks, Levy Andrew Levy, the Gratz brothers, among others, owned slaves, a sign of their rising affluence and identification with elites. In a contemporary pamphlet, Franklin pointed out that labor costs remained high because of a small population in North America and underscored the benefits of a bountiful labor supply. Franklin argued that unlimited land benefitted migrants and their economic activities grew the wealth of the empire. Levy and Franks, at least in part, helped to put those ideas into practice.¹²

Colonial trade, however, was wracked with currency problems. A scarcity of hard money and volatility of provincial paper money led to numerous forms of money in circulation.

¹² David Franks to Naphtali Franks, March 14, 1743, in *LFF*, 112; "The Philadelphia Dancing Assembly," *PMHB* 34 (1910), 243. For Esq, see the numerous letters in Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 8-11, AJHS, and Legal Documents and Correspondence Reflecting Activities as Colonial Attorney, Franks File, SC-3643, AJA. For Independent Troop of Horse, see Franks Family Notes, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA; *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, II, 448. Franks also held pretensions of a position in New York's Law Department, see David Franks's Book (New York, 1786), copy in AJHS; quoted Stern, *Franks*, 16, 32; "Ship Registers for the Port of Philadelphia, 1726-1775," *PMHB* 23 (1899), 254-64, 370-85, 498-515; *ibid.*, vol. 24 (1900), 108-15, 212-23, 348-66, 507; *ibid.*, vol. 25 (1901), 126; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 7, 1745, March 15, September 1, 1748, June 8, 1749, October 4, 1750, and August 9, 1753; Samuel Oppenheim, "Jewish Owners of Ships Registered at the Port of Philadelphia, 1730-1775," *PAJHS* 26 (1918), 235-36; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 22, 1748, May 26, 1748, August 11, 1748, August 18, 1748, November 23, 1749, January 23, 1750, August 9, 1750, September 6, 1750, November 15, 1750, March 19, 1751, May 9, 1751, and August 2, 1753; servant quotes *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 26, 1745, November 14 and 21, 1751, and March 17, 1752; slave quotes in Pitock, "Commerce," 96, also 60-63; Benjamin Franklin, "Observations Concerning the Increasing of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, &c.," (Boston, 1755), copy in AAS; Pencak, *Jews*, 184; *JOP*, 190-93. Benjamin Levy, Michael Moses, David Franks, Israel Jacobs, Myer Josephson, and other Jewish entrepreneurs obtained domestic servants and slaves, a hallmark trait of high society, see *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, December 14, 1767; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 23, 1762 and December 10, 1767.

Provincials used European specie, as well as colonial currency. George Washington, for example, asked David Franks if Virginia currency—“having little of another kind with us”—was an acceptable form of payment for provisions that David provided his forces. No standard rate of exchange existed, either. David requested that Naphtali “Exchange for Jersey Money” the £300 he had received from Hyam and Lardner “for I am in want of Money” and “cant get any Money in to” Pennsylvania. That colonial currency was valued less than the British pound cut into profits. By 1763, the exchange rate improved, but was still almost 2 to 1: £10 in Pennsylvania currency was about £6 sterling. This discrepancy led more than eighty prominent businessmen in Philadelphia to petition Parliament for a standard rate of exchange throughout the empire. Levy and Franks signed it, suggesting their growing involvement in the marketplace.¹³

The third stage of Jewish migrations commenced at about the mid-century mark, when arrivals contributed to the vast diversity and growing population of Pennsylvania’s urban centers and frontier towns. In the 1740s, Jacob and Solomon Bloch fled Langendorf, Silesia (125 miles southwest of Berlin), and settled in London, where they anglicized their names to Henry and clerked for the Franks-Levy family complex. Jacob Henry also clerked for David Franks and Joseph Simon. Solomon, meanwhile, remained in London. The Henry brothers encouraged their cousins, Barnard and Michael Gratz to follow them abroad. Jacob returned to London, but not before recommending Barnard Gratz to Franks as a suitable replacement. Barnard spent several years in Holland, Kraków, Prague, and London, where he too clerked for the Levy-Franks

¹³ George Washington to David Franks, May 1, 1758, in *The Writings of George Washington From the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, ed., John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1931-1944), II, 190; David Franks to Naphtali Franks, March 14, 1743, in *LFF*, 112; Solomon Henry to His Father and Mother, January 14, 1763, *BMG*, 60; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 16, 1742; Matthias Bush to Barnard Gratz, November 7, 1769, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 5, Folder 36, AJA.

family, before assuming his duties with Franks in Philadelphia. Michael Gratz fled Langendorf and, like his brother, traveled the world a bit. He spent time in London, Berlin, the Caribbean, Amsterdam, and India. He returned to London, and embarked upon the transatlantic voyage to Philadelphia, where he too clerked for David Franks. Solomon Henry served as Michael's agent in London and loaded David's vessel *Myrtila* with goods destined for the New World. The years spent abroad allowed them to study world markets. As seasoned merchant-traders in a globalizing world, the Gratzes formed a partnership, the firm B. and M. Gratz, which the Penn family patronized.¹⁴

The experiences of Jacob Henry show the prospects for cooperation between Jews and Christians. When Jacob Henry was robbed on his way to Amsterdam from Breslau, he returned to Philadelphia where he opened a store on Water Street with "a credit of merchandise to the

¹⁴ The population of British North America grew from about 250,000 in 1700 to about one million in 1750. At mid-century, about 13,000 people resided in Philadelphia, see Nash and Smith, "Population," 366. Pitcock, "Commerce," 65-80, 90-100; Solomon Henry to Parents, February 14, 1763, Gratz-Sulzberger Papers, SC-4292, AJA. Barnard earned £21 per annum, plus room and board. In the same year, Franks paid taxes on a net income of £70, see David Franks in Account with Barnard Gratz, February 1, 1754, Gratz-Franks-Simon Papers, (McA MSS 011), McAllister Collection, Box 2, Folder 61, LCP; David Franks Account Book, 1757-1762, Etting Collection, Collection 0193, Box 1a, HSP; *JOP*, 36-42; *BMG*, 9-13, 31; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 26 and November 6, 1760. For quotes, see *Pennsylvania Journal*, July 26, 1759; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 2, 1759; Michael Gratz to Hyman and Jonathan Gratz, c. 1758, and Solomon Henry to Michael Gratz, February 16, 1760, Gratz Papers, SC-4292, AJA; Fish, *Gratz*, 1-32, 78; Jonathan Bloch to Solomon Henry, June/July 22, 1757, and Jonathan Bloch to Jacob Henry, February/March, 1756, McAllister Collection, HSP; Last Will and Testament of Michael Gratz, 1765, and Policy of Marine Insurance, May 16, 1761, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folders 4 and 17, AJHS. In 1761, Barnard purchased a £200 insurance policy to protect cargo destined for Western Africa. The return cargo, of course, consisted of slaves, see Myer Josephson to Michael Gratz, February 19, 1763, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, AJHS, translation from Yiddish in Joshua N. Neumann, "Some Eighteenth-Century American Jewish Letters," *PAJHS* 34 (1937), 84-85. In one case, a slave-buyer refused to pay, and the Gratzes threatened a lawsuit, see Myer Josephson to Michael Gratz, September 7, 1763 and February 19, 1763, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, AJHS, translation from Yiddish in Neumann, "Letters," 84-88. The Gratzes partnered with Solomon Henry in the diamond trade at Madras, see James Cunningham to Barnard and Michael Gratz, July 5, 1766, Cornelius Tucker to Barnard Gratz, July 31, 1766, Henry Cruger, Jr. to Barnard Gratz, October 8, 1766, J. Cohen Henrig to Michael Gratz, January 8, 1766, Joseph Brown to Michael Gratz, July 6, 1766, Elias and Isaac Rodriguez Miranda to Michael Gratz, January 9, 1766, *BMG*, 78-80; Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, February 16, 1760, SC-4292, AJA; Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, August 19, 1757, and Solomon Henry to Michael Gratz, February 16, 1760, SC-4292, AJA. The brothers also patronized Myer Josephson at Reading, partnered with Captain Isaac Martin in the tobacco and flour trade, and Thomas Bruce and William Nesbitt in Savannah's indigo market, see Meyer Josephson to Gratz brothers, December 1, 1760 and February 28, 1762, Henry Joseph Collection, MS-451, Boxes 1 and 2, AJA (hereafter Gratz Correspondence); idem, November 2, 1761, SC-4292, AJA.

amount of about £3000 sterling” from Christian merchants. Jacob’s Christian friends extended him a substantial sum of money on credit and without security. Solomon attempted to provide Jacob £200 for security, but Jacob refused, and the Christian merchants loaned him the money anyway. They did so with the knowledge that Jacob’s financial situation remained bleak, chiefly because “of his honest disposition and the regard entertained for him by Christian merchants who know his skill in goods for the American market.” The store, however, failed. In poor health, Jacob spent time in Lancaster, New York, and Newport, and died in arrears to both his brother, Solomon, and cousin, Barnard Gratz. “The whole estate,” Solomon wrote to his parents, “is substantially composed of debts owing by Jews; three or four have already failed.” One’s reputation and self-presentation as a merchant of credibility meant acceptance among neighbors, and at times even financial assistance from those neighbors.¹⁵

Growth of frontier trade led the Jewish business community to make additional contacts in western Pennsylvania. West of the Appalachian Mountains remained a wilderness, but backwoodsmen and trappers visited these vast lands and competed for the loyalties of local natives. Those who respected native culture received their patronage and pelts. Levy and Franks searched for capable traders who acted as intermediaries between natives and merchants. The partners befriended William Trent and George Croghan, whose need for British goods to exchange with natives brought Jews into frontier trade on a much larger scale. As Philadelphia slowly grew in population and geographical size, rugged frontier types gradually moved farther west from Philadelphia and its surrounding settlements. As a result, Lancaster became the most

¹⁵ Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, February 16, 1760, SC-4925, AJA; Jacob’s List of Expenses for Lawsuit, June 16, 1756, Jacob Henry, Breslau, List of Expenses, June 16, 1756, and Will of Jacob Henry, April 14, 1760, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 22, AJHS; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 1, September 8, and October 6, 1757; quote in Solomon Henry to Barnard Gratz, July 18, 1766, Gratz Papers, Manuscript Collection 72, Series I, APS; quoted Solomon Henry to His Father and Mother, January 28, 1763, Jacob Henry to David Franks and Barnard Gratz, July 14, 1760, *BMG*, 59-61.

important commercial entrepôt in colonial Pennsylvania after Philadelphia, because it sat on the dominant routes running west to Fort Pitt and the Ohio River Valley farther west, north into New York, and south into Virginia. Lancaster's location ensured that a continuous traffic of traders and troops visited the village, which soon grew into a bustling town. Small communities developed along Conestoga Creek, including Conestoga and York. Individual Jews settled at Easton, Heidelberg, and Reading. Joseph Simon partnered with his nephew Levy Andrew Levy, and opened a small hardware store in Lancaster's Penn Square. Simon also partnered in a store and a blacksmith venture with a native of Chester County, William Henry, a capable gunsmith, inventor, and scientist. The partners catered to the German population in the region. They crafted high-demand silver wares destined for Indian trade. Traders utilized silver as gifts to native chiefs, which facilitated productive exchanges between Europeans and natives. Simon opened a distillery, operated by Mordecai Moses Mordecai who had migrated from Lithuania, and a snuff factory. He partnered with Benjamin Nathan to open a general store in Heidelberg. Alexander Lowery's friendship with Simon blossomed into a lucrative business association that flourished for more than forty years. A Scots-Irish immigrant, Lowery arrived in Pennsylvania in 1729, and became an established fur trader, along with his brothers. The friendship ran deeper than ledgers and contracts. According to legend, the two friends met and reconciled their accounts without error or disagreement, sometimes decades later. Such tales of mutual honesty between Jew and gentile demonstrated that Christians and Jews could not only live alongside each other in harmony but could also develop meaningful friendships rooted in goodwill and respect. The legend shows that cross-cultural friendships and business relationships could surmount differences of religion and ethnicity.¹⁶

¹⁶ Thomas Perkins Abernethy, *Western Lands and the American Revolution* (New York, 1937), 1-18; Kenneth P. Bailey, ed., *The Ohio Company Papers, 1753-1817: Being Primarily Papers of the "Suffering Traders" of*

Affluent Jews extended support and education to other upstarts in the same family complexes, the next generation of merchants-traders and shopkeepers. Barnard offered Michael an opportunity to work for David Franks, “in my place,” which would allow his brother to “do a little business for himself.” As one scholar points out, however, the benefits of membership in such Jewish networks of patronage had limitations. David Franks sued Lyon Lipman for nonpayment, an act replicated on various occasions. Benevolence extended as far as one’s reputation as a trusted and loyal agent of the Levy-Franks family complex. Coleman Salomons, David Franks’s cousin, dabbled in the Madras diamond trade. Salomons boarded with the Franks family in New York, and probably apprenticed with Jacob Franks in the merchant trade. Salomons, according to Abigail Levy Franks, was accused of lying and impregnating an acquaintance’s maid, and whose violent temper and reputation as a spendthrift, not only landed him in jail but also found the patronage of the Franks-Levy family withdrawn. Jacob concluded that “he can nor will doe noe more for Him.” Members of the network risked damaging their own reputations if they continued to support and defend Coleman’s depraved character. Jacob assisted Coleman’s brother, Moses, however, when the young man found himself overextended in a deal in South Carolina. Jacob paid his nephew’s debt, because Moses had proved himself reliable and honest. One’s honesty and reputation promoted trust between associates within the network.¹⁷

Pennsylvania (Ann Arbor, 1947), 1-18; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 22, 1747; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 2, 1740, and March 26, 1745; Nathan Levy to James Dinnen [Dunning], October 15, 1742, *EAJ*, II, 7-8; *CAJ*, I, 325-31, II, 595-96; Hirsh, “Lancaster,” 96-98; Samuel Evans, “Sketch of Joseph Simon,” *Papers Read Before the Lancaster County Historical Society* 3 (1899), 165-72; Fish, *Gratz*, 39; *BMG*, 62-63; Brener, *Lancaster*, 10-12; Pitock, “Commerce,” 63; James Lowery Sworn Deposition, August 26, 1754, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 9, AJHS.

¹⁷ Quoted Barnard Gratz to Solomon Henry, November 20, 1758, *BMG*, 36. The Levy, Henry, and Gratz brothers learned the merchant trade from the Franks-Levy clan in London and New York. Nathan and his brothers taught David Franks and Joseph Simon. Simon taught Levy Andrew Levy. Simon, Franks, and the Henry brothers taught Barnard. Barnard, Simon, and Franks taught Michael. Michael’s sons, Simon and Hyman, and David’s sons, Jack and Jacob, learned from their close families, and thus took over from their elders and operated the family business

Transatlantic business enterprise required more than trustworthy family and friends. Relationships with gentile patrons became an essential strategy among Jews, which contributed to the development of a practical avenue toward Jews' social acceptance. Thomas Penn, for example, paid Levy & Franks to transport goods destined for frontier trade. The partners relocated to "Second-street" to "the house of Isaac Norris, Esq; wherein the Governor lately lived." Norris was a prominent businessman, James Logan's son-in-law, and a staunch political partisan. A Quaker who served in the assembly, Norris, like Penn, conducted business with numerous Jewish merchants. Jewish-Quaker cooperation was not uncommon. As Speaker of the Provincial Assembly, Norris commissioned Levy & Franks to transport Philadelphia's famous Liberty Bell from England to Philadelphia, which underscores the importance of patronage for a minority group that hoped to integrate into the social fabric of Philadelphia's cultural scene. In this case, Norris patronized Jews, not his fellow Quakers, which demonstrates the benefits of refashioning public images for Jews. Patronage, though, had its limitations. At the same time that Norris entrusted Levy & Franks with precious cargo, he and his coreligionists denied them full equality. Access to authority, however, situated the partners as insiders in Pennsylvania, a replication of what the multi-family complex accomplished in London.¹⁸

well into the nineteenth century when they became close friends of Henry Clay's family, see Pitock, "Commerce," 37-38, 47-50, 86-90; *JOP*, 36-42; Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz, December 18, 1832, *LRG*, 163-66; Power of Attorney from Jacob and Moses Franks to David Franks and Nathan Levy, March 26, 1744, Franks File, SC-3643, AJA; quoted Abigail Levy Franks to Naphtali Franks, October 10, 1733, June 9, 1734, and December 25, 1734, in Gelles, *Letters*, 15, 19-21, 34; Trivellato, *Strangers*, 13.

¹⁸ Quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 22, 1751; Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Office of the Recorder of Deeds, 1849-85, Folders SC-6574, SC-6576, AJA; Stern, *Franks*, 17-18, 21; Real Estate of David Franks, Coxe Family Papers, Collection 2049, Series 1, Volume 277, Folder 36, HSP; Pitock, "Commerce," 61, 68-69; Henry Necarsulmer, "The Early Jewish Settlement at Lancaster, Pennsylvania," *PAJHS* 9 (1901), 29-44; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 27, 1751, September 28, 1752, June 7, 1753, September 27, 1759, and October 1, 1761; *JOP*, 26-30; Jacob Franks to Naphtali Franks, November 22, 1743, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 7, AJHS; Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, June 9, 1734, in Gelles, *Letters*, 21-22; Pitock, "Commerce," 58-59. Naphtali, for example, obtained a lucrative government contract to supply naval forces stationed in London, and served as New York Governor Crosby's agent in London, not to mention Jacob's many supply contracts.

Levy & Franks acquired four plots of land in the commercial center of Lancaster, a 300-acre plantation, an interest in two others, and other landholdings in Virginia. Franks and Simon grew closer, as Franks provided Simon's store a continuous supply of manufactured goods in exchange for Simon's silver. Franks assumed control of a large multifaceted trading firm, and purchased additional properties, including two in "Norris's Alley" in Philadelphia (another benefit of their association with Norris), a tract on the Delaware River, and a snuff mill on Cobb's Creek. David also mentored the Gratz brothers. He moved the business to Water Street and partnered with Nathan's brother Isaac, and the partners patronized Jews and non-Jews, including Robert Bulley of St. Johns, Mores and Hooper of Savannah, Joseph Wood of Georgia, Moses and Lazarus Jacobs and Joseph Levy of London.¹⁹

Patronage widened Jewish privileges in civil society, but persistent anti-Jewish prejudice offset some of their gains in the public sphere. In 1753, Parliament passed the "Jew Bill," which provided a structured and uniformed avenue for Jewish naturalization throughout the British Empire. A bill aimed at all Anglo-American Jews, not aliens alone, underscores the importance of Jewish wealth to the empire but also patronage and friendship for an ethno-religious group whose members had constructed a vast domestic and transatlantic network of businesspeople, patrons, and politicians. Such networks of kinship and friendship ensured Jew and gentile cooperation from the American frontiers to London and beyond. In 1740, the Franks-Levy

¹⁹ Pencak, *Jews*, 188-90; Franks to Tench Coxe and Andrew Hamilton, May 10, 1782, Robert Bulley to David Franks, June 27, 1758, Robert Bulley to David Franks and Benjamin Levy, November 3, 1759, Mores and Hooper to Franks, December 24, 1760, Joseph Wood in account with Franks, Franks File, SC-3643-44, AJA; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 15, February 19, March 5, May 16, June 27, and July 4, 1754, March 4, 1755, August 19 and November 18, 1756; Benjamin Levy to Tench Coxe, October 26, 1782, Coxe Family Papers, Collection 2049, Series 2, Box 12, Folder 2, HSP; Pitock, "Commerce," 96. In 1754, Isaac Levy invested £300 in the production of cotton on Georgia's Sea Islands. Levy's partner, a mysterious Mr. Bosomworth, sold the land and never repaid Levy his share. Levy petitioned the king but the Board of Trade sent the suit back to Georgia's Council, whose members were concerned with Bosomworth's scheme and denied Levy recompense. Levy petitioned London once more, but again failed, see *Sea Island Cotton Recalls A Famous Suit*, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 10, Folder 27, AJA.

family complex and London's Sephardic Bevis Marks congregation lobbied their patrons and friends in Parliament for naturalization of Jewish aliens throughout the empire, which provided economic security to migrants, and they did so again in support of the "Jew Bill" thirteen years later. Members of Parliament, who had invested in Jewish enterprise, responded favorably to Jewish demands. But the limitations of patronage soon surfaced when popular anti-Semitic attitudes among London's Christians erupted in violent protest. And Anglican merchant-traders, in competition with their Jewish neighbors, lobbied their friends in Parliament for the law's repeal. Investors in Parliament sided with Anglicans, not Jews, a calculated political maneuver to assuage their Anglican friends' greed and their constituents' bigotry. Although Parliament repealed the "Jew Bill," Jews gained important insights about how patronage functioned. Their transatlantic network facilitated the patronage of imperial and colonial leaders, an avenue for ethno-religious outsiders to apply pressure to Protestant insiders—through the patronage, ironically, of Anglicans, Irish Catholics, Scots-Irish Presbyterians, and at times even Quakers. Patronage, commercial exchange, and material culture refashioned the boundaries between Jews and Christians in the marketplace.²⁰

²⁰ Thomas M. Doerflinger shows four ways that eighteenth-century merchants in Philadelphia could succeed. One could inherit wealth and status; if one had status but not wealth, one could use established connections in the community; if one lacked status and wealth, one could establish connections, and use savings as capital to rise up the social ladder; if one migrated without status or capital, one could utilize foreign connections, experience, and capital, see *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill, 1986), 47-57. Philadelphia's Jewish merchant-traders fit Doerflinger's last category by drawing from the experiences and capital of the Franks-Levy family complex, which spanned from London and Amsterdam to the Caribbean, Italy, Mediterranean basin, and even India, see Pitock, "Commerce," 20-22; Aust, "Commercial Cosmopolitans;" Gelfand, "A People;" Trivellato, *Strangers*. Once reluctant because of the pervasive Shylock trope, scholars have recently focused on Jews' role in the rise of capitalism, which dispersed them throughout the Anglo-American world, see Natalie Zemon Davis, "Religion and Capitalism Once Again? Jewish Merchant Culture in the Seventeenth Century," *Representations* 59 (1997), 56-84; Jonathan Karp, "It's the Economy Shmendrick!: An 'Economic Turn' in Jewish Studies?," *AJS Perspectives* (2009), 8-11; Pitock, "Commerce," 7-9. Others have argued that Jews became commercial intermediaries or cross-cultural brokers, or "insiders," see Israel, *Mercantilism*; idem, *Diasporas Within a Diaspora*; Philip Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (New York, 1984); Trivellato, *Strangers*. For "Jew Bill," see Endelman, *Georgian England*, 26-47, 114-15.

The Seven Years' War, or what Anglo-Americans referred to as the French and Indian War, provided the greatest opportunities for Jewish merchant-traders to ingratiate themselves to patrons and neighbors. European Jews had a long history of supplying imperial armies at war. Warfare allowed Pennsylvania's Jews to simultaneously celebrate their usefulness as merchant-traders and to cultivate and express their Anglo-American identities through the exchange of goods that sustained frontier expansion. A pivotal span of five years determined which imperial power—France, Spain, or Great Britain—controlled the Ohio River Valley, the gateway to the continental interior and lucrative Illinois territory and Great Lakes region. Geopolitics demonstrates the significance of the region to Jewish merchant-traders, whose allegiances to Great Britain never wavered. The Gratz and Henry brothers hailed from Prussia, a British ally in the war, thus their allegiance to Great Britain was never in question. Nor was the loyalty of David Franks a concern for the British, because his brother-in-law, Oliver DeLancey, was an officer in New York's militia. Levy Andrew Levy joined Pennsylvania's militia, as did Matthias Bush who migrated from Prague. Simon's silver was an essential commodity that earned natives' loyalty.²¹

When diplomacy broke down between the French and British, Jewish merchants and their trader allies supplied Anglo-American armies. Natives attacked supply caravans, which proved disastrous to the Lowery brothers. Simon and Franks extended them a "Moratorium" for two years without interest. The Gratzes, meanwhile, assisted George Croghan and William Trent. The British gained an upper hand in peltry, chiefly because English manufactured goods remained in demand among natives and native intermediaries, or brokers who met natives on

²¹ Pitcock, "Commerce," 66-71; Fish, *Gratz*, 41, 61; Stern, *Franks*, 33-34; Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, December 6 and 21, 1757, February 16, 1760, Franks Papers, AJHS. By 1760, about 30 adult Jewish males and their families resided around Philadelphia, about 100 Jews in total, see *JOP*, 53; Pencak, *Jews*, 1; Israel, *Mercantilism*, 123-45.

their cultural terrain to initiate exchanges. Jewish merchant-traders partnered with these cultural brokers and provided them with goods necessary to facilitate trade. British officials held deep suspicions about natives. Cultural intermediaries, and the gifts they received from Jewish merchant-traders, thus became indispensable to placating native tribes.²²

Sir William Johnson, George Croghan, and William Trent became the three most important cultural intermediaries or Indian brokers, and their patronage ensured that Jews played a fundamental role in frontier expansion. An Irish Catholic, Johnson managed Admiral Sir Peter Warren's extensive land holdings in North America. Warren, Johnson's uncle, married Susannah, daughter of the powerful New York fur trader, Stephen DeLancey. Warren was wealthy, and extended his patronage to his nephew William, who, in turn, offered favors to his relatives and friends. A link to the DeLancey clan brought into their orbit David Franks, whose sister Phila had married Susannah's brother Oliver. Marriage solidified an alliance between Warren, Johnson, DeLancey, and Franks. Johnson endeared himself to natives, adopted native dress and manners, and even became an Iroquois sachem. Warren urged his friends in Parliament, particularly Thomas Pownall, to reward Johnson for his efforts, which culminated in Johnson's appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in New York. With success in that

²² Moratorium, July 6, 1754, *BMG*, 8-9, 30-32, 90; Pitock, "Commerce," 65-72. For overview of war, see Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York, 2000); Stern, *Franks*, 29-30, 42; Volwiler, *Croghan*, 151, 280; Pencak, *Jews*, 184-85. Croghan gave his papers to Barnard Gratz, which became part of Gratz/McAllister papers at HSP; a[n] account of Indian Trade, 1756, Gratz Collection, Case 15, Box 18, HSP; Account of French advances to the Indians on the Ohio River, Governors of Pennsylvania and New York with the Six Nations, Du Simitier Collection, LCP. For cultural intermediaries, see Margaret Connell Szasz, *Between Indians and White Worlds: The Cultural Broker* (Norman, 2001); Yanna Yannakakis, *The Art of Being In-Between: Native Intermediaries, Indian Identity, and Local Rule in Colonial Oaxaca* (Durham, 2008); Fintan O'Toole, *White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America* (New York, 2005), 62-65; Fish, *Gratz*, 41-42; Statement relative to Indian Trade Transacted by Richard Hockley, William Trent, and George Croghan, November, 1748, Trent and Croghan Papers, Cadwalader Collection, HSP; *Pennsylvania Archives*, First Series, II, 233-39.

post, Johnson became Superintendent of Indian Affairs for all the British North American colonies, and appointed Croghan as his assistant.²³

Like Johnson, George Croghan, an Irish Catholic from Dublin, sought to pacify local tribes as a counterpoint to French influence. Croghan served as Indian agent for Pennsylvania and, later, as Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs under Johnson's authority. Croghan was responsible for Pennsylvania, the Ohio River Valley, and Illinois. He once boasted, "we sold them goods on much better terms than the French which drew many Indians over the lakes to trade with us." Croghan lived in Carlisle, before migrating farther west to Aughwick and Pittsburgh, where he settled alongside Levy Andrew Levy. Johnson relied upon Croghan's geographical expertise and language skills to earn natives' respect. Croghan, like Johnson, adopted native culture, endeared himself to chiefs, and fathered at least one child with a Mohawk woman. General Braddock appointed him chief advisor of Indian affairs during the war. William Trent, whose father migrated from Scotland and founded Trenton, New Jersey, was born into a family of polite society. Young William, though, married Croghan's sister. Trent's father was a member of Christ Church, the church of David Franks's wife Margaret Evans. Trent the younger headed west to the frontier and engaged in trade with natives. He clerked for Edward Shippen, a respected frontier merchant. Trent served as secretary at treaty negotiations with natives, and Pennsylvania and Virginia officials turned to him as agent on their behalf. Procured for him by Johnson and Croghan, Trent served as Assistant Deputy Indian Agent of the Crown at Fort Pitt.²⁴

²³ O'Toole, *Savage*, 1-38; Stern, *Franks*, 27. Franks also dabbled in privateers, see David Franks to Naphtali Franks, April 1, 1743, in Gelles, *Letters*, 121-22.

²⁴ Nicholas B. Wainwright, ed., "George Croghan's Journal, 1755-1763," *PMHB* 71 (1947), 313-444; quoted in George Croghan, "Journal to the Ohio," Du Simitier Collection, LCP, 3. Croghan's daughter, Catherine, married the famous Mohawk chief, Joseph Brant, see Nicholas B. Wainwright, *George Croghan: Wilderness Diplomat* (Chapel Hill, 1959), 1-15; Pitock, "Commerce," 68; Albert T. Volwiler, *George Croghan and the Westward Movement, 1740-1782* (Cleveland, 1926), 13-15, 23-25; idem, "The Imperial Department and the Occupation of the Great

Trent and Levy Andrew Levy became resident partners at Pittsburgh for Simon and Franks, and silver ware from Simon's Lancaster forges kept negotiators at conferences stocked with gifts. The cross-cultural activities among Pennsylvania's merchant-traders show that mutual economic interests, and particularly one's professional identification as a "merchant" and "trader," could surmount differences among them. Although Croghan cultivated a rugged, backwoodsman persona, his frontier successes brought him closer to colonial and imperial elites, which made his patronage a valuable asset to Jews. And Croghan's relationships with genteel dandies who bestowed him with preferential treatment demonstrated to his Jewish friends the value of the cultivation of such relationships. Johnson and Croghan endured anti-Popery sentiment, not unlike the anti-Jewish attitudes endured by their Jewish friends, which strengthened their bonds of friendship and cooperation. Both Johnson and Croghan abandoned their Catholicism, not unlike Miranda, Franks, and several Levy brothers who outwardly converted to Christianity. As agents of imperial *and* colonial governments, it was imperative that they gave their potential patrons no reasons to withhold favors. Quaker partisans utilized anti-Catholic rhetoric to malign their opponents and competitors, which further endeared native intermediaries and Jewish merchant-traders to partisans of the proprietary faction. The Penn family and their supporters fought for a political agenda that best served their interests, such as the establishment of a militia and westward expansion. Jews gained immediate financial windfalls from the cultivation of patronage relationships. They provided Croghan with credit and British manufactured goods, often on consignment. In return, Croghan sold land to Jews at

West," in *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1925), 100-07; Fish, *Gratz*, 41-47. A politician in Philadelphia, the elder Trent was a successful merchant and close ally of William Penn and James Logan. Virginia hired Trent the younger to oversee Indian trade and manage Virginia's land claims, see Pitcock, "Commerce," 69; Wainwright, *Croghan*, 8-9; Sewell Elias Slick, *William Trent and the West* (Harrisburg, 1947), 1-85; George E. Lewis, *The Indiana Company, 1763-1798: A Study in Eighteenth Century Frontier Land Speculation and Business Venture* (Glendale, CA, 1941).

discount prices, and bestowed them with trading licenses that legalized their status as frontier merchants. Croghan remained the closest friend to Pennsylvania's Jews. The Gratz brothers, for example, served as executor of his estate, and Croghan's will bequeathed 5,000 acres to Barnard and 1,000 acres to Barnard's daughter, Rachel. Through Croghan, most important, Jews gained additional access to imperial authority, which included Sir William Johnson, Henry Bouquet, Sir Jeffrey Amherst, Thomas Gage, Robert Monckton, and others.²⁵

Early in the war, Croghan reported losses "between five and six Thousand Pounds," but warfare also provided Franks and others opportunities to supply British armies with war matériel. Franks and his newest partner William Plumsted supplied Braddock's army in Pennsylvania. Plumsted brought genteel respectability to the partnership. Plumsted abandoned his Quakerism and converted to Anglicanism, as did James Logan and Joseph Galloway, whose careers benefitted from conversion. When David's father-in-law, Peter Evans, died, Plumsted replaced him as register general. As a proprietary partisan in local politics, Plumsted served as mayor three times, which placed Franks next to a seat of local political authority. As a political insider, if indirectly, Franks gained influence and favors. Franks, for instance, supplied all of Virginia's military forces, including Washington's army on its fateful march to Fort Duquesne. George Washington wrote to Franks, requesting such items as "indian-leggings for 1,000 men," among other supplies that, according to Franks, totaled more than "£196.15.2." Belligerent governments issued civilian contracts for the capture and return of runaway soldiers, of which Franks took advantage. British officials turned to Franks because of his exceptional reputation. Franks also served as power of attorney to recover funds from confidence men, who had

²⁵ The Last Will and Testament of Colonel George Croghan, June 12, 1782, *BMG*, 31-32, 35, 209; Wainwright, *Croghan*, 4, 83-103; Volwiler, *Croghan*, 23, 91, 151, 169, 273, 284; O'Toole, *Savage*, 1-38; Slick, *Trent*, 1-10, 15-41; Stern, *Franks*, 28-29, 56-57; *CAJ*, III, 1161. Pencak suggested that class determined anti-Semitic attitudes, see Pencak, *Jews*; idem, "Jews and Anti-Semitism."

absconded with merchants' merchandise and cash. When colonial officials needed silver gifts for negotiations with natives at the Easton treaty sessions, the Penn family turned to Franks, not Simon or anyone else.²⁶

Good fortune, in addition to family connections and patronage, also assisted Franks and his partners. The Quaker firm Baker, Kilby, and Baker supplied British troops in North America, but could not fulfill the terms of the contract. Oliver DeLancey, who had married Phila, David's sister, and his partner, John Watts, a close friend and former classmate of David's brother Moses, subcontracted with Baker, Kilby, and Baker to supply forces in New York. Johnson's uncle, Admiral Sir Peter Warren died in the war. His wife, Susannah, was Oliver's sister. Oliver thus managed Susannah's properties, one of which he rented to Christopher Kilby, who informed Oliver that his firm was overwhelmed. Kilby worried that a contract extension was in jeopardy. He was right to worry, because Amherst and Forbes sought and found a replacement firm. Oliver begged Susannah to convince her son-in-law, Colonel Fitzroy, to secure the contract for DeLancey and Watts. Oliver benefited from Kilby's plight, but not quite

²⁶ Quoted Croghan to Johnson, May 15, 1755, *PWJ*, I, 496; *BMG*, 33-34, 106; Wainwright, "Failure," 343-75. For a typical newspaper advertisement, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 29, 1760. In 1753, Nathan Levy died, and Franks partnered with Isaac Levy; thereafter, he partnered with Simon, and with Plumsted in 1760. Franks diversified his investments, and partnered with Michael Moses and, later, with Nathan and Mathias Bush to dabble in insurance, soap, and candles, among other enterprises, see *JOP*, 38-39; Mathias Bush, undated, Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 23, 1762 and May 12, 1773; Articles of Agreement Indented, etc., January 1, 1757, McAllister Collection, Series III, Box 3, Folder 133, LCP; David Franks and Michael Moses Deed, January 1, 1750, Articles of Agreement in the Tallow Chandling Business between David Franks and Michael Moses, January 1, 1757, Franks File, SC-3660, AJA; Pitock, "Commerce," 79, note 137. Plumsted's father, Clement, was one of Philadelphia's wealthiest merchants, before turning the family business over to William, and served as alderman and judge on the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas, see Stern, *Franks*, 40-47, 50-53; quoted George Washington to David Franks, May 1, 1758, *Writings*, II, 190; David Franks to George Washington, June 27, 1758, Franks File, SC-3656, AJA; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 27 and December 4, 1760. In one case, merchants as far south as Savannah contracted with Franks and Barnard Gratz for the recovery of £18. In another case, a judge and member of Virginia's House of Burgesses employed the partners to settle debts regarding a shipping vessel, see John Morel and Thomas Hooper to David Franks, December 24, 1760, Power of Attorney from Morel and Hooper to Franks, December 22, 1760, among many in Franks File, SC-3643, AJA; Fish, *Gratz*, 31-32.

as he had imagined. Unbeknownst to him, Moses and Jacob Franks operated behind the scenes.²⁷

Moses Franks's London-based firm, Colebrook, Nesbitt & Franks, obtained the contract that supplanted the Quakers. As primary agents, Moses orchestrated the appointment of his father, Jacob, as the firm's principal agent in the colonies. Based out of New York, Jacob subcontracted with Franks and Plumsted to supply Pennsylvania and the Ohio River Valley. Franks and Plumsted subcontracted with General Amherst to supply other forts and posts, such as Carlisle and Pitt. Jacob named Oliver's firm, DeLancey and Watts, principal suppliers of the Northeast. Oliver's partner John Watts married Oliver's sister, Anne DeLancey, which brought him into the multifamily business. Through Watts, David speculated in larger land schemes, one for 800 acres, a portent of the kind of lucrative investments that lay ahead. Plumsted acted as liaison between contractors and commanders. Together, this frontier network earned £10,000 per month. In 1760, King George II authorized a payment of more than £32,169 to "Contractors for victualling Our Forces in North America," of which about £6500 was forwarded to Jacob and David Franks. The transatlantic network handled more than £750,000 worth of provisions during the war. David's sister-in-law, Rebecca, married Alexander Barclay, close political ally of the Penns. Rebecca's uncle, David, was head of London's Barclay's Bank that financed King George III, which placed the consortium even closer to imperial patrons. Franks and Plumsted proved far more flexible and pragmatic than their Quaker predecessors and settled into a symbiotic and lucrative relationship with British officers. They signed a contract with Robert Monckton to supply troops garrisoned at Forts Carlisle and Pitt. They subcontracted with

²⁷ Stern, *Franks*, 34-35, 49-50; *USJ*, I, 49; *CAJ*, II, 599-601; Matson, *Merchants*, 168. In London, Moses had friends in high places, see Lord Rockingham to Moses Franks, December 13, 1767, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, AJHS; David Franks to Arnold Nesbitt, Adam Drummond, and Moses Franks, May 28 and 29, 1778, Franks File, SC-3643, AJA.

Captain Evan Shelby, who agreed to supply Fort Pitt with “ninty nin head of Catall,” and with Dr. Thomas Walker, a member of Virginia’s House of Burgesses, to provision Fort Pitt.²⁸

Jewish merchant-traders relied on correspondents in regions unknown to them. Agents provided useful information about the integrity and propriety of potential associates and the demand of specific items. Preston Paint, a native of Philadelphia and Gratz agent in Canada, informed Barnard, “Shoes are a most unsalable article” in Quebec. With a saturated market of shoes, the brothers instead sent “90 gallons of Geneva,” or Dutch gin, a spirit in high demand among soldiers during the Canadian winter. Myer Josephson, a Gratz associate in nearby Reading, asked Michael “to buy £1,000 worth of good leather” and forward it to him, “for now have not a pound’s worth more in the house.” But not just any leather, because “light leather sells poorly.” Leather was a hot commodity in Reading. Beyond leather, customers purchased all “140 pieces” of skins the Gratzes had sent Josephson. He thus asked Michael to send him “fifty more skins” to sell. Such examples of ingenuity won patronage for Jews at the expense of their Quaker competitors. Franks even publicly reprimanded his drivers for halting to rest at their homes to and from Philadelphia, which compromised the timeliness of scheduled deliveries. Franks may well have said that such unprofessional behavior reflected poorly upon his own reputation, which compromised future favors from patrons. The gravity of the situation for Franks he made explicit in a private letter to Barnard Gratz: “Give the Waggoners a strict Charge

²⁸ Oliver DeLancey to Amherst, February 20, 1760, Christopher Kilby to Smith and Nutt, March 2, 1760, Contract Between Franks and Plumsted and General Robert Monckton, May 17, 1760, Samuel Martin to William Baker, December 6, 1760, William Baker to Lords of Treasury, December 9, 1760, Plumsted & Franks to John St. Clair, December 1, 1761, Franks File, AJA; Stern, *Franks*, 24, 35-36, 44-50, 69; DeLancey to Moses Franks, February 17, 1760, Oppenheim Collection, Box 3, Folder 3, AJHS; quoted in King’s Warrant for Payment to Sir James Colebrook, Bart Arnold Nesbitt George Colebrooke and Moses Franks Esq, August 4, 1760, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, AJHS; Necarsulmer, “Lancaster,” 32; Fish, *Gratz*, 51; Notes to General Concerning Flood at Fort Pitt, January 9, 1762, *PHB*, XIII, 101-04; quoted in Shelby to Bouquet, October 3, 1761, Thomas Walker to General John Stanwix, November 5, 1759, Inspection of Meal: Walker’s Contract, November 27, 1759, and Bouquet to Plumsted & Franks, December 26, 1761, *PHB*, IV, 299-301, 334-35, V, 794-95, XIII, 96-97; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 30, 1760 and February 19, 1761.

not to Stop by the Way, or they'l Loose their pay and be hang'd." Amherst demonstrated how patronage functioned alongside politics when he hired Plumsted to transport provisions and soldiers from Philadelphia to Martinique. When Plumsted could not find vessels, Amherst asked Pennsylvania Governor James Hamilton for assistance. Hamilton procured the ships, and five months later, Plumsted satisfied the terms of the contract. The following year, Hamilton assisted Plumsted again through the conduit of Amherst. Patronage meant favors from politicians at home and abroad.²⁹

Wartime inflation drove up prices on war materiél, which led Franks and Plumsted to request a new contract. Amherst knew that Parliament was broke and needed new sources of revenue, information he used to stall negotiations. Amherst requested a "gentleman's agreement" between them, without signing a new contract. In practice, Franks and Plumsted absorbed the rising costs of goods, and lost considerable sums of money in their attempt to keep Amherst happy. On a tour of frontier forts, Franks arrived in Lancaster to catch up with Simon. As British victory neared, Franks and his associates gathered at Simon's home to celebrate. Governor Hamilton convened a conference among colonial leaders and native tribes, which brought both Croghan and Trent to Lancaster. Such was the importance of native intermediaries and Jewish merchant-traders, who arrived in Lancaster on official business for colonial and imperial patrons. Franks purchased £220 worth of silver from Simon, and turned it over to Croghan and Trent, in hopes of retaining their favors. Jewish merchant-traders earned patronage

²⁹ Pitock, "Commerce," 24-27, 50; quoted in Preston Paint to Barnard Gratz, February 23, 1761, *BMG*, 53. James Cummings served as David Franks' agent in Quebec, see James Cummings to Franks, August 30, September 1 and 15, 1766, Franks File, SC-3643, Josephson to Gratz, December 9, 1761, Gratz Correspondence, Box 1, AJA; quoted Myer Josephson to Michael Gratz, November 2, 1761, quoted Josephson to Barnard Gratz, January 1, 1764, Josephson to Michael Gratz, February 19, 1763, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, AJHS, translation from Yiddish in Neumann, "Letters," 82-85, 89-91; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 29, 1760 and June 19, 1760; Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, August 22, 1761, Notes to General Concerning Flood at Fort Pitt, January 9, 1762, *PHB*, V, 706-7, XIII, 101-04; Stern, *Franks*, 43-47, 51-52; Amherst to Hamilton, March 21, 1760, Franks File, SC-3651, AJA; quoted Franks to Barnard Gratz, June 8, 1760, Fish, *Gratz*, 50.

and expressed their Anglo-American identities through buying and selling of British goods, which, arguably, made the difference in British victory and defeat in the Seven Years' War.³⁰

During the war, Pittsburgh emerged as one of the first battlegrounds between Quakers and Jews for economic supremacy of a growing region. Simon, Levy, Trent, and Franks partnered in a commercial firm that operated out of Lancaster and Pittsburgh. Franks sent goods from Philadelphia to Simon at Lancaster, and Simon sent Levy and Trent merchandise from Lancaster to Pittsburgh, a triangular trade that flourished. The importance of the trade route to merchant-traders led to debates about the need to defend the caravans that traversed it. Quaker leaders held firm to their commitment to nonviolence, thus Pennsylvania had limited means to protect its citizens against Europeans and natives alike. Anglicans and other Protestants charged Quakers with imposing their pacifist beliefs upon others, which, they argued, conflicted with the ends of government. Critics joined the proprietary faction, whose leaders had left Quakerism, such as the Logan, Hamilton, and Penn families. The Quaker faction maintained political power, because they kept taxes low and required no military obligations. Proprietary pundits utilized the French specter of popish tyranny as propaganda in their efforts to oust the Quaker majority in the assembly. The anti-Catholic rhetoric did not work, despite the ardent efforts of Franklin and James Logan. The rhetoric of pacifism, espoused by Quakers such as Samuel Smith and Anthony Benezet, won out, at least for a time. General Braddock's failed attempt to seize Fort Duquesne inspired fear. Raids into Pennsylvania and Virginia led by the French and their native allies destroyed houses and public buildings and killed innocent bystanders. With Quaker leaders reluctant to respond, David Franks joined other affluent elites who donated money to

³⁰ Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, December 20, (1750-something; illegible), AJHS; Fish, *Gratz*, 49-50; Stern, *Franks*, 53-55; Franks to Bouquet, September 4, 1762, Franks File, SC-3639, AJA; Slick, *Trent*, 103-04; Breen, *Marketplace*; idem, "Baubles," 73-104.

assist their neighbors. David pledged £5,000 (Pennsylvania currency) to this cause, which demonstrates his patrician persona as much as his identification with proprietary partisans, whose philanthropy in the community and economic interests often coincided with his own.³¹

How did the Jewish community view Quaker leadership in the assembly? Jews sided against their Quaker competitors, because most Jews identified with proprietary elites, who patronized Jewish businesses and fought for their interests. Jews bought into the language of government-led frontier expansion utilized by the proprietary faction, whose leaders argued that self-preservation was a natural law and that all governments existed to defend their citizens' lives and fortunes. Because Quakers held firm to pacifism, they did not protect the caravans and forts on the frontier, which hurt Jewish frontier enterprise. As early as 1743, Nathan Levy signed a petition to King George II that requested a militia for Pennsylvania. On the high seas, too, Jews expected state-sponsored protection of their vessels, and turned to trusted patron, Benjamin Franklin, who lobbied for a voluntary force of privateers, which Quaker leaders, finally, formed to protect merchant vessels. Jews enjoyed recompense for ships they lost in the war when Franklin successfully lobbied Quaker leaders to allow them to seize goods aboard captured French ships. Reverend William Smith arrived from London as provost of the College of Philadelphia and wrote public polemics that undermined Quakers' war policies. Smith argued Quakers who controlled the assembly had bestowed unfair advantages upon their coreligionists, which monopolized the peltry trade in Quakers' favor. Smith was somewhat correct. Before about 1760, Quakers controlled much of that trade and used their political positions to reward their coreligionists with funds and favors from public coffers. Jews sided against Quaker

³¹ Frost, *Freedom*, 29-35; *BMG*, 34-47; Jack Marietta, "Growth of Quaker Self-Consciousness in Pennsylvania," in *Seeking the Light: Essays in Quaker History*, ed. J. William Frost and John M. Moore (Wallingford, Pa., 1986), 79-104; Tully, "Ethnicity," 491-536; Stern, *Franks*, 31. For Pennsylvania politics, see Tully, *Penn's Legacy*.

pacifism because they sought to weaken Quaker economic power on the frontier. Fortune, however, favored those with the foresight to have cultivated patronage beyond the assembly. Jews offset and overcame Quaker competition with their careful management of imperial patrons and colonial connections in London, New York, and Pennsylvania.³²

David Franks provides us the greatest insight regarding Jewish views of Quaker leadership. When John Penn took over the governorship of Pennsylvania from James Hamilton, Franks remarked that the outgoing governor would turn “Quaker...at least till he gets all the Money he can from the Assembly.” To “turn Quaker,” according to Franks, one had only to pillage public monies to aggrandize their friends, an argument that mirrored his political ally, William Smith. Franks’s swipe had little to do with Hamilton, a patron and social equal of Franks whose son married Franks’s daughter Abigail. Instead, Franks chafed at the advantages of Quaker merchant-traders, whose political allies in the assembly bestowed them with favors at his expense. Proprietary leaders, conversely, sought to mitigate Friends’ influence through control of the executive branch. Quaker partisans thus despised the likes of John Penn who, according to Franks, “they will oppose for no other reason [than] his being of Penn’s family.” Franks turned upside down the Shylock stereotype once used to denigrate Jews and applied it to Quakers who he believed had misappropriated public funds to aggrandize their coreligionists. Jews had made significant gains toward dispelling anti-Jewish attitudes. Franks, though, still feared, “this change [in governorship] will not be more conducive to the Public Service & protection of our Frontiers than heretofore,” because Quakers’ numerical majority ensured their continued influence in popular politics, and because their “thirst for popular Glamour will always...support them in their Seats as Members.” Quakers dominated the assembly, Franks

³² Frost, *Freedom*, 35-42; *JOP*, 30, 43; Watson, *Annals*, I, 323-33.

recognized, despite proprietary control of the executive seat, which undermined “the proprietaries’ Interest,” as well as Jewish interests.³³

Many merchant-traders and cultural brokers emerged from the war in financial straits, or, as in the case of wealthy Jews, they emerged as creditors whose debtors could not pay. In petitions to imperial and colonial governments, they referred to themselves as the “Suffering Traders of 1754.” Jews, meanwhile, watched as their cordial relations with Quakers transformed into fierce competition, which, to Quakers’ chagrin, coincided with Quaker political leaders’ gradual withdrawal from public life. As Quaker merchants watched helplessly as their coreligionists’ rescinded favors, so too did Jews experience the limitations of their carefully-crafted and maintained transatlantic patronage network. When the revolutionary crisis deepened, the locus of authority transferred away from London, and thus mitigated the influence of Moses Franks, Sir William Johnson, and others. The many Jews who had invested heavily in land watched, like their Quaker competitors, as Whig leaders seized the lands as their own or for their emergent states and corporations. Yet, David Franks and the Gratzes once again procured government contracts to supply belligerent armies. The upshot of a transference of power from London to Philadelphia meant that Whig patrons received Jews’ attention more than ever before, but navigating the imperial crisis was fraught with perils because many merchant-traders attempted to balance their commitments to both imperial and colonial officials.

Suffering Traders’ petitions to Parliament requested recompense, which detailed significant losses—in one case, they asked for more than £48,000. William Trent gathered 22 individual affidavits from his associates and combined them into one petition. Moses Franks

³³ Quoted Franks to Bouquet, August 30 and November 4, 1763, Fish, *Gratz*, 60-61; Franks to Bouquet, August 29 and November 1, 1763, Franks File, SC-3639, AJA.

twice appealed to King George II, but to no avail. Suffering Traders spent decades attempting to recover their losses. A lack of money and the revolutionary crisis led imperial officials to ignore these and other requests. Recognizing the need for a different strategy, Suffering Traders asked Parliament for land grants valued at the amount of their losses. This failed, too, but Croghan and Trent mitigated their debts to their Jewish friends with somewhat tenuous land grants. Croghan, for instance, promised Franks, “You shall have my part of these Ten Tracts for 15% over tho’ I was offer’d 20% Over,” Croghan promised Franks, concluding, “you Can apply to the Greatest of my old Debt With you and Mr. Levy.” Such mutual honesty was well and good, but debts remained unsettled. In London, meanwhile, military expediency gave way to economic reality. Nearly bankrupt, Parliament curbed spending after years of expensive warfare. Amherst ordered Bouquet to halt the practice of gift giving, a native custom he viewed as bribery. Johnson, conversely, remained committed to the placation of natives’ cultural norms, despite Scots-Irish and Germans in the backcountry who detested natives. He referred to the Paxton Boys as nothing more than “Ignorant People...Country People who think they do good Service when they Knock an Indian in the Head.” When natives threatened Fort Augusta, Governor Hamilton sent 130 militiamen to defend it, and turned to Plumsted and Franks to transport provisions to the fort. Amherst viewed militia as no “Soldiers in any shape Whatever,” and refused to ask Quakers in the assembly for military envoys to protect caravans, which placed the partners at risk once again.³⁴

³⁴ Petitions, Accounts, and Papers of the ‘Suffering Traders,’ *Ohio Papers*, 33-77; Volwiler, *Croghan*, 41-42, 51, 163; Moses Franks’s Petition to the King in Council, Ohio Book, Etting Collection, HSP, I, 58; Fish, *Gratz*, 81; quoted Croghan to Franks, December 25, 1770, Franks to Croghan, October 30, 1769, Orders to Officers at Fort Pitt, March 8, 1763, Franks File, SC-3645, AJA. Even as late as 1775, Croghan promised to secure patented deeds to lands, see Croghan to Franks, December 27, 1772, January 9, 1775, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 10, AJHS; O’Toole, *Savage*, 235-37, Johnson quote on 269; Judith Ridner, “Unmasking the Paxton Boys: The Material Culture of the Pamphlet War,” *Early American Studies* 14 (2016), 348-76; Stern, *Franks*, 29-30, 58-66, 90, Amherst quote on 65; Bouquet to Plumsted & Franks, July 19, 1763, *PHB*, VI, 320-21.

Chief Pontiac gathered warriors, attacked Fort Pitt, and raided caravans. They attacked Lancaster, captured Levy Andrew Levy, and massacred settlers at will. Franks warned Michael Gratz, “The Indians have begun a war near the Forts.” Pontiac’s uprising nearly ruined Croghan, who pleaded to the Lords of Trade for recompense. Renewed warfare cost Suffering Traders an additional £100,000 in goods. Franks wrote Bouquet, “this insurrection of the Indians” has taken its toll on unprotected caravans to Pittsburgh, concluding, “We fear we shall not be able without a proper Escort to supply that Garrison with Provisions.” Bouquet told Franks that assistance depended “upon troops being rais’d by the provinces to escort those Provisions.” Because Quaker leaders in the assembly held firm to pacifism and Governor Hamilton’s militia was small, military envoys did not materialize. Simon, Trent, Levy, and Franks estimated their personal losses at about £30,000. Croghan’s financial situation worsened, which placed his Jewish creditors at risk. “Now I believe there will be peace,” Solomon Henry wrote, “and with God’s help, everything will go better.” Neither colonial nor imperial governments felt compelled to protect caravans or to reimburse Suffering Traders’ losses. Johnson, though, lobbied to secure land patents Croghan had received from natives. Johnson wrote to Lord Halifax on Croghan’s behalf and forwarded Croghan’s petition to Thomas Pownall. Johnson’s leverage, unfortunately, extended only so far, thus Croghan’s land remained contested and Suffering Traders remained uncompensated.³⁵

Plumsted and Franks turned their attention toward Fort Pitt’s commanding officer, Colonel Henry Bouquet, a native of Switzerland and mercenary by trade. When Bouquet arrived

³⁵ Quoted Franks to Michael Gratz, June 12, 1763, quoted Solomon Henry to His Father and Mother, January 28, 1763, *BMG*, 60, 64; Fish, *Gratz*, 51-57, 64-65, 81; Stern, *Franks*, 57-58; Lewis, *Indiana*, 38; Slick, *Trent*, 102; quoted Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, June 4, 1763, Simon to Bouquet, June 30, 1763, Henry Bouquet to Plumsted & Franks, July 19, 1763, Franks File, *AJA*; *JOP*, 66-67; Wainwright, *Croghan*, 4; Johnson to Franks, September 17, 1763, *Indian Affairs, Etc.*, An Indian Meeting, Amherst to Johnson, September 10, 1763, Johnson to Halifax, November 19, 1763, *PWJ*, II, 204, IV, 199-204, 248-55.

in Pennsylvania, success at the forks of the Ohio propelled him to a post at Fort Pitt. Franks sent Bouquet a pair of pistols. When Bouquet complained about a disruptive employee, Franks sent as a replacement Robert Callender, who had worked with Bouquet. When Bouquet lambasted Franks and Plumsted for their mistakes, they remained polite and contrite. When Simon apologized to Bouquet for his rudeness in a recent letter, Bouquet felt “much obliged to you for the Pains you have taken.” Deference to Bouquet’s authority, they believed, meant additional favors in emergent Pittsburgh. In an uncommon burst of deference, for instance, Franks wrote, “Itt gives us no small pleasure to find you are satisfied with our Conduct,” because “The continuance of your favours is by us greatly esteemed.” Favors opened up lucrative opportunities, and reputation refashioned how gentiles viewed Jews and Judaism.³⁶

Mutual economic interests ensured cooperation among merchant-traders of disparate backgrounds. A group of entrepreneurs and investors met at Philadelphia’s Indian Queen Tavern to discuss their options. It included Jews from Iberia, Caribbean, France, London, Amsterdam, Germany, and Poland, Scots-Irish Catholics and Presbyterians, German Lutherans, Anglicans, and Quakers. With such cross-cultural cooperation, Trent (Presbyterian) and Wharton (Quaker) drafted a petition to Parliament on behalf of the signatories. Because Croghan was preparing to leave for London, they agreed that Croghan would deliver to Moses Franks “A Memorial of the merchants and traders.” They asked Moses to deliver the petition, either to the Lords of Trade or to the king in council. “To make our Application with a probability of Success, We have requested Mr. David Franks to remit you, by Mr. Croghan, A Bill of Exchange for Two Hundred

³⁶ Quoted Pencak, *Jews*, 183; Franks to Bouquet, August 29, 1763, Franks to Bouquet, September 4, 1762, Franks File, SC-3639, AJA; Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, August 30, 1763, Bouquet to Plumsted & Franks, September 11 and 30, 1763, Plumsted to Bouquet, October 2, 1763, Franks to Bouquet, November 1, 1763, Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, September 14 and November 4, 1763, *PHB*, VI, 418-21, 424-26, 444-45, IX, 33, 35-36, 47-49, 126-27, XIII, 220-21; Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, July 1, 1761, August 22, 1761, November 3, 1761, Franks to Bouquet, September 4, 1762, *PHB*, V, 611-12, 706-7, VII, 179-80, VIII, 83; quoted Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, February 17, 1762, March 3, 1762, *PHB*, VIII, 28, 40-42; Stern, *Franks*, 54.

Pounds Sterl., which we recommend to you, To dispose of, in such Manner, As will be most likely to facilitate and confirm it.” Money, friendship, and kinship secured the influence of Moses Franks on their behalf, but he could do no better than Johnson or Pownall. Suffering Traders also wrote to Amherst, Halifax, Gage, Monckton, and Thomas and Richard Penn, who they hoped would pressure their contacts in London to assist them in their efforts at remuneration. They could not have known it at the time, but the British government was broke.³⁷

Thomas Gage, meanwhile, arrived in America to replace Amherst. A Catholic, Gage’s success in the Canadian campaign propelled him to the governorship of Montreal. When Gage arrived in the Mid-Atlantic region, he found complex contracts left in disarray by Amherst. Gage brought the “gentlemen’s agreement” with Amherst to the foreground when officials refused to release funds for payment without a contract. Plumsted and Franks curried Gage’s favors by transporting dispatches and military intelligence between Philadelphia and Fort Pitt, but Gage looked askance at them and ignored their overtures. As primary agents, Moses Franks and his partners signed a new supply contract in London, which named Franks and Plumsted the principal agents in Pennsylvania. Gage still refused to negotiate. “People may be found on the Frontiers,” Gage fumed, “who will Supply the Troops at Fort Pitt on Easier Terms to the Crown.” A stalemate ensued. Plumsted, meanwhile, fell gravely ill, retired, and died. Franks and his silent partner, Isaac Levy, partnered with John Inglis and Gilbert Barkly. Levy’s connections included access to the king. Without Plumsted’s diplomatic skills, though, Franks’s letters to patrons aroused anger and mistrust. Franks maintained his resolve, though, in hopes of

³⁷ Quoted Merchants to Moses Franks and Croghan, December 12, 1763, A Memorial of Merchants, Proceedings of a Meeting of Traders, December 7, 1763, *PWJ*, IV, 264-71.

receiving back payments and a new contract. But Franks also kept sending provisions to Bouquet at Fort Pitt.³⁸

Patronage broke the stalemate. Bouquet ordered provisions for two thousand men for six months from “the Contractors Agents at Philadelphia.” Raids upon unescorted caravans threatened to ruin his firm, Franks told Gage and, finally, he threatened to halt transportation of supplies to Fort Pitt until Gage or Governor Penn provided military protection. Confused and hesitant, Franks solicited advice from Bouquet, who instructed Franks to be patient. Franks turned to his brother-patron Moses, who again lobbied his friends in London. Although imperial instructions to Gage have been lost, Gage became friendly toward Franks thereafter, which suggests that officials listened to Moses and pressured Gage to resolve the issue. In private, however, Gage vented to Amherst about Moses, who Gage claimed had asserted, “Falsehoods...before the Treasury.” He accused the Franks brothers of lying “in the Manner these People generally do,” and concluded the entire affair was “a downright Falsehood.” Gage’s anti-Jewish remark is a reminder of latent anti-Jewish sentiment reminiscent of the Shylock stereotype. Gage’s bigotry, however, seems less important than Moses Franks’s access to imperial patrons, which led to Gage’s relaxation of his demands and a new contract for David.

³⁸ Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, December 12, 1763, Bouquet to Captain Robert Callender, March 13 and June 6, 1764, Plumsted & Franks to Bouquet, March 14, 1764, *PHB*, VI, 561-62, IX, 174-75, X, 58-59; Gage to Plumsted & Franks, December 15, 19, and 22, 1763, Thomas Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (hereafter, Gage Papers), Stern, *Franks*, 70-72, also 58-75, 91; Gage to Whately, August 10, 1764, in Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage with the Secretaries of State, and with the War Office and the Treasury, 1763-1775*, (hereafter *Gage Correspondence*) 2 vols. (New Haven, 1933), II, 237-39; quoted Gage to Whately, July 11, 1764, Gage to Robert Leake, June 22, 1764, Gage to Plumsted & Franks, June 22, 1764, *Gage Correspondence*, II, 231-33; Bouquet to Penn, June 4, 1764, Bouquet to Callender, June 6, 1764, *PHB*, VI, 554-56, 561-62; Bouquet to Plumsted & Franks, March 7, 1764, Gage to Bouquet, July 18, 1764, Croghan to Franks, December 25, 1770, Franks File; Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 10, Folder 27, AJA.

Patronage, then, granted elite Jews insider status within the imperial framework, despite persistent prejudice against them.³⁹

That Suffering Traders did not recoup their losses, conversely, demonstrates the limitations of imperial patronage. Despite pleas sent to Amherst, Monckton, Gage, Halifax, Penn, and others, the group lacked the political clout in London and Philadelphia necessary to satisfy their monetary claims. In London, Croghan learned of the Treasury's financial woes, and asked for land grants as recompense, not cash. Croghan revived Franklin's plan to create buffer states in western territories, first unveiled at the Albany Congress. Supporters of the scheme included former New Jersey Governor James DeLancey, Secretary of Board of Trade Thomas Pownall, Sir William Johnson, among others, but it failed once more. Croghan approached Johnson with a renewed plan to bypass the imperial government altogether. He suggested that Suffering Traders negotiate with natives to cede lands as compensation for their losses. Johnson agreed to support this strategy and even lobbied Lord Dartmouth. The Suffering Traders organized the Indiana Company, and issued shares based on the amount of each member's losses. Shareholders appointed Trent as their principal agent, whose responsibility it was to secure land from natives. Jews and Christians alike held original shares as proprietors of the Indiana Company, and Trent brokered a deal with natives, who ceded a small amount of land to the traders near Fort Pitt. Shareholders thereafter tied their own economic interests together with those of patrons in British North America. New Jersey Governor William Franklin, for example,

³⁹ Quoted Bouquet to Gage, c. February 1765; Bouquet to Agents at Philadelphia, June 16 and 23, 1764, *PHB*, XI, 147, XIII, 302-04; Gage to Plumsted & Franks, June 22, 1764, Articles of Agreement Between Callender and Leake, July 6, 1764, *Gage Correspondence*, II, 234-36, 250-52; Franks to Bouquet, August 14, 1764, Franks, Inglis, and Barkly to Gage, October 1, 1764, Gage to Inglis, Franks, and Barkly, October 8, 1764, Franks File, AJA; Franks to Gage, August 15, 1764, Franks, Inglis, and Barkly to Gage, October 17, 1764, John Watts to Moses Franks, August 11, 1764, Gage to Franks, August 12, 1764, Gage Papers, Stern, *Franks*, 76-84; quoted Gage to Amherst, November 7, 1764, *Gage Correspondence*, II, 253-54; Gross, *Shylock*, 114; Nathans, "Maligned," 310-11; Agreement Between Franks, Inglis, and Gage, February 4, 1765, Franks File, SC-3636, AJA.

received 5,399 shares in the Indiana Company, and Quaker-turned Anglican, Joseph Galloway, Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly and Benjamin Franklin's political ally in local politics, received 1,125 shares. These financial favors, they hoped, ensured them the active participation of Franklin and Galloway in securing remuneration. The failure of the "Jew Bill" had taught them the need to tie their interests to those of ruling elites. Trent sent a request to Lord Dartmouth, president of the Board of Trade, while William Franklin asked his father in London for assistance. In this case, as in others, patronage failed to procure land as compensation, because frontier lands remained entangled in a labyrinth of conflicting claims by individuals, tribes, officials, and colonial governments.⁴⁰

Suffering Traders thus refocused their attention upon frontier markets. Quakers and Jews had cooperated since the 1730s, but economic competition and political partisanship strained Jewish-Quaker relations. Pittsburgh and Illinois became violent battlefields among ambitious entrepreneurs. James Kenny, a Quaker merchant, operated a Pittsburgh store. The Commissioners for Indian Affairs, including prominent Quakers, Israel Pemberton, Jr. and Joseph Morris, established it to compete with Jews. Levy and Trent also operated a store there, as did Simon, Franks, and Croghan. Kenny complained about the "Store kept by Trent and Levy here (Franks being concerned)," and fumed that when combined with "Croghan's Pollyticks" Jews' had monopolized Indian trade—an allusion to Croghan's vast connections. "Levy the Jew" also manipulated Indians to trade with Jews, not Quakers. Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan

⁴⁰ Croghan to Johnson, February 24, April 14, and July 12, 1764, *PWJ*, IV, 264-71, 339-411, 419-22, 396-98, 462-66, V, 337-61; Croghan to Franks, December 27, 1772, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 10, AJHS; Fish, *Gratz*, 83-86; Pitock, "Commerce," 69-71; *JOP*, 65-66; Lewis, *Indiana*, 43, 45-46, 316; *BMG*, 90, 341; Stern, *Franks*, 60-61; Samuel Wharton, *View of the Title to Indiana, a Tract of Country on the River Ohio* (Philadelphia, 1775); idem, *Plain Facts; Being an Examination into the Rights of the Indian Nations of America, to their respective countries* (Philadelphia, 1781); William Franklin to Benjamin Franklin, December 17, 1765, Lewis, *Indiana*, 51-52. Indiana Company Papers, *Ohio Papers*, 287-345. Simon held 4,822 shares, Franks and Levy held 3,097 shares each, Trent held 7,427, and Croghan held 1,125 shares, among others.

built a post on the Scioto River, but, determined to supplant Quakers, Joseph Simon, John Gibson (Mayor of Philadelphia), and Alexander Lowery appealed to their staunchest patron, Sir William Johnson. Johnson responded with his support of William Murray and Croghan, who set out on an expedition to Illinois from Fort Pitt. Murray, a native of Scotland, had met Moses Franks in London, and migrated to Pennsylvania. He fought Pontiac alongside Bouquet, met Croghan at Fort Pitt, and Richa Franks, David's sister, in New York, where he resided in the Franks home, relationships that brought him into the orbit of Suffering Traders. Murray represented the Gratz brothers in Carlisle and Illinois, friendships that only matured over time. In return, they controlled his accounts in Philadelphia; he met Simon in Lancaster, where he purchased Simon's silver as he traveled westward. The Gratzes cared for Murray's two young sons "down the River" while he set up a permanent homestead on the frontier. Murray referred affectionately to Barnard as "Barney," and correspondences between the Gratzes and Murray are full of wit and teasing—evidence of their close friendship.⁴¹

Wishing to control frontier trade, Jews extended Croghan a credit line of more than £2,000 and allowed him to use their warehouses at Fort Pitt as his primary source of merchandise suitable "for the Use of the Indians." Croghan, Trent, the Gratzes, and Franks partnered with Levy and Simon to open another store in Pittsburgh. Trent acted as liaison in Pittsburgh, Levy and Simon controlled the affairs in Lancaster, and Franks, Isaac Levy, and the Gratzes did so in Philadelphia. Quaker merchant George Morgan attempted to align his firm Baynton, Wharton,

⁴¹ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 26, 1745; *JOP*, 29-30; Brener, *Lancaster*; Kenny quotes in Pencak, *Jews*, 184. For violence, see Thomas P. Slaughter, "Interpersonal Violence in a Rural Setting: Lancaster County in the Eighteenth Century," *PHJ* 58 (1991), 98-123; John W. Jordan, ed., "Journal of James Kenny, 1761-1763," *PMHB* 37 (1913), 395-449; Anna Edith Marks, "William Murray: Trader and Land Speculator in the Illinois Country," (Thesis, University of Illinois: 1919), 1-5, 8-11; quoted Murray to Barnard Gratz, June 9, 1768 and June 29, 1769, Michael Gratz to Murray, December 28, 1769, Gratz brothers to Murray, April 4, 1770, *BMG*, 84, 95, 108-09, also 33, 217, 351. The Gratz brothers also befriended Cosmo Alexander, Gilbert Stuart's painting instructor, who required the Gratzes' patronage when he faced debtors' prison, see *CAJ*, III, 1161.

and Morgan with Croghan, whose patronage, Morgan believed, gave his firm an advantage over Jewish competitors in the Illinois market. Needing goods, Croghan accepted Morgan's offer to partner in Illinois trade. Gage, probably at Johnson's urging, extended Croghan Indian gifts and £2,000 to defray costs. Croghan and Morgan embarked for Illinois. West of Carlisle the Paxton Boys, not natives, launched a raid on the caravan, which contained Croghan's personal stores of ammunition and knives destined for trade with Indians. Colonial and imperial authorities had prohibited such trade in the region, thus the Paxton Boys took the law into their own hands. British troops, local residents, the Paxton Boys, and merchant-traders squared off in a skirmish. Both sides captured prisoners, but no one was killed. Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan turned to Governor Penn for a resolution. Penn worked out a peaceful solution, but Croghan's reputation was damaged. Croghan negotiated with native chiefs in Illinois, and earned their friendship, patronage, and pelts. But Croghan returned from Illinois destitute and reliant upon the compassion of friends and patrons. Franks granted Croghan a one-year reprieve, interest free. Croghan appealed to Johnson, who informed Gage of Croghan's "private losses," and requested that Gage use his "interest to procure a reimbursement." These favors alone did not alleviate Croghan's financial situation.⁴²

Morgan, meanwhile, worked to gain a foothold in Illinois through the patronage of Murray, rather than Croghan. He invested in unmarketable goods, which overextended his credit, a problem that Jews overcame with well-positioned correspondents and the resources of

⁴² Quoted *Advances Made by Simon, Levy and Company to Croghan, March 23, 1765*, *BMG*, 69-71; Marks, "Murray," 4-11. Jacob and Abigaill were known to have opened their home to military officials, which is probably how Murray met Richa Franks, see *BMG*, 103; *JOP*, 66; Max Savelle, *George Morgan, Colony Builder* (New York, 1967), 1-5, 18-23; Kenneth P. Bailey, *The Ohio Company of Virginia and the Westward Movement, 1748-1792* (Glendale, CA, 1939), 6-7; Johnson to Captain Howard, July 2, 1765, Johnson to Gage, August 19, 1765, Johnson to Croghan, April 4, 1765, *PWJ*, IV, 281-82, 816, 706-07; Volwiler, *Croghan*, 178-81; Fish, *Gratz*, 86-88; Stern, *Franks*, 84-86; Johnson to Gage, June 19, 1765, Augustine Prevost to Johnson, August 16, 1765, Croghan to Johnson, December 27, 1765, *PWJ*, IV, 770-72, 825, 886-89; Croghan to Captain William Murray, July 12, 1765, *BMG*, 71; Wainwright, "Journal," 313-444; quoted Johnson to Gage, January 7 and 30, 1766, *PWJ*, V, 117-20.

the transatlantic network of agents and patrons. Nearing bankruptcy, Morgan attempted to save his reputation and business. Moses Franks and his partners, meanwhile, signed yet another contract, one that gave them and their associates a monopoly on trade in the region between Philadelphia and Fort Pitt. That Fort Pitt accessed the Ohio River and that Croghan controlled licensing in the region ensured that Jews and their allies dominated trade in Illinois thereafter. Morgan turned to trusted patrons, William Franklin and Johnson, for favors that would allow Quakers to compete again. Unknown to Morgan, the winds of fortune had already shifted to Moses Franks and his associates. Without protections and favors provided by patrons in London and Philadelphia, financial ruin seemed all but certain. Morgan complained to friends and former patrons alike, including Lords of Treasury, about unfair advantages afforded Jews. Morgan even offered an interest in his firm to Lauchlin MacLeane, undersecretary to Lord Shelburne, in exchange for MacLeane's influence in London. Morgan's efforts failed, and he and his partners bankrupted. Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, once close friends and fellow Suffering Traders, blamed Croghan and his Jewish friends for their plight. Although the firm reopened for business and Morgan worked with Jews thereafter, Morgan never forgave them.⁴³

Johnson, meanwhile, recognized that frontier expansion lay in numbers, and urged Croghan to make amends with Quakers. Croghan issued Indiana Company shares to important officials and to Quakers. Morgan accepted 5,400 shares in the company, and cooperated with Murray and the Gratzes, which kept the peace, at least for a time. To secure the favors of Gage, Croghan offered Gage a stake in the company. Gage refused, but approved Croghan's second expedition to Illinois, again at Johnson's behest. With the patronage of Johnson and Gage

⁴³ Savelle, *Morgan*, 20-37; Stern, *Franks*, 86-88; Simon to Barnard Gratz, May 10, 1767, McAllister Collection, HSP; Lewis, *Indiana*, 53; Simon to Barnard Gratz, July 7, 1768, *BMG*, 85-88, 118, 125, 342. In 1770, Murray's firm merged with David Franks's firm, see Marks, "Murray," 10-20.

secured, Croghan prepared again to set off from Fort Pitt to Illinois with more goods on consignment from Franks and his associates. Tensions, competition, and jealousy ran high when Croghan's second expedition arrived in Illinois with Morgan. George Gibson and Henry Prather arrived thereafter as agents for Joseph Simon and Barnard Gratz, as did Murray, who represented the Illinois interests of David Franks and the Gratzes. When Morgan unknowingly sold skins to Prather and Gibson, and learned later that Gibson was a Jewish agent, he attacked him. In the ensuing struggle, Prather nearly beat Morgan to death. He survived the altercation, but his business did not. The arrival of Murray, "our friend, who, I hope, will not forget us," wrote Michael Gratz, and Croghan meant the arrival of Jewish dominance in Illinois.⁴⁴

Jews purchased much of the goods from the defunct Quaker firm. Franks purchased Morgan's personal inventory for about £10,000 and asked Murray to inspect the goods at Fort Pitt. Murray deemed about ten percent of the merchandise spoiled, and Franks refused to pay. Franks enlisted the support of Thomas Hutcheson, Philadelphia Mayor John Gibson (George's brother), and Morgan's own clerk in Illinois, John Finley, all of whom testified under oath that Morgan had sold damaged goods. Yet, Morgan somehow won a lawsuit against Franks, which underscores his personal clout among his Quaker brethren. One year later, Franks had not yet paid Morgan, and no evidence shows whether or not he ever did. Morgan fled Illinois for Missouri. With Illinois free of Morgan's interference, Jews and their partners invested in its development and even worked with Quakers again thereafter. They provided the goods and provisions necessary to sustain civilization on the frontier. Networks of patronage allowed them to do so, and, because frontier enterprise was popular among colonials, Jews won the support of

⁴⁴ Henry Prather and George Gibson to Joseph Simon and Barnard Gratz, June 10, 1768, Gratzes to Murray, April 5, 1770, *BMG*, 85-86, 103-10, 120; Fish, *Gratz*, 87-90; Savelle, *Morgan*, 55; *CAJ*, II, 593; *JOP*, 67-70; Marks, "Murray," 1-8; Michael Gratz to William Murray, September 1, 1769, Murray to Gratz brothers, September 22, 1769, quoted Michael Gratz to William Murray, September 1, 1769, *BMG*, 102-04.

important gentiles. For patrons of Jewish enterprise, frontier trade was one thing. Land speculation proved to be a matter altogether different, which demarcated the boundaries of patronage and underscored the growing importance of Whig patrons for Jews and their allies.⁴⁵

The financial woes of the British government spearheaded debates, which raged on both sides of the Atlantic to determine the prudence of a stamp tax. In London, Benjamin Franklin received numerous complaints from Philadelphia's constituents, and he lobbied against the new tax at court. Members of Parliament, though, ignored him and moved forward with their plans. Limitations on colonial exports, at the same time that the cost of imports increased, placed heavy financial pressures on colonial merchants, including Jews. Without avenues for redress, merchants argued that their only recourse was to boycott British goods. Like the disparate group of Suffering Traders, Jews and other like-minded merchants came together once more in economic solidarity, which mitigated their ethno-cultural differences and demonstrates Jews' rising influence in the public sphere. Jewish merchants and shopkeepers, of course, had a significant interest in the repeal of the stamp statute. As businesspeople, Jews depended on the authentication of numerous documents. Jews up and down the eastern seaboard signed the formalized Non-Importation agreement, which included Mathias Bush, the Gratzes and Levys, David Franks, and others. In the wake of the Townshend Acts, merchants issued a second agreement, and Jews signed it as well. From London, Barnard Gratz reported to his brother,

⁴⁵ George Morgan to Franks, October 30, 1770, Franks to Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, October 18, 1770 and February 15, 1771, Affidavit signed by Thomas Hutcheson and John Gibson that Morgan sold damaged goods, November 30, 1771, Affidavit signed by John Finley, October 28, 1772, Windsor Brown to James Rumsey, February 23, 1771 and February 15, 1772, Windsor Brown Opinion Favors Franks, December 28, 1770, Windsor Brown Opinion Favors Morgan, February 16, 1771, George Morgan to Franks and Co., December 29, 1770, Award of Louis Viviat in George Morgan and James Rumsey's differences relative to saleable Goods, February 16, 1771, Franks File, SC-3640, AJA; Savelle, *Morgan*, 73; Stern, *Franks*, 88-90; *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, I, 374-79; *JOP*, 70-72; Murray to Gratzes, May 15, 1773, Michael to Barnard, September 26, 1779, *BMG*, 120, 130-31, 136-37, 187.

“Tradesman and Manufacturers are a’crying out about” the boycott in North America, which led Barnard to suggest, “the acts will be Repealed.” Matthias Bush, likewise, complained, “Trade in America is very dull,” because the “goods shipped from Great Britain since last April are all stored.” Rising prices for commodities in short supply tested Jewish resolve. The Gratz brothers, for example, stood firm and refused to ship 3,300 pounds of sugar from New York to Philadelphia. Newspapers show that not everyone did so, which brought the ire of radical Whigs down upon them.⁴⁶

As the imperial crisis worsened, it shifted the center of power across the Atlantic to Whig leaders, which upset the preexisting patronage network that the Levy-Franks family complex had worked so hard to cultivate. With frontier expansion came the land claims of individuals, natives, corporations, and even colonies that negotiated their own treaties with natives. As London’s Board of Trade was bombarded with conflicting petitions, Jews and their allies speculated in those contested lands, accepted tenuous land titles to settle debts, and in the process learned some hard lessons about the functionality of the patronage game. The outcome of the revolutionary crisis determined the winners and losers of the land grab on the frontiers of North America. Jewish merchants, though, embraced the opportunity to supply troops once more. At Fort Pitt, Barnard Gratz supplied troops with “blankets and leggings-stuff,” Aaron Levy received a contract to supply goods; the Committee of Safety hired Michael Gratz to supply troops in Philadelphia with “Blankets” and Virginia hired him to supply leather; Levy Marks petitioned the Continental Congress to manufacture the uniforms of the army; and Manuel Josephson won a

⁴⁶ Pencak, 195. For agreement, see *DHJ*, 38-40, 50-51. In October 1776, fifteen or sixteen Jews signed an allegiance to General Howe in New York, see *USJ*, I, 46, 52-4, 56, 78-9; *JOP*, 47-48, 57; quoted Barnard Gratz to Michael Gratz, October 31, 1769, Gratz Papers, Henry Joseph Collection, AJA; *JOP*, 52-53; quoted Mathias Bush to Bernard Gratz, November 7, 1769, *BMG*, 106-07; Isaac Adolphus to Michael Gratz, November 8, 1765, McAllister Collection, HSP; *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, February 3, 1778.

contract to supply troops with “guns, cutlasses and bayonets;” David Franks supplied the armies and prisoners of both American and British forces, and again subcontracted with DeLancey and Watts. In Lancaster, too, Joseph Simon and his partner William Henry manufactured rifles at their forge for the army’s use, while Levy Andrew Levy supplied shoes and blankets.⁴⁷

The contest for western lands was to some extent the result of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, which ceded Iroquois lands west of the Alleghenies and south of the Ohio River. Croghan received a large personal land grant for his efforts, which he used to repay his Jewish creditors. Barnard Gratz purchased lands in Pittsburgh and, as Illinois’s emergent market expanded, the Gratzes partnered with Murray. Levy Andrew Levy, meanwhile, partnered with Michael Gratz to purchase land near Fort Bedford. At Carlisle and Fort Pitt, Murray sold goods obtained from the Gratzes, while his Jewish friends controlled his commercial interests in Philadelphia. “Do in it as if for yourself,” Murray assured them, while he traded on the Gratzes behalf at Forts Chartres, Kaskaskia, and Cahokia, deep in Illinois. Michael Gratz purchased 9,050 acres in New York’s Mohawk Valley near Otsego Lake and William Cooper’s Town. Michael’s claims to much of those lands ended in failure because he held a deed but no patent. With Johnson’s assistance, Croghan received clear titles to specific tracts. But Jews’ access to Johnson ran through the conduit of Croghan, which brought the limitations of patronage to the foreground once more. Johnson, under pressure from London, refused to grant patents to Indiana Company shareholders, which prompted David to offer his brother Moses shares in the company, in

⁴⁷ *JOP*, 76-8, 82-3; *DHJ*, 38-40, 50-1; *USJ*, I, 46, 52-4, 56, 78-9; *JOP*, 76-8, 82-3, 402; Colonel Aeneas Mackay to Barnard Gratz, September 16, 1776, McAllister Collection, LCP; *JCC*, III, 315, VII, 188; Matthew Anderson to Michael Gratz, August 10, 1779, *BMG*, 157, 162-63, 183; *Pennsylvania Packet*, May 13, 1778; Joseph Simon to Barnard Gratz, April 4, 1777, McAllister Collection, LCP; Francis Hutcheson to Lord Treasury, May 25, 1774, Agreement Robert Field and David Franks, March 1, 1774, Moses Franks to David, May 8, 1775, Daniel Charnier to David, February 8, 1776, David to Arnold Nesbitt, Adam Drummond, and Moses Franks, May 28 and 29, 1778, Warrants signed by Colonel Frederick Haldimand, May 25, 1774, David to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, November 7, 1778, David to Major André, December 2, 1779, Franks File, SC-3639, SC-3643, SC-3654, SC-3655, SC-3657, AJA.

exchange for his lobbying efforts in London on their behalf. Moses lobbied his friends but failed. Their claims to land was further complicated with passage of the Quebec Act in 1774, which placed much of the contested lands in Quebec's jurisdiction.⁴⁸

As early as 1730, Virginia's leaders claimed much of the lands in question. Lawrence Washington, and his brother George, along with Thomas Lee, president of the State Council, formed the Ohio Company of Virginia, whose members made up much of Virginia's colonial gentry. It received a royal charter of 200,000 acres. Another group of prominent Virginians, including Peter Jefferson, Thomas Jefferson's father, Dr. Thomas Walker, and others, formed the Loyal Company, which gained a grant of 800,000 acres. The Suffering Traders' ultimate success regarding their land claims rested with the relationships they had forged with patrons. Virginia's gentry, however, worked the patronage game to their advantage by gaining the support of Virginia's Governor Lord Dunmore—it helped, too, that Dunmore's successors were members of the gentry, Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson.

William Trent traveled to London, in hopes of obtaining recognition of the Indiana Company's land claims. Trent found an ally in influential London banker, Thomas Walpole, a proprietor in the Walpole Vandalia Company. (Scholars have suggested that Vandalia was named by investor Benjamin Franklin in honor of England's German queen, a descendant of the Vandals, though it could have been an allusion to Franklin's many Jewish friends and fellow investors of German origin.) Trent and Walpole combined the claims of the Walpole Vandalia

⁴⁸ Stern, *Franks*, 62; Slick, *Trent*, 127-35; *Pennsylvania Archives*, First Series, II, 233-39, Second Series, VI, 67; Fish, *Gratz*, 42-43, 88-92; Volwiler, *Croghan*, 17-31, 38, 117; Edward Ward to Barnard, April 17, 1765, Levy Andrew Levy to Michael Gratz, January 11, 1768, *BMG*, 72-73, 83, also 14, 19, 90; quoted Murray to Barnard Gratz, June 8, 1768, Murray to Gratzes, June, 1768, Michael Gratz to Murray, July 8, 1768, Gratzes to Murray, August 31, 1768, *BMG*, 84-89; David Franks, et al, to Moses Franks, January 4, 1769, Etting Collection, HSP; Michael Gratz to Barnard Gratz, July 6, 1770, Barnard Gratz to William Emerton, October 3, 1770, *BMG*, 90, 111-13; Barnard Gratz to Michael Gratz, June 14, 1769, Gratz Correspondence, AJA; DeLancey to Moses Franks, January 4, 1775, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, AJHS.

Company with the Indiana Company to form the Grand Ohio Company. To maximize their potential favors from patrons, they called a meeting at London's Crown and Anchor Tavern, which attracted land speculators, including William and Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Galloway, who contributed £600, and Moses, John, and Naphtali Franks of London, who invested £800. Despite the influential voices on behalf of the Grand Ohio Company, though, Parliament patented the land claims of Virginia's gentry instead. Murray negotiated with Illinois natives, who ceded lands that encompassed the lower half of the future states of Illinois and Indiana. The Gratzes partnered in the "Indiana" and "Wabash" land grants with William Franklin, Simon, Franks, Croghan, and others; Trent, Callender, Franks, Simon, and Levy Andrew Levy combined their claims as well. In London, Benjamin Franklin lobbied hard for patents to these lands. Croghan insisted that the Board of Trade would patent the contested land titles, but Virginia stood in the way. When settlers in the region massacred Chief Logan's family, frontier warfare placed land controversies on the periphery. Lord Dunmore's War again disrupted trade, but a silver lining appeared once again, when the Gratz brothers won the contract to supply troops sent to suppress natives and to repair damaged forts. The revolution dampened frontier expansion, and Jewish investors' land claims remained unresolved.⁴⁹

The Virginians soon learned the limitations of patronage themselves. George Washington and Lord Dunmore placed a garrison at Fort Pitt, whose responsibility it was to strengthen with force the claims made by the Ohio Company of Virginia. Dunmore broke from

⁴⁹ *Ohio Papers*, 1-18; Fish, *Gratz*, 11-15, 43-44, 90-91; Stern, *Franks*, 62; *JOP*, 67-73; Pencak, *Jews*, 186; William Franklin to Benjamin Franklin, August 14, 1775, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. William B. Willcox (New Haven, 1982), XXII, 169-171; Wabash Grants/Land Purchased from Indians, 1768-1780, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 9, Solomon Bush, undated, Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 85, Indentures, Partnership Agreement, Schedule of Shares, January 19 and 20, 1776, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 9, AJHS; Franks to Coxe and Hamilton, May 10, 1782, Franks File, SC-3644, AJA; Franks, Murray, and John Campbell to Dunmore, April 19, 1774, *EAJ*, II, 38-41; Murray to Barnard Gratz, May 16, 1774, Campbell to Levy Andrew Levy, May 30, 1774, *BMG*, 140-43, 14-15; Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, August 1757, Gratz Papers, AJHS.

imperial policy, when he allowed surveys of land to commence in Kentucky. Washington, Jefferson, and Patrick Henry received massive tracts of land from their patron. In 1775, Dunmore and the Virginia gentry broke ranks and became enemies, thus Dunmore revoked their patents. Levy Andrew Levy informed the Gratzes, “Lord Dartmouth has sent orders to Lord Dunmore...to make null and void the patents he has already granted.” The outcome of the war determined the lawful owners of the lands in question. Many of Virginia’s Whig leaders and their Jewish allies therefore embraced rebellion and revolution for personal gain. For Pennsylvania’s Jews, the decision to cast their lot with the likes of Franklin and Washington was not a difficult one to make, because their interests aligned with Whig elites who wished to create a new nation and thus continue the march westward. The Gratz brothers, meanwhile, invested in George Rogers Clark’s 1777 expedition to Illinois, commissioned by Virginia’s wartime Governor Patrick Henry.⁵⁰

That Jews allied with Whigs, however, did not always work to their advantage. Jews saw firsthand how colonial leaders utilized their positions of political power to wrest away land from individuals whose deeds did not have patents. The controversy was rooted in debates about state and national sovereignty. The Continental Congress, a group of the wealthiest colonial Americans, claimed the “Back Country” lands in question. Members of Congress argued that that body was “heir of the Crown,” which meant that Congress (or, more accurately, specific members of Congress) owned all contested lands, a decision that rendered previous titles null and void. But the supremacy of the national government was not yet determined, thus Virginia ignored Congress, though it did cede some lands in the Old Northwest, until George Mason orchestrated a compromise that satisfied state claims to land, not individuals’ claims, in the

⁵⁰ Fish, *Gratz*, 44; quote Pencak, *Jews*, 186; *BMG*, 14-15.

Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Before the compromise, however, Virginia law, aimed at British interlopers and loyalists, forbade all “foreigners” from owning frontier lands, orchestrated by the gentry.

Did this law mean foreigners of Virginia or the emergent United States? Barnard traveled to Williamsburg to find out; he found a capable ally in Duncan Rose, a member of Virginia’s Board of Trade and confidant of Henry. But it was not enough leverage to satisfy their claims. Governor Henry deemed the Gratzes and others “foreigners in Virginia.” Henry even refused to pay dividends from the Gratzes’ investments in Clark’s expedition, which secured for Virginia the very lands in question. For years, the Gratzes lobbied Whig leaders for redress and turned to their most trusted patrons for assistance. Several prominent Jewish patrons and fellow partners in western lands, including Quaker Samuel Wharton and deists Benjamin Franklin and Tom Paine. Wharton gave Paine a stake in the lands if he agreed to utilize his literary talents to shape popular opinion in favor of the speculators, not the Virginia gentry. The group produced several pamphlets, *Plain Facts* and *Public Good*, which not only conflated their personal interests with the “public good” but also lamented Virginians’ injustices not only against the Gratzes and other Jews but also Lord Fairfax, Washington’s imperial patron-turned-Whig. Franklin even stood before Congress and read aloud his “Passy Memorial,” which laid out the interests of those concerned in the Vandalia lands, including his Jewish friends. The Gratz partnership turned to Richard Henry Lee and Clark for assistance. They awaited compensation for supplies and repairs to forts, but Henry stalled, reluctant to pay debts incurred by Dunmore’s imperial government. Michael Gratz met with Henry, though, who agreed to pay them for supplies and building materials. Henry, however, ignored their land claims. They even

enlisted the support of Aaron Burr and petitioned James Madison in Congress in the 1780s, pointing to protections under the terms of the Northwest Ordinance, but that too failed.⁵¹

Similar to their experiences in Virginia, Jews lost many of their land claims in Pennsylvania. George Croghan had purchased “from Chiefs of the Six Nations three tracts of land,” which totaled 200,000 acres. Croghan, however, owed his Jewish friends tens of thousands of pounds but, without money, he was dependent upon the Gratz brothers’ compassion. He repaid them in contested lands but, to be fair, he also warned them to sell the lands as quickly as they could because “the least misfortune happening to the French will ruin it.” Disgruntled radical Whigs in Philadelphia, meanwhile, accused David Franks of loyalist sentiments, while western traders accused Croghan because his Indian friends attacked frontier settlements. Franks was arrested three times on suspicion of assisting the British. Croghan fled Pennsylvania, though the Gratz brothers did what they could for him, despite the large debts he owed them. Croghan admitted, “it was of my own free will I promised to pay all those old Debts which was not commonly done by the people that failed in Trade.” Radical Whigs, who now controlled the assembly, seized their assets and banished them from Pennsylvania. Not guilty verdicts for Croghan and Franks made no difference in the outcome. In 1782, Croghan died, and Franks fled to New York, Montreal, and London. They petitioned the “Speaker and House of Representatives of Pennsylvania” for redress. In response, the assembly passed a law that gave legal sanction to their seizures, which allowed the state of Pennsylvania to escheat “their titles,” a decision buttressed by a previous law that granted the commonwealth alone the right to

⁵¹ For power and self-interest on the frontier, see Alan Taylor, *William Cooper’s Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York, 1996); Pencak, *Jews*, 187-88; Michael Gratz to Barnard Gratz, May 30, 1775, William Croghan to Barnard, August 7, 1779, Barnard to Michael, October 28, 1779, Duncan Rose to Michael, November 10, 1779, Aaron Burr to Barnard, June 21, 1785, *BMG*, 17-18, 149-50, 182-83, 188-91, 231; Michael to Barnard, April 19, 1780, September 19, 1782, September 19, 1792, Barnard to Michael, July 16, 1788, October 3, 1793, April 9, 1794, Barnard and Michael to Solomon Henry, November 10, 1789, Henry Joseph Collection, MS-451, AJA.

purchase lands from natives. The Gratz brothers' titles, then, held no legal weight, and Croghan and Franks were ruined in the process. Jewish revolutionaries who emerged from the war learned important lessons about how patronage functioned in the Anglo-American world. Power, or access to it through patronage, was akin to roulette—sometimes it worked out, sometimes it did not. Their most important London patron, Moses Franks, whose access to authority had aggrandized members of the transatlantic patronage network, was now useless to Jewish Whigs. After 1776, when authority shifted from London to American shores, Jews learned the hard way that their focus must shift accordingly to Whig leaders. As we shall see, though, Jews utilized those lessons in productive, often political ways in the years after 1783.⁵²

Lord Dunmore's War and subsequent revolution postponed the creation of new governments in the west and brought the limitations of Jews' clout to the foreground. Suffering Traders' efforts to recoup their losses ended in failure, and Jewish investors spent more than a decade attempting to patent their land claims. Jews, conversely, enjoyed prosperity, status, and acceptance in their communities, made possible by their economic activities and cultivation of relationships with patrons. Socioeconomic patronage offered elite Jews some "insider" status, but Jews remained essentially outsiders under British hegemony. For imperial lawmakers, theory and practice did not always align. The gap between economic exploitation on the one hand and promises of full emancipation on the other widened, which meant most Jews

⁵² Barnard Gratz (for himself and Joseph Simons, Col. Charles Sims, Major William Croghan, and Michael Gratz) and Edmund Milne, memorial to Speaker and House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, Report of Committee [of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, on the memorial of Gratz and others], November 1779, Croghan to Franks, December 27, 1772, January 9, 1775, Gratz Papers, Box 9, Folder 1, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 10, AJHS; first quote Croghan to Michael, November 22, 1779, *BMG*, 14-15, 190-91; second quote Pencak, *Jews*, 184-85; Volwiler, *Croghan*, 111, 286-87, 312, 327-28, 379; Articles Concerning Franks' Three Arrests and Subsequent Banishment to New York for Alleged Pro-English Loyalties, David Franks to Tench Coxe and Andrew Hamilton, May 10, 1782, Franks to Cox, May 30, 1782, Franks Last Will, 1785, executed on July 15, 1794, Franks File, SC-3637, 3644, 3642, AJA.

abandoned their British allegiances, and embraced instead an emergent nationalism espoused by radical Whigs who promised supporters full participation in a republican experiment. Every Jew in Pennsylvania joined the Whig ranks save David Franks. Dr. Benjamin Rush remarked of this phenomenon, “many of the children of Tory parents were Whigs, so were the Jews in all the States.” Rush’s hyperbole aside, Jews elsewhere recognized their second-class legal status and wondered aloud why they should support their Whig oppressors. Moses Michael Hays, for example, complained, “I am an Israelite and am not allowed the liberty of a vote or voice in common with the rest of the voters.” Unlike Hays who lived in docile Rhode Island, Pennsylvania’s Jews contended with radical Whigs at every turn. Those who remained loyal to British auspices became outcasts, most notably David Franks, whose attempt to supply the forces and prisoners of both sides during the revolution earned him a reputation of duplicity. With his credibility damaged beyond repair, Pennsylvania’s leaders seized his lands and assets and banished him. Franks found himself on the wrong side of the patronage game, but old habits die hard. So central was patronage to his life that Franks, when he resided a short time in New York before embarking for London, published a plea to his fellow merchants who he hoped would grant him “their patronage.” At age 70, moreover, Franks solicited from Lord Powell an appointment as Attorney General of the Bahamas. In 1794, Franks died in England with one final favor, a £100 government pension procured for him by his brother Moses.

The popular protest and violence that led to the repeal of the “Jew Bill,” as well as the treatment of David Franks at the hands of Whigs, reminded Jews of the specter of prejudice, which had followed them across the Atlantic. Colonial leaders, like those in the Newcastle ministry, feared losing popular support among Protestants. An emergent national consciousness inspired popular debates regarding the proper boundaries to be drawn around the nature of

citizenship in a “free” society. To Jews’ chagrin, Pennsylvania’s Whig leaders withheld the natural rights they had promised Jews and others when, in 1776, a new state constitution required voters and public office holders to swear oaths to Protestant Christianity. Revolution did little to widen Jewish legal rights in Pennsylvania. Jews, therefore, remained excluded from political culture. Maintaining their political power and economic advantages was far more important to colonial leaders than Jewish natural rights, however much they found them economically useful. All, however, was not lost. For Jews, the utility of patronage, now aimed at Whig leaders—Robert Morris, Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, John Jay, Benjamin Rush, Aaron Burr, James Madison, among them—paid off when the Gratz brothers and even David Franks secured patents to some of their dispossessed lands, mostly in Illinois, New York, and Virginia. With successful overtures of favors from Whig elites, even modest ones, Jews turned to political activism on an unprecedented scope and scale.⁵³

⁵³ Rush Quoted in Cyrus Adler, “Benjamin Rush and the Jews,” *PAJHS* 17 (1909), 203-04; *BMG*, 14-19, 216; Faber, *Planting*, 16, 96; Endelman, *Georgian England*, 20-30; quoted Moses Michael Hays, July 12, 1776, in Jacob Rader Marcus, “Jews and the American Revolution: A Bicentennial Documentary,” *AJAJ* 27 (1975), 121; Daniel Chamier to David Franks, February 8, 1776, Robert Wigram to Tench Coxe, April 4, 1778, Franks to Arnold Nesbitt, Adam Drummond, and Moses Franks, May 28 and 29, 1778, Franks to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, November 7, 1778, Franks to Major John André, December 2, 1779, Franks File, SC-3643, 3655, 3657. Franks to Lord Powell, February 7, 1790, David Franks Petition to Parliament for Payment of Losses Incurred as a Loyalist in America, 1782-83, Certificate/Petition #223 Franks, David, 1784-89, Decision of Committee to Award Franks 100 Pounds Per Year, undated, Moses Franks Certificate/Petition on David’s Behalf, undated, Evidence on Memorial of David Franks, June 12, 1786, Memorial of David Franks, undated, Schedule of Mr. Franks’ Losses, undated, Franks to Tench Coxe and Andrew Hamilton, May 10, 1782, Franks to Barnard Gratz and Jacob Mordecai, March 2, 1783, Franks File, SC-3653, 3644, 3647, *AJA*; quoted David Franks’s Book (New York, 1786), copy in *AJHS*. The Gratzes obtained patents to some lands in New York and Virginia by petitioning state assemblies, the Continental Congress, and James Madison. As late as 1794, they enlisted the assistance of Robert Morris and their cousin Solomon Henry in London, see Michael to Barnard, April 19, 1780, September 19, 1782, September 19, 1792, Barnard to Michael, July 16, 1788, October 3, 1793, April 9, 1794, Barnard and Michael to Solomon Henry, November 10, 1789, Henry Joseph Collection, MS-451, *AJA*. In 1786, Barnard received a patent to 20,000 acres in Virginia, made possible by Governor Edmund Randolph, see Barnard to Michael, May 13, 1786, Henry Joseph Collection, *AJA*; *CAJ*, I, 30-1, 100-06, 444-45; Chyet, “Rights,” 28.

CHAPTER FOUR ENLIGHTENED JUDAISM: TRANSATLANTIC INTELLECTUALISM & POLITE SOCIABILITY

If the first cultural space Jews utilized to establish their mainstream Anglo-American identities was the secular marketplace, the second cultural realm that refashioned relationships between Jews and gentiles was one of the mind. Enlightenment thought and its concomitant cultural institutions of polite society—where public and private life overlapped—sustained a subculture of enlightened Anglo-American elites, including Anglicans, Quakers, Presbyterians, and Jews. Eighteenth-century liberal thought, including William Penn’s “Liberty of the Mind” thesis implemented in early Pennsylvania, begat a radical reinterpretation of religion as a matter of individuals’ opinion or personal choice, like deism. Such cultural transformations provided émigrés with the intellectual resources necessary to craft enlightened dispositions. An examination of libraries enumerated in Jewish wills, Jewish subscriptions to circulating libraries, secular and Jewish educations, and Jewish participation in Freemasonry, as well as other social clubs, taverns, and coffeehouses illuminates a dynamic intellectual world among Jews. Elite Jews and gentiles shared a mutual commitment to enlightenment idealism through domestic and transatlantic exchanges, which brought them together in closer fellowship through shared participation in the cultural institutions and voluntary associations of civil society. Although social acceptance was a positive outcome, the results of such enlightened fellowship for Jews were not always positive, because in some cases it undermined their Jewish identities. Their encounters with Christian Hebraists and other freethinkers combined with enduring prejudices against them in public life led many Jews to convert to Christianity, intermarry with Christians, and raise their children within the Christian fold. Although Christians remained aware of Jewish ethnic and religious distinctiveness and sometimes wielded anti-Semitism to discredit Jews,

mutual activities in enlightenment culture was yet another step toward the refashioning of positive Jewish public images and reputations, which strengthened both fellowship and friendship between elite Jews and gentiles.¹

Scholars have assumed that Jewish migrants of Germanic origins to British North America, the Ashkenazim, remained unsophisticated, unenlightened, often illiterate, conservative, and rural “Village Jews.” As a result, these scholars have presented Pennsylvania’s Jews as having little knowledge of Berlin’s Jewish Enlightenment, the *Haskalah*, at best, and no knowledge at all of enlightenment thought at worst. Although sometimes these

¹ David Shields has shown that polite society’s enlightened cultural institutions represented the intersection of “high society” and “private society.” To describe the salons, coffeehouses, taverns, social clubs, tea tables, and other societies that emerged in eighteenth-century Europe, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, coined the term “private society,” or “a social space in which opinion might be formed, manners refined, and arts encouraged.” Anglo-Americans emulated Europeans and constructed such cultural institutions across the Atlantic, which became “instrumental in the formation of the public sphere, and their modes of discourse necessary to the creation of public opinion,” see David S. Shields, *Civil Tongues & Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill, 1997), quotes on xiii, xv. That Jews were involved at this intersection was essential for them to mold public opinion in their favor, which mitigated their marginalization in public life. The scholarship on eighteenth-century liberal thought, republicanism, and democracy is far too copious to enumerate here, but the following are authoritative classics on the subject. Hofstadter, *American Political Tradition*; Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York, 1955); Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, 1967); Gordon Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1789* (Chapel Hill, 1969); James T. Kloppenberg, *The Virtues of Liberalism* (Oxford, 2000); Joyce Appleby, *Liberalism and Republicanism in the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, 1992); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975); idem, “Machiavelli, Harrington, and English Political Ideologies in the Eighteenth Century,” *WMQ* 22 (1965), 551, 557; idem, “Virtue and Commerce in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3 (1972), 119-134. For liberal thought applied to religious acceptance in Anglo-America, see Schwartz, *Multitude*; Murphy *Conscience and Community*; Beneke, *Beyond Toleration*; Dianne L. Eck, *A New Religious America: How A “Christian Country” Has Become the World’s Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (San Francisco, 2001); William R. Hutchison, *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contested History of a Founding Ideal* (New Haven, 2003). In the development of his “public sphere” concept, Habermas used the eighteenth-century coffeehouse, salon, tavern, other social clubs, and periodical essays of Addison and Steele in the *Spectator*, the first periodical directed at a popular audience, as essential examples of the importance of print culture and cultural sociability. Such social spaces in public life, which also included libraries, colleges, Freemasonry, and other cultural institutions and social clubs, fomented a “leveling” of social customs. Put otherwise, the social spaces of the public sphere welcomed any man to high-minded discourse on a range of topics, regardless of social rank or religious persuasion. Jews took advantage of such social transformations, see Habermas, *Public Sphere*, Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York, 1974), Brian Cowan, “What was Masculine About the Public Sphere?,” *History Workshop Journal* 51 (2001), 127-57, idem “Mr. Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37 (2004), 345-66. Scholars have shown that European enlightenment culture produced philo-Semitism, or comity between elite Jews and gentiles, see Frank Manuel, “Israel and the Enlightenment,” *Daedalus* 111 (1982), 33-51; Adam Sutcliffe, “Myth, Origins, Identity: Voltaire, the Jews, and the Enlightenment Notion of Toleration,” *The Eighteenth Century* 41 (1998), 107-26.

assessments rang true, Jews of German heritage traveled to numerous cosmopolitan urban cultural hubs across the Anglo-American world. Members of the Miranda (Sephardic heritage from Italy), Levy, Franks, Henry, Gratz, Bush, Phillips, Salomon, Seixas, and Nones (Sephardic heritage from France) families, among many others, arrived on American shores, where tidewater towns like Philadelphia boasted a cosmopolitan character. They explored, and sometimes resided in, enlightened urban centers such as Amsterdam, London, Edinburgh, Paris, Prague, Livorno, New York City, Philadelphia, Bonn, and Berlin. They frequented the taverns and salons of polite society, read enlightenment literature, joined voluntary associations, social clubs, and other institutions. They learned from Christian *and* Jewish teachers and tutors. They matriculated into institutions of higher learning that emphasized the civic and practical values of a secular education. They adopted the latest intellectual and cultural assumptions, fashion, material consumption, and behavior, indicative of eighteenth-century Anglo-American elite culture. Many, in fact, did so while also maintaining commitments to organized Judaism and sometimes to *Halakha*. Migrants' "horizons encompassed not just their immediate surroundings but the entire Atlantic world," which meant that even if they resided in provincial towns and cities on the fringes of the British Empire and North American continent, most Jews looked to London or Amsterdam or even Berlin for cultural and social guidance.²

Jews were well-educated participants in enlightenment culture. For Pennsylvania's Ashkenazim, secular educations combined with traditional Hebraic curriculum remained

² Scholars have dismissed enlightenment culture and erudite learning as a significant impact on the intellectual development of Pennsylvania's Ashkenazim, noting that their interactions with enlightened Sephardim remained superficial. Yet, as this chapter shows, Ashkenazim maintained substantive connections to enlightenment thinkers, literature, and institutions, see *EAJ*, II, 3-164; *CAJ*, I, 321-31, 442-46, II, 1069-78, III, 1195-1211; Pencak, *Jews*, ix-x, 7, 36, 70, 133-34; *JOP*, 7, 53, 122, 130, 133; Sorkin, *Haskalah*; quoted Faber, *Planting*, 26. Both Amsterdam and London boasted Sephardic and Ashkenazic synagogues, and Jewish intellectuals espoused liberal ideas of Jewish inclusion, rather than exclusion. Amsterdam gained renown, like Berlin, as a center for enlightened Jewish worship and scholarship.

common, because most of them had lived in Amsterdam and London, where secular educations remained easily attainable. Even in a provincial environment such as Pennsylvania, secular educations among affluent and often polyglot Jews remained the norm rather than the exception, because their wealth allowed them to send children and grandchildren to gentile institutions and teachers. A product of transatlantic cultural-sharing, private schools, colleges, and tutors abounded in urban centers such as Philadelphia and New York City. That Jewish schools remained rare in the colonial period—New York City boasted the only one—meant that Jews sometimes learned from gentile instructors, which cultivated additional goodwill between them.³

Similar intellectual interests meant that elite Jews and Christians also joined together in their pursuits of learning in the form of private schools, tutors, and colleges. Enlightened, secular educations furthered Jews' sense of belonging in their communities. Unlike European Jews, whose Jewish educations often reinforced their exclusion from broader communities, Jews learned about Judaism, its moral precepts and humanitarian ethics, at home, and then discussed more enlightened religious ideas with gentiles at school and other public social spaces. The comity cultivated in these cultural niches provided the intellectual resources for Jews and Christians to mitigate the ancient cultural barriers between them through enlightened fellowship which fostered shared cultural values. Jews learned about their natural rights, no doubt, but they also learned that they were not all that different from their gentile neighbors. Christians, too, recognized the expansive common ground they shared with their Jewish friends. In nearby Easton, Myer Hart donated supplies for the construction of a local school, where he sent his children to learn alongside gentiles. And in Philadelphia, Jacob Mordecai, whose father Moses had migrated from Bonn, Germany, attended the well-respected schoolhouse conducted by

³ CAJ, III, 1195-97.

Captain Joseph Stiles. Jews' increased participation in the public sphere, which their Christian neighbors tacitly accepted, only further encouraged them to demand their natural rights withheld from them for nothing more than their Jewishness. Many of their gentile friends, revealingly, increasingly spoke out against anti-Jewish behavior, rhetoric, and attitudes, and they did so often in the public square.⁴

German-born and German-trained physicians, surgeons and, in rare cases, rabbis and lawyers and other learned individuals bustled about on Pennsylvania's frontier, offering their services to their brethren in the wilderness. Philadelphia's urbanism attracted professionals to the city throughout the eighteenth century. Although not as prevalent in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania as physicians, some Jews learned enough legal skills to serve their brethren as lawyers and powers of attorneys—David Franks and his sons Jack and Moses, for example. Moses, though, fled Philadelphia for London, where he studied law at the Middle Temple. Philadelphia's Jews referred to Solomon Bush, a second-generation migrant from Bohemia, as “Doctor Bush,” though the nature of his formal medical training remains unknown. Evidence suggests that Isaac Franks, referred to as “Dr.” as well, had some medical training. Bush and Franks probably learned basic medical practices in the military and may well have studied with their friend Dr. Benjamin Rush in Philadelphia. Rush was known for his Hebraism and befriended and cared for many of Philadelphia's Jews, including the families of Isaac Franks, David S. Franks, Benjamin Levy, Jonas Phillips, Mordecai Manuel Noah, and Benjamin Nones. Rush wrote Isaac Franks a letter of recommendation in his quest for government employment in the wake of warfare. Rush also attended the Jewish wedding of Rachel, Jonas Phillips's

⁴ *CAJ*, III, 1195-1219; Leon Hühner, “Jews in Connection with the Colleges of the Original Thirteen States Prior to 1800,” *PAJHS* 19 (1910), 106-07; Gratz Mordecai, “Notice of Jacob Mordecai, Founder, And Proprietor From 1809 To 1818, Of The Warrenton (N.C.) Female Seminary,” *PAJHS* 6 (1897), 40-41.

daughter. In a detailed account of the wedding, Rush described Rachel: “Innocence, modesty, fear, respect and devotion appeared all at once in her countenance.” Rush’s flattering description, revealingly, was a major departure from pervasive anti-Jewish stereotypes.⁵

In 1743, Benjamin Franklin established the oldest learned society in America, the American Philosophical Society. Joseph Ottolenghe, a Jewish scientist and expert on Georgia’s silk culture, became the first Jew elected into the APS, followed by Isaac Hays, an ophthalmologist. Dr. David Nassy, a Jewish physician from Surinam, migrated to Philadelphia, where he and Rush shared their professional experiences. Nassy cared for yellow-fever-stricken Philadelphians alongside Rush. Nassy’s book on the oft-noted epidemic became foundational literature in medical students’ subsequent training, which earned him membership honors in the APS. Born in Hamburg, Dr. Isaac Cohen studied medicine for seven years in Copenhagen, before migrating to Lancaster. Moses Sheftall, a second-generation Prussian migrant, studied medicine under Rush in Philadelphia and became the first American-born Jew to receive a formal education in medicine. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia’s schools of medicine—University of Pennsylvania, American Philosophical Society, and later Academy of Natural Sciences and Franklin Institute—emulated the greatest eighteenth-century medical school in the Anglo-American world at Edinburgh, where Rush had studied. Under the

⁵ Barnard Gratz to Michael Gratz, September 4, 1792, *BMG*, 243-44. When the yellow fever hit Philadelphia in 1793, Rush made every effort to save David S. Franks from the fever but failed. Some confusion arose when Rush noted in a letter to his wife that Franks was “deserted by all his former friends,” and thus received a pauper’s burial in a random field. Rush, a few days later, noted that someone had “obtained a grave for him in Christ Church burying ground.” Some scholars have suggested that Franks had converted to Christianity, and supported it with Rush’s words, but contextual evidence suggests that Franks was buried there out of expedience, not because he had converted to Christianity. Isaac Franks enjoyed a long-lasting friendship with Rush, who cared for his large family, and even requested that his friend use his influence to obtain a job for him at the Mint, see Benjamin Rush to Julia Rush, October 7 and 9, 1793, Isaac Franks to Benjamin Rush, September 12 and 15, 1783, June 27, 1787, June 25, 1810, May 10, 1813, *JOP*, 195-99, quote on 99, 438-40; Dr. Isaac Franks Document, 1779-1788, Rush Letter of Recommendation, undated, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 15 and 17, Oppenheim Collection, Box 2, Folder 83, AJHS; Franks Family Notes, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA. For Franks family as attorneys, see the numerous letters in Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 8-11, AJHS, and Legal Documents and Correspondence Reflecting Activities as Colonial Attorney, Franks File, SC-3643, AJA.

titular leadership of Rush, Philadelphia's medical institutions copied Scottish medical ideas and practices. Jacob De La Motta studied under Rush at the University of Pennsylvania and later became an army surgeon. These are just a sampling of the many Jews who took advantage of Rush's medical expertise. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia emerged as the fulcrum of scientific investigations in the early republic. Jews remained involved in such intellectual pursuits well into the antebellum decades and beyond. Secular educations instilled students with particular values that served them well in their communities, especially in the cultivation of civic responsibilities. Similar to how religious educations instilled students with particular moral values, secular educations, along with other voluntary associations, instilled them with proper genteel etiquette and civic virtue, essential skills necessary for Jews to participate in civil society as respectable members of the body politic.⁶

Abigaill Levy Franks married Jacob Franks, whose education included a degree in Mosaic Law. Jacob was gifted with a sharp and literary mind and keen interest in Jewish history. Abigaill's education was impressive as well. She learned French and Spanish, wrote poetry, and was a devoted skeptic. The Franks children enjoyed a privileged childhood with classical and Hebraic educations. The matriarch of the Franks-Levy clan, Abigaill was severely opinionated and sharp-tongued. She chose favorites in every facet of her life, and not only among material objects such as books and flowers but also among her friends and family, especially her children. Naphtali, David, Moses, Phila, and Richa mirrored their mother's enlightened interests and their

⁶ David Nassy to James Hutchinson and John Williams, February 1, 1793, and Nassy Essay, February 20, 1794, MS., APS, *JOP*, 193-95, 201, 326-27; W.M. Kraus, "The Origin, Wives, and Children of Moses Levy," undated and unpublished manuscript, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 11, Folder 3, AJA; Nassy, *Observations on the Cause, Nature, and Treatment of the Epidemic Disorder, Prevalent in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1793), copy in AAS. Nassy owned a massive library of 433 books, see Estate Inventory of David Cohen Nassy, 1782, in Michael Hoberman, et al. eds., *Jews in the Americas, 1776-1826* (New York, 2017), and Robert Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment: Surinam in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1991). From 1792 to 1838, seventeen Jews studied medicine in Philadelphia, see *JOP*, 289, 325-27.

father's erudition. Her favored child, Naphtali, the couple's eldest son, received the affectionate title "Heartsey," while Abigaill sometimes ignored the talents of her other children. Whatever Abigaill lacked in maternal equity, however, she more than made up for in her egalitarian, if authoritarian, approach to learning. Abigaill was steeped in enlightenment refinement—sophisticated, artistic, well read, skeptical. She steadily consumed contemporary literature, purchased scholarly books from London, subscribed to polite society's darling periodical the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and quoted from Fielding, Shakespeare, Smollett, Dryden, Montesquieu, Addison, Pope, and others. A voracious reader of enlightened skepticism and other secular literature, she insisted that her children receive the best educations possible, despite their provincial environment. Moses attended an exclusive private preparatory school alongside Governor George Clinton's son Henry, and Oliver DeLancey's partner, John Watts. Moses developed genteel friendships that endured the remainder of his life. Abigaill encouraged Naphtali to devote "two mornings in a week...intirely until dinner time...to some usefull book." Abigaill and Jacob's children received the most sophisticated educations at that time and learned the genteel tastes and behavior that allowed them to associate with ease among the highest ranks of polite society.⁷

Abigaill's staunch commitment to the educations of her children was a noble legacy, one celebrated by later generations of Jews. Among other languages, David and Moses learned Hebrew at the school sponsored by Shearith Israel, an amazing accomplishment in colonial New York. The school eventually added secular subjects to its curriculum, alongside Jewish ones. Her children exhibited artistic talents early in their intellectual developments. Naphtali excelled

⁷ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 7, 1741; Phillips, "Levy and Seixas Families," 189-190; Stern, *Franks*, 7; Abigaill Franks to Naphtali Franks, May 7, 1733, June 9, 1734, December 12, 1735, November 20, 1738, October 18, 1741, December 5, 1742, December 4, 1746, October 30, 1748, Jacob Franks Amsterdam Prayer Book, 1686, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 1, 2, and 7, AJHS; quoted *CAJ*, III, 1208-09.

in botany and Moses in mathematics and poetry. As an adult, Naphtali became a Fellow of London's Royal Society. Abigaill noted, "Phila learns French, Spanish, Hebrew, and writing in the morning," but she never doted upon David, of whom she claimed, "has not that Sprightly Genious that the rest have." David, undoubtedly, recognized his mother's disappointment in him, and sought but never attained his mother's approval. David's unfortunate relationship with his mother probably sustained his determined disposition and unfailing ambition throughout his life. Much later in life, for instance, David emulated his mother's bibliophilia when he wrote and published in New York the first directory of the city's inhabitants; he also pulled from his vast knowledge of Pennsylvania's frontier when he sought to publish "a Treatise of BOOK-KEEPING, digested for the inland and foreign Trade of America." David even instilled a love of literature into his daughter Rebecca, who was a well-known poet and close friends of the Shippen and Chew sisters, prominent Philadelphia socialites. The Franks children and their Levy cousins received perhaps the best classical and Hebrew educations one could have in colonial New York. Steeped in enlightenment refinement and skepticism, the Franks-Levy family of London, New York, and Philadelphia fitted well into the contours of high, polite society. Their liberal and enlightened worldviews mirrored those of their elite neighbors, which gained the attentions and respect of important gentiles.⁸

Barnard and Michael Gratz, whose educations in Germany surpassed most of those who resided in provincial environments, joined the educated and well-to-do Franks-Levy family in Philadelphia. Barnard resided next door to none other than Benjamin Franklin. In Langendorf,

⁸ Quoted Abigaill Franks to Naphtali Franks, October 7, 1733, in Gelles, *Letters*, 12; Abigaill Franks to Naphtali Franks, July 6, 1740, Moses Franks Poetry, Rebecca Franks as a Writer, undated, quoted David Franks's Book, 1786, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 1, 13, and 17, AJHS; Carl and Jessica Bridenbaugh, *Rebels and Gentlemen: Philadelphia in the Age of Franklin* (New York, 1942), 156-60; *CAJ*, III, 1203, 1209; David Franks to Naphtali Franks, March 14, 1743, *LFF*, 112-13; Rebecca Franks to Abigail Hamilton, August 10, 1781, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA.

they received classical and Hebraic educations from their elder brothers, Hayim and Jonathan. A voluminous record of family letters show that Jonathan taught Barnard and Michael cursive Hebrew and Yiddish, in addition to cursive English. Barnard, like Moses Franks, enjoyed poetry and other literature. The Gratz brothers hailed from a family whose legacy consisted of several well-respected German rabbis, thus they received impressive Hebrew educations as well. Barnard admonished his daughter Rachel to mind her “schooling,” to which she promised her father to “do my endeavors to learn.” Michael’s library included Judaica, such as David Levi’s translation of the Pentateuch, which explains biblical allusions in a contemporary context, among other works by Levi that focused on showing that ancient Judaism first presented ideas about resurrection and heaven, not Christians; he also owned Levi’s introduction to the Talmud for worship services in one’s home. Barnard also owned Levi’s Hebrew prayer books in English meant for home worship and private observances of the high holy days. Such Hebraic literature was necessary because no public synagogue existed in Philadelphia until 1782. Enlightenment texts included Hume, Milton, Shakespeare, Condercet, Vayer, even Napoleon’s memoirs, which drew their attentions because the emperor had liberated German Jews from centuries of ghettoization. Michael’s daughter, Rebecca, took full advantage of her father’s fine modern library stocked with Enlightenment texts and other secular and Jewish literature, as did her brothers Simon, Jacob, and Hyman.

Rebecca attended the finest women’s academies of late eighteenth-century Philadelphia, alongside her many Christian friends, befitting her social stature. Rebecca read the German scientist Spurzheim and attended lectures on phrenology at the University of Pennsylvania, and even perused Benjamin Rush’s medical essays. She was fond of Pope, Milton, Shakespeare, Dickens, Lord Byron, Bulwer, Wollstonecraft, Shelley, and Aesop’s fables. She was among a

circle of writers who contributed to Philadelphia's genteel literary magazine, the *Port Folio*. Her father and uncle ran in the same circles as novelist James Fenimore Cooper because they had bought and sold land from the novelist's father William, founder of Cooperstown, New York. She socialized with members of the presidential Adams family and with members of the influential Kentuckian and four-time presidential hopeful, Henry Clay's family. Rebecca was friends with novelist Catharine Maria Sedgwick and poets Lucretia Maria Davidson and her sister Margaret Miller Davidson. Washington Irving edited the Davidson sisters' poetry and was a frequent house guest of the Gratz family. Rebecca was among the "Lady patronesses" who prepared a "Bazaar for the Academey of fine Arts." Her brother Hyman was a founding member of Philadelphia's Academy of Fine Arts and served as its Director, Treasurer and President. Rebecca devoted her life, as did several of her brothers, to literary pursuits and community service, manifestations of their secular, civic-minded educations.⁹

When Franklin and provost William Smith raised money to open the Academy, which became the College of Philadelphia and eventually the University of Pennsylvania, David Franks donated money on at least two separate occasions. So, too, did his newest partner John Inglis, as well as Thomas and Richard Penn, Moses Franks's London-based partners Sir George Colebrooke, Adam Drummond, and Arnold Nesbitt, and Philadelphians Robert Morris, James

⁹ Numerous letters in AJHS, APS, and AJA show the erudite learning of all the Gratz brothers, sisters, and cousins. Fish, *Gratz*, 1-35; CAJ, III, 1197; Dianne Ashton, *Rebecca Gratz: Women and Judaism in Antebellum America* (Detroit, 1997), 13, 36-38, 61-64, 100-07, 121-48, 209-38; "Joseph Dennie," *Penn Monthly* 11 (1880), 722-25, APS; Edwin Wolf, II, *The Book Culture of a Colonial American City: Philadelphia Books, Bookmen, and Booksellers* (New York, 1988). For Irving and Gratz, see Andrew Burstein, *The Original Knickerbocker: The Life of Washington Irving* (New York, 2007), 68-69; quoted Rachel to Barnard Gratz, August 3, 1779, Richard Edwards to Simon Gratz, April 15, 1796, *BMG*, 182, 249; Rebecca to Benjamin Gratz, February 27, 1825; Rebecca to Maria Gist Gratz, February 1, 1829, October 12, 1833, February 2 and March 9, 1834, February 8, 1839, July/August, 1829, April 18, 1832, and August 10, 1841; quoted Rebecca to Ann Boswell Gratz, August 31, 1845; Rebecca to Cary Gratz, August 8, 1852; Rebecca to Benjamin Gratz, May 1, 1856, *LRG*, 72, 93, quote on 184, 99-100, 146-48, 192-97, 260-61, 292-93, 317, 385-86, 403-04. For Coopers, see Isaac Franks, Benjamin Rush to Thomas Stokley, Plunket, and William Cooper, May 1, 1786, David S. Franks, Small Collections, SC-3671, AJA. In a letter to his father, William Franklin mentioned "Mr. Bernard Gratz (your Neighbour)," see William to Benjamin Franklin, August 14, 1775, *Papers of Franklin*, XXII, 169-171.

and Andrew Hamilton, Thomas Cadwalader, and Edward Shippen, among others. Franks's late partner, William Plumsted, sat on the Board of Trustees of the Academy, as did Moses Levy. Jewish altruism was not restricted to Pennsylvania alone. Gershom Mendes Seixas, the leader of New York's Shearith Israel who resided in Philadelphia during the revolution, served as Trustee of Columbia College for thirteen years, the only Jew on a board dominated by Episcopalians. Sampson Simson, likewise, delivered a commencement speech in Hebrew at Columbia College.¹⁰

Jews also enrolled their children in the College of Philadelphia. The university deemphasized religious theology, and instead focused on non-sectarian natural religion or a form of deism, as well as practical disciplines such as mathematics and science. Such intellectual universalism accommodated Judaism far better, and thus attracted far more Jews, than religious institutions such as Harvard and Yale. Similar to Jewish commitments to civic-engagement, Franklin's College also emphasized the cultivation of virtuous citizens "beneficial to the public," or the ways in which students could be serviceable to the community and thus more productive members of society. Many Jews embraced such objectives and enrolled alongside gentiles. David Franks's son, Moses, matriculated, and John Franks, David's cousin, enrolled his son, David Salisbury Franks. The Franks family was not alone. Abraham Judah's son, David, Samson Levy's son, Moses, Benjamin Levy's son, Nathan, Jonas Philips's son, Zalegman, Michael Gratz's son, Jacob, and Michael Simpson all attended the Academy. Considering that colonial America boasted only ten institutions of higher learning before 1775, admittance for

¹⁰ The Collection Books of Provost Smith, Containing a List of Subscribers to the Academy and Charitable School in the Province of Pennsylvania, and Account of Cash Collected by Rev'd, Dr. Smith for the Use of the College of Philadelphia, c. 1762-1772, Franks File, SC-3638, AJA; Francis R. Packard, *Charter Members of the Library Company* (Philadelphia, 1942), 9-10; Stern, *Franks*, 46-47; "A Rabbi Turned Militant," undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 14, Folder 35, AJA; Sampson Simson, Address Delivered in Hebrew at the Columbia College Commencement, August 6, 1800, in Hoberman, *Jews*.

Jews was a prestigious accomplishment, which strengthened their social positions in their neighborhoods. Matriculation was even more prestigious for Jews, because Franklin's College of Philadelphia was one of just three institutions that admitted Jews at all in the colonial period. Jewish connections to patrons played no small part. King's College, later Columbia, matriculated Jews, mostly because Oliver DeLancey, who married David's sister Phila, served as governor of the institution, and Moses Franks—along with James Jay, John Jay's brother—raised funds among his aristocratic friends in London. Such efforts saved King's College from closing its doors in the 1760s. Cultured Jews, meanwhile, enjoyed plays at William Plumsted's Water Street Theatre, the first in Philadelphia, and eventually the Chestnut Street Theatre. West of Philadelphia, Lancaster's Jews enjoyed college educations at the Franklin Academy—later the Franklin and Marshall College—and matriculated David Franks's son, Jacob, and Michael Gratz's son, Hyman, and daughter, Richea, among others.¹¹

Libraries—personal, private inventories of books and public library societies with circulating subscriptions—became a distinct cultural feature of eighteenth-century Anglo-American polite society. Jews played an important role in the development of public subscription libraries, which colonials built on the European model. When John Watts and the DeLancey family organized the New York Society Library and King's College (later Columbia College), they turned to their kin and patrons in London, the Franks-Levy family, for book recommendations and assistance. Moses Franks asked his brother Naphtali and uncle Aaron to assist in the purchasing of the library's books. They offered the New Yorkers sage advice and

¹¹ Quoted Franklin Papers, VI, 28; *CAJ*, III, 1198-99. Yale admitted Jews, and after the revolution, Franklin College in Lancaster did so, see Hühner, "Jews in Connection," 101-24; Packard, *Charter Members*, 9-10; Pencak, "Jews and Anti-Semitism," 368, 371-72; idem, *Jews*, 182; Moses Levy Family, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 11, Folder 1, AJA; Hirsh, "Lancaster," 96-97.

money. Members of the Franks and Levy families in New York, Pennsylvania, and London subscribed to the New York Society Library. Jacob Franks, meanwhile, brought hundreds of books from London to New York aboard one of his many ships gratis. In Philadelphia and Lancaster, likewise, Jews David Franks and Joseph Simon participated in the development of, and subscribed to, the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Lancaster Library Company, respectively.¹²

Libraries served as pillars of cultural development and through its catalogues of books and periodicals cultivated, like Freemasonry and other social spaces of enlightened fellowship, notions of religious acceptance and freedom of conscience. Although books provide a glimpse into readers' minds, printed materials also reflect an ongoing cultural process among migrants and their neighbors. Eighteenth-century books were harbingers of cultural trends, they moved ideas across borders and seas and inspired new cultural perceptions in new milieus. In this way, Jewish libraries reflect, to some degree, the cultural trends that inspired them to behave in specific, usually, utilitarian and rational ways. Provincial bibliophiles read literature that taught them about contemporary trends. In the eighteenth century, this meant that libraries, taken in their totality, taught readers to be enlightened humanists, tolerant of their neighbors' differences. Voltaire's words to Isaac de Pinto, a prominent Sephardic Jew and Dutch intellectual, may well have been uttered to any Pennsylvanian Jew: "Since you are a Jew, remain one...but be a *philosophe*." That both Jewish and gentile elites recognized the importance of books meant that they shared deep commitments to erudite learning. Whereas European Ashkenazim had traditionally focused upon Hebrew and Yiddish literature, and discussed it only with other Jews, once they migrated to Amsterdam and London and especially once they arrived on American

¹² CAJ, III, 1215-16. In Newport, Moses Lopez and Jacob Joseph were among the founders of the Redwood Library modeled on Philadelphia's, see Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 8, AJA.

shores, migrants broadened their reading habits to include English, secular literature, and increasingly discussed enlightenment ideas and theology with gentiles. In a contemporary essay, for example, Isaac Franks demonstrated keen knowledge of ancient and modern classics, which included Homer, Virgil, Milton, Cervantes, Fielding, Richardson, Smollet, and others—staple reading among cultured Anglo-Americans. Franks also conversed about enlightenment literature, and even cutting edge medical practices, with the likes of Dr. Benjamin Rush and George Washington. Franks was a known poet as well. So central was learning to Isaac Levy's life that he filed a lawsuit to obtain the books from his late father's estate. When John Campbell, a Gratz associate at Pittsburgh, set out for the "Falls of the Ohio," he left behind "five bound books and three stitched ones" at Philadelphia's "Indian Queen" tavern for the Gratz brothers' enjoyment.¹³

Although the masses did not consume such esoteric literature to any great degree, it commanded the attention of elites, or those who wielded the cultural authority to shape popular opinion. Enlightened discourses diffused across the Anglo-American world through print culture, coffeehouses, and taverns. Jews frequented Philadelphia's Indian Queen Tavern continuously because it served as a meeting place for business transactions, but it was also the provincial equivalent of Parisian salons, the meeting places of enlightened European intellectuals. A second-generation émigré and close friend of Robert Morris, Israel Israel, owned and operated Cross Keys Tavern on Market Street in Philadelphia, a popular gathering place

¹³ Voltaire quoted Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 120-21; Isaac Franks, "On Novel Reading," *AJA* 12 (1959), 124. Franks was good friends with Rush and served as Washington's aide-de-camp during the revolution, see *JOP*, 196-98, 437-39; quoted John Campbell to Barnard Gratz, February 18, 1786, *BMG*, 233-34. When Isaac's father Moses Levy died in 1728, his books were lost. Moses had married Grace Mears after his first wife's death, which caused contention in the family and a distrust of Grace among his children, who refused to abide by Moses's will that stipulated Grace receive £300, 150 ounces of silver, and one slave. Isaac therefore suspected his step-mother stole the books, see Bill of Complaint, David Hays vs. Nathan and Isaac Levy, December 5, 1738, Levy Injunction, 1739-43, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 16, Folder 10, AJA.

among Jews and Christians. James Madison, who turned to Haym Salomon, a Polish émigré, for favors and loans, referred to Salomon “our friend near the coffee-house.” Because Jews frequently traveled abroad, London’s Ginovais Coffeehouse served as both a venue for sociability but also to send postage and to receive one’s mail. Taverns, like coffeehouses and other clubs, brought disparate folks of various cultural and class backgrounds together for socialization, drinks, and news, which broke down traditional barriers to sociability, especially among various religious groups in Pennsylvania. Because taverns represented the intersection of oral culture and print culture, even poor, illiterate members of the community could hear newspapers read aloud and debated by their friends in local taverns. Courts met and trials took place in taverns. Women sometimes made a living as tavern-keepers. The working poor ensured that taverns functioned efficiently. In Philadelphia, as historian Peter Thompson has shown, colonials’ obsessive tavern-going meant more to them than a simple venue to drink their spirits of choice. Tavern-goers became fundamental to the politicization of a host of pressing contemporary issues, such as bestowing Whig elites with the deference most of them craved. Taverns became a hotbed for religious dissenters who openly questioned the cultural restrictions levied upon them by the clergy. In turn, the clergy feared the rising clout of ordinary folk who, they believed, threatened the prevailing social order, inside and outside the church. Tavern-goers therefore debated the most important issues of the late eighteenth century, which included the permissible boundaries around citizenship and religious freedom, and the role of popular culture in the formulation of public opinion in a free society. For Jews, tavern culture impacted their thinking about the potential for Jewish emancipation and public expressions of Judaism, but it also normalized their presence among their neighbors.¹⁴

¹⁴ Peter Thompson, *Rum, Punch, and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1998). A similar pattern developed in Boston, see David W. Conroy, *In Public Houses: Drink and the*

Isaac Miranda's personal library shows the diffusion of knowledge across the Atlantic, and the esoteric reading interests among some émigrés. Miranda was a man of the Enlightenment and of considerable learning, but his Sephardic heritage makes him somewhat of an outlier compared to most contemporary migrants. Yet, many Ashkenazim in Pennsylvania shared his intellectual interests. He owned cabbalist texts, most notably Hayyim Vital's *Sefer Ha-gilgulim*, a mystical and spiritual treatise on the *Zohar*, the foundational literature regarding Jewish mystical thought found in the *Torah* (the five Old Testament books of Moses). Vital was known for his concepts of soul transmigration. Vital and other cabbalists discussed *Gilgul*, or one formulation of a soul as it experiences a multitude of rebirths from one generation to another. Vital argued that God created a finite number of souls at Genesis, all of which derived from Adam. But when Adam sinned this collective spiritual body fragmented into many lesser, derivative souls that have transmigrated over the ages. Individual souls therefore have retained the essences of their earlier forms in a continuous march toward perfectibility. Each soul in each generation must abide by the commandments and pray to God through proper rituals, a process called *tikkun*. When all souls have achieved perfectibility, according to Vital and others, the process culminates in the reunification of Adam's soul. The cosmos, or the natural world, undergoes a similar transformation from chaos to perfect order. For cabbalists, the important part of this theology fulfills the Old Testament prophecy, which promised the reunification and messianic redemption of Israel. According to the cabbalist tradition, only when Jews achieve

Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts (Chapel Hill, 1995), and throughout British North America, see Sharon V. Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (Baltimore, 2002). For Indian Queen Tavern, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 2, 1779 and January 12, 1780. For Israel, see Morris Jastrow, "Notes on the Jews of Philadelphia," *PAJHS* 2 (1893), 53. Madison quoted in U.S. Senate Report of Bill S. No. 331, June 24, 1864, Senate Office of Public Records. For Ginovais Coffeeshouse, London, see Matthias Bush to Barnard Gratz, November 7, 1769, MS-107, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 5, Folder 36, AJA.

tikkun, in both its spiritual and corporeal forms, can the Messiah return and redeem them from sin.¹⁵

That Miranda owned this text is significant for several reasons. By the early modern period, Euro-Jewish intellectuals had split into two separate approaches to Scriptural interpretation. The conservative and literal exegesis of the *Halakha* tradition adhered to Jewish intellectual customs. The cabbalist tradition, conversely, attempted to reconcile old ideas with new ones, especially those rooted in the Enlightenment impulse to make logical and reasonable sense of Scripture, not unlike medieval scholasticism. It was, then, an interpretation of Scripture far more liberal in its outlook and conclusions than its more conventional *Halakha* counterpart. The allegorical cabbalist approach to Scriptural interpretation was a relatively new phenomenon, a byproduct of the Jewish *Haskalah*. In Berlin, enlightened religious thinkers—Protestants, Catholics, and especially Jews—sought to renew and reconcile the new methods of science and philosophy with their traditional religious ideas. Jewish thinkers shared commonalities with those of the Protestant Theological Enlightenment and Reform Catholicism, which spread these ideas far and wide. Proponents of each religion grappled with similar intellectual problems, which facilitated cooperation among them. Such collaboration ended cultural and intellectual insularity for Jewish intellectuals in the Anglo-American world. The Prague and Sephardic schools of thought, led by the MaHaRaL and Wetzlar, altered Jewish curriculum to provide “alternative interpretations that legitimated change from within.” Autodidacts, such as Hanau, Mendelssohn and Wessely, and physicians, such as Worms and Gumpertz, applied secular knowledge to traditional Jewish texts and learning. Rabbis, meanwhile, employed science to safeguard a conservative view of Judaism, a school of thought led by the enlightened scholar,

¹⁵ Miranda’s Will, AJA; Richard G. Marks, *The Image of Bar Kokhba in Traditional Jewish Literature: False Messiah and National Hero* (University Park, 1994), 185-87.

Emden. Rabbis sought to harmonize “current knowledge into a decidedly Jewish framework in order to renew established Jewish disciplines of thought.” Even conservative rabbis therefore remained aware of the broader cultural innovations in science, philosophy, and scriptural exegesis.¹⁶

As historian Anthony Grafton and others have shown, the esoteric ideas and erudite learning of enlightenment culture moved back and forth between British North America, the British Isles, and the European continent. Just one example of transatlantic sharing among many, Jews grappled with these novel ideas in Europe and, in more than a few cases, brought enlightened religious ideas with them to American shores. Once in British North America, Jews continued to share ideas and even newspapers with their brethren across the Atlantic. When Solomon Henry returned to London from Philadelphia, his brother Jacob remained in America. The brothers, though, shared relevant news and information with each other almost constantly, including their local newspapers, which kept them abreast of the most pertinent issues in London and Philadelphia.¹⁷

Transatlantic cross-cultural interactions and intellectual sharing demonstrate several important points. Jewish thinkers such as Mendelssohn and Friedländer replaced the *Haskalah*'s early and more conservative emphasis on cultural and intellectual renewal with secular

¹⁶ Manuel, *Broken Staff*, 37-65; Sorkin, *Haskalah*, 1-9, 38-62, 125, quotes on 40 and 44; idem, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, 2008), 1-21. Also helpful are the essays in David B. Ruderman and Giuseppe Veltri, eds., *Cultural Intermediaries: Jewish Intellectuals in Early Modern Italy* (Philadelphia, 2004), which show that Jewish intellectuals interacted with Christians in substantive cultural exchanges as early as the Renaissance. Some Jewish rabbis transformed their religious and ethnic identities to suit common European cultural expectations, which mitigated their marginalization, a pattern replicated later by German Jews in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

¹⁷ Grafton wrote, “The decades around 1700, after all, witnessed a renewed globalization of European intellectual life,” see Anthony Grafton, “The Republic of Letters in the American Colonies: Francis Daniel Pastorius Makes a Notebook,” *American Historical Review* 117 (2012), 1-39; Norman S. Fiering, “The Transatlantic Republic of Letters: A Note on the Circulation of Learned Periodicals to Early Eighteenth-Century America,” *WMQ* 33 (1976), 642-60; David D. Hall, “Learned Culture in the Eighteenth Century,” in *A History of the Book in America*, eds. Hugh Amory and David D. Hall, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 2000), I, 411-33; Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, August 19, 1757, December 6 and 21, 1757, Jacob to Solomon, July 10, 1757, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 19, AJHS.

knowledge, especially enlightenment ideas such as natural rights that emphasized Jewish emancipation and religious freedom. For Miranda and others, such considerations inspired Jewish migrations to Pennsylvania. Jews had little or no access to institutions in Germany, which set them apart from their Protestant and Catholic counterparts. As a result, Jewish thinkers of the *Haskalah* fled west, to Italy, Amsterdam, London, and other enlightened entrepôts of learning, where they met Christian Hebraists in abundance, and, together expounded upon the prospects of Jewish equality. Learned Jews met in clubs and salons to discuss the plethora of theological tracts, sermons, and books printed and disseminated by numerous publishing houses for consumption by polite society. In London, for example, Michael and Barnard Gratz, Matthias and Solomon Bush, and Solomon Henry frequented the Ginovais Coffeehouse, where such literature was found easily and in abundance. From London, Solomon Henry sent “Regards to all friends over there,” by which he meant “all the coffeehouse...acquaintances” that he and his brother had met and befriended in Philadelphia and New York City. When émigrés traveled abroad and interacted with their enlightened neighbors, whether they practiced Christianity or had reclaimed or maintained their Judaism amid the early modern Diaspora, both Ashkenazim and Sephardim inhabited a “cultural threshold,” at once “a boundary and a crossroads between the Jewish and Christian worlds.” Cross-cultural interactions laid the foundation for Jews to construct hybrid intellectual identities rooted in ideas derived from “European, American, Old, and New Worlds.” Miranda, who had lived in southern France, Italy, London, and New York before arriving in Pennsylvania, and Mordecai Moses Mordecai, who had lived in the Lithuanian town of Telsh, the home of a famous rabbinical college, were therefore but a few among many enlightened Jewish émigrés who were exposed to and explored such ideas before and after arriving in Pennsylvania. And, to be sure, Miranda was not alone in his cultivation of a fine

Hebraic library along mystical and rational lines. Conversion served utilitarian purposes, no doubt, but sometimes conversion was genuine, facilitated by Jews' readings of secular, enlightenment literature and their interactions with Christian Hebraists, humanists, deists, and other freethinkers.¹⁸

Nathan Levy, not unlike Miranda, was a learned polyglot of the Enlightenment. Levy owned "22 Hebrew Books" and "8 Span[ish] Hebrew Books," in addition to a corpus of foundational texts of the Enlightenment and classical traditions, including works by Locke, Voltaire, and Plutarch, an assortment of religious works and Hebraic texts, histories, law and grammar books, and dictionaries in Dutch, Spanish, French, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Of particular note, Levy owned the Hebraist William Wollaston's *The Religion of Nature Delineated* (1722), a highly popular and influential book of skeptical inquiry. Benjamin Franklin, revealingly, chose this volume for inclusion in the Library Company's catalogues, probably upon the recommendation of the avid Hebraist James Logan. Voltaire and Diderot acknowledged the deep influence of Wollaston on their thinking about miracles in the Old and New Testaments. Wollaston's approach allowed them to further undermine the credibility of revelatory scripture. Wollaston, a well-respected expert of Jewish culture and history, wrote numerous important works that further developed deistic philosophy in the early eighteenth century. Such European and Christian humanism and the critical skepticism of deism worked together to produce a religious universalism among the learned, which included Jews. Deists' conceptions of God, humanitarian ethics, and moral values remained compatible with Judaism.

¹⁸ Sorkin, *Haskalah*, 38-62, 95-124; idem, *Religious Enlightenment*, 167-213. Richard Sher has shown the ways in which printing and publishing of enlightenment books in London, Dublin, and Philadelphia dispersed across the Anglo-American world, see *Enlightenment and the Book*. For connection of Jews to coffeehouse, see Matthias Bush to Barnard Gratz, November 7, 1769, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 5, Folder 36, AJA; quoted Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, December 6, 1757, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 19, AJHS; quoted David Graizbord, *Souls in Dispute: Jewish Identities in Iberia and the Jewish Diaspora, 1580-1700* (Philadelphia, 2003), 2; quoted Lois Dubin, "Port Jews of the Atlantic," *Jewish History* 20 (2006), 120; Hoberman, *New Israel*, 34-35; CAJ, I, 260.

In this particular work, Wollaston focused on natural religion, and borrowed concepts from Jewish rationalism to do so.¹⁹

Wollaston's influence derived from his readings of an important Jewish philosopher from twelfth-century North Africa, Moses Maimonides, of whom learned Jews, such as Miranda and Levy, must have been aware. Maimonides argued that God could be best understood, not through miracles and other abstract theologies but through the careful observation of the natural world. He also emphasized that a correct understanding of the *Torah* and Mosaic Law must be rooted in philosophy and science, not blind and illogical faith. This brand of rational theology and religious universalism was controversial in medieval Egypt, but one widely accepted and debated among thinkers in the eighteenth century, including Hebraists and Jewish intellectuals who emphasized commitments to rationality indicative of Berlin's *Haskalah*. Learned Jews read Maimonides, including Isaac Da Costa of Charleston and Philadelphia, and Manuel Josephson of New York and Philadelphia, both of whom owned a copy of the *Mishneh Torah*, a law code enumerated by the great mystic. Even as late as the 1830s, Maimonides remained in the Anglo-American Jewish imagination. Isaac Leeser, *hazan* of Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel congregation and perhaps the greatest Jewish intellectual of the antebellum decades, dedicated the first American Jewish theological seminary, Maimonides College, which demonstrates the philosopher's enduring legacy.²⁰

¹⁹ Quoted Nathan Levy, Will, MS., Register of Wills, County of Philadelphia, Administration Papers, No. 58, Book F, 527, Levy's Will, *AJD*, 8-10; *JOP*, 53; Jonathan I. Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670-1752* (Oxford, 2006), 361, 789; Edwin Wolf, "Franklin and His Friends Choose their Books," *PMHB* 80 (1956), 28; Wayne Hudson, et al. eds., *Atheism and Deism Revalued: Heterodox Religious Identities in Britain, 1650-1800*, (Burlington, 2014), 119-22; *CAJ*, III, 1165-66.

²⁰ Alexander Altmann, "William Wollaston (1659-1724), English Deist and Rabbinic Scholar," *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 16 (1951), 185-211; Moshe Halbertal, *Maimonides: Life and Thought* (Princeton, 2015); Will of Manuel Josephson, no. 256 (1796), Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, *CAJ*, II, 1075-76, III, 1554 (hereafter Josephson Will); Manuel Josephson, 1752-96, Oppenheim Collection, Box 6, Folder 85, *AJHS*. In an oft-cited letter, Josephson demonstrates his close reading of Maimonides, see Manuel Josephson to

That Levy owned Wollaston suggests that, like Miranda, he could have been more of a freethinker than previous historians are willing to admit. Unlike Miranda, though, Levy not only remained within the Jewish fold but also maintained the most important position in the Jewish community at that time, the *hazan* or leader of the congregation. It was Levy who organized the private meetings of Philadelphia's small congregation, probably in his own home, because non-Protestants could not collectively own property in early Pennsylvania. Considering that Levy owned more than thirty Hebrew books, he probably owned the Wollaston text for its unequaled use of ancient and medieval Jewish sources. Such a corpus of Hebraic texts satiated Levy's curiosity about Jewish antiquities and theology, as much as such texts strengthened his religiosity along rational lines. Miranda and Levy remained rational thinkers, regardless of their true religious beliefs, and challenged the conservative dimensions of Judaism. Penn's formulation of "Liberty of the Mind" allowed Miranda and Levy to own and read such works of heterodoxy, which contributed to the development of a liberal Jewish intellectual tradition, in some ways unique to the Mid-Atlantic experience. Jewish émigrés took fragments of the reason and logic representative of transatlantic enlightenment culture, in which they participated and to which they contributed, and combined them with traditional tenets of Judaism. Enlightenment idealism, therefore, became an important component of migrants' intellectual developments, and provided some of the cultural tools with which Jewish leaders utilized in their demands for greater freedoms.²¹

Miranda and Levy were not alone in their ownership of such books. Jewish contemporaries, David Franks of Philadelphia, Joseph Ottolenghe of Savannah, and Judah Monis

Moses Seixas, February 4, 1790, Lyons Collection, *PAJHS* 27 (1920), 185-90; Solomon B. Freehof, "An Eighteenth-Century American Responsum," *AJA* 5 (1953), 121-25; *JOP*, 372-73.

²¹ Nathan Levy, 1728-62, Oppenheim Collection, Box 8, Folder 18, AJHS.

of Cambridge, Massachusetts also owned similar polemics and they too “converted” to Christianity. It is therefore a possibility that Miranda genuinely followed the dictates of his own conscience when he converted. On the other hand, enlightened Jewish thinkers, Isaac Touro and Aaron Lopez of Newport, Manuel Josephson of New York and Philadelphia, Francis Salvador of Charleston, and Nathan Levy of Philadelphia owned massive Hebraic libraries and mystical polemics, but remained committed to organized Judaism, as did Benjamin Levy, Haym Salomon, Gershom M. Seixas, Benjamin Nones, and the Gratz brothers, all of Philadelphia. Although she retained her Judaism, Rebecca Gratz shows the enduring legacy of such liberal thinking. She dabbled in cabalistic traditions and *Zohar* and suggested its tenets could be found in the Bible and the Laws of Moses, even if cabala was not divine revelation. Rebecca read deeply about German Reform Judaism espoused by the likes of Moses Mendelssohn. She spoke highly of Mendelssohn’s treatise on Jerusalem, for example, in which the philosopher echoes Jefferson and Madison’s postulations regarding separation of church from state and freedom of conscience, as well as his ideas about orthopraxy defining Judaism, not orthodoxy.²²

The relationship between Sephardic Jewish convert Isaac Miranda and Quaker James Logan shows that comity between Jews and gentiles—philo-Semitism—may not have always prevailed among colonial elites. Logan, not unlike Penn, was a learned man, who studied history, law, botany, astronomy, mathematics, and linguistics. He learned to read and write in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and Spanish, and probably attained a reading knowledge in many

²² Josephson Will; *CAJ*, II, 1075-76, 1097-98, III, 1205, 1554; Snyder, “Place,” 205-10, 218-22; Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz, February 23, 1840, *LRG*, 274-77. Monis, a professor at Harvard, converted to Christianity, but produced the first published piece of literature, a Hebrew grammar book, written by an American Jew, see Hoberman, *New Israel*, 86-120, George Alexander Kohut, “Early Jewish Literature in America,” *PAJHS* 3 (1895), 116-17. Roger Williams noted the similarities between Judaism and Quakerism, see *George Fox Digg’d Out of His Burroves*, 96. David Franks owned an impressive personal library, but the catalogue of its contents has been lost. Judging from his family’s educational background and other evidence, though, it must have contained a combination of Jewish works and Enlightenment texts, not unlike his contemporaries.

others. Logan's Hebraism became well known, even legendary, in his lifetime. Logan admired the Hebrew Bible, Miranda's Jewish education, Jewish history in general, and somehow gained access to Miranda's Hebraic library. Drawing from his extensive classical education and knowledge of Hebrew, Logan was interested in two mystical Hebrew works of the cabbala (sometimes kabbalah) tradition that Miranda owned. A man of the Enlightenment and Hebraic learning, Logan's intellectual curiosities probably drew him to Miranda's texts. That Logan came to own Miranda's books suggests that their relationship went beyond their business partnership. Miranda owned a manuscript of Portuguese poems, which honored the legacies of Sephardic martyrs of the Inquisition. Logan scribbled on the inside cover of Miranda's copy, "It belonged to Isaac Miranda a Jew by Education...I read it over in 1735." Logan provided no other clues as to the nature of their association. How Logan came to possess Miranda's mystic texts remains a mystery. Logan may well have received the books as a gift before Miranda's death. Perhaps Miranda's heirs sold them to one of five bookstores in Philadelphia before 1740, where Logan purchased them secondhand or even at auction. Logan, after all, was an avid book collector, whose private library of more than three thousand volumes was the finest and largest in colonial Pennsylvania. Housed in a brick building at the corner of Sixth and Walnut Streets, Logan's library remained open to his close friends and associates. After Logan's death, the collection became a public library, open to everyone. A patron of printers and publishers, Logan the bibliophile spearheaded the charter for the Library Company of Philadelphia in 1742. Considering Logan's love of books and learning, it is unsurprising that he came to own Miranda's corpus of cabbalist texts.²³

²³ Pencak's bifurcation of colonists' attitudes runs along class lines, with elites who held positive views of Jews and the middling and lower orders who held negative views of Jews, see *Jews*, ix-xi, 93-4, 128, 175, 189-90, 225-28, 248-53; Hayyim Vital, *Sefer Ha-gilgulim* (Amsterdam, 1658); *CAJ*, II, 1075; Bridenbaugh, *Rebels*, 70-99. For Philadelphia's book culture, see Wolf, *Book Culture*. Miranda's Spanish inscriptions and Logan's marginalia are on

A strong tradition of sharing knowledge among Jews, Christians, and freethinkers transformed the social thinking and liberalized the religious views of many educated colonials. In keeping with Enlightenment thinkers' emphasis upon personal improvement, Benjamin Franklin established among his friends a weekly discussion group that met in local taverns and coffeehouses to discuss novel ideas as they pertained to morals, politics, and science. For their mutual betterment, members also shared the newest literature of the day, including the deist Joseph Addison's London-based *Spectator*, a periodical that espoused enlightened values such as religious toleration and freedom of conscience. In London, a "Gentleman's Society" gathered at Younger's Coffeehouse to read and discuss the moral lessons in the periodical's pages. Provincial societies and clubs arose and proliferated across the Atlantic world, which encouraged members to read enlightened literature. From Addison, Franklin derived the idea of a particular kind of social club, whose members shared their books with each other, the locus for a public subscription library. In addition to polite conversation, members of the "Junto," as the club became known, shared books, magazines, and newspapers, which became the blueprint for the development of subscription services at the Library Company of Philadelphia. For inclusion in Franklin's "Junto," applicants were asked a revealing question, "Do you think any person ought to be harmed in his body, name, or goods, for mere speculative opinions or his way of worship?" If an individual answered in the negative, of course, Franklin denied that person membership. Such religious inclusion, or what William Smith called "this liberality of sentiment," made possible Jews' public expressions of Judaism, which Smith, Franklin, the Penns, and other elites could now imagine as not only legitimate but necessary for their Jewish friends.²⁴

the front and rear fly-leaves of James Logan's copies in LCP, see *JOP*, 17-20, 386, who maintained that Miranda and Logan were friends because of books.

²⁴ The essays of Addison and Steele presented coffeehouses and salons as central to an emergent Anglo-American polite society of sociability and became prime examples of Habermas's "public sphere" concept, see Cowan, "Mr.

The link between Jews and the Library Company is a crucial one, because the intellectual preoccupations and self-presentations of its founders and subscribers mirrored those of Jewish elites, who in many ways emulated their patrons' genteel behavior. Gentility among affluent Jews can be seen through their many portraits, painted by Gilbert Stuart, Charles Willson Peale, and Thomas Sully, among others. Their patronization of Anglo-American artists shows their attempts to emulate their elite gentile friends. Like portraiture, their gentility can also be seen in their participation in circulating libraries like the Library Company. Charter members included merchant-traders and artisans up and down the social hierarchy, who aspired to cultural authority to mold public opinion and sought to fashion positive public images to obtain political power. Those involved included Jewish patrons, such as Benjamin Franklin, Governor James Hamilton, William Allen, Trench Francis, David Franks's partner William Plumsted, "King of the Quakers" Israel Pemberton, Jr., and Levy and Franks's shipping partner, Thomas Hopkinson. Franklin and his associates in the "Junto" pooled their financial resources to purchase books for their shared use. Franklin consulted Logan, "the best Judge of Books in these Parts," who also became an honorary member of the library. Hopkinson purchased the first shipment of books from London, and members continuously added volumes until John, Thomas, and Richard Penn chartered the library in 1742. Eventually Logan's library, and thus Miranda's mystic texts, circulated among its members.²⁵

Spectator," 345-66; quoted in Leonard W. Labaree, ed., *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven, 1959), 255-59 (hereafter, Franklin Papers); Smith quoted in William Sabine, ed., "Historical Memoirs of William Smith," 169, New York State Library, *CAJ*, III, 1166.

²⁵ In 1792, Logan's heirs donated his library to the Library Company, see Packard, *Charter Members*, 5-13. Others included James and William Logan (James was an honorary member), Samuel Norris, Hugh Roberts, Thomas and Phineas Bond, Samuel Rhodes, Francis Richardson, Charles Willing, William Lawrence, Samuel McCall, John Mifflin, Judge William Peters and Reverend Richard Peters of St. Peter's and Christ Church. David Franks met William Allen, a prominent politician and mayor of Philadelphia, probably through Plumsted, see Franks to Bouquet, August 14, 1764, Franks File, SC-3649, AJA; quoted in Wolf, "Franklin, 14; idem, "The First Books and Printed Catalogues of the Library Company of Philadelphia," *PMHB* 78 (1954), 45-55; *JOP*, 322. For Jewish

Unlike the corpus of literature at other contemporary libraries, such as those at Harvard, William and Mary, and Yale, whose books focused on theology almost exclusively, the Library Company of Philadelphia's collections reflected the autodidactic character of its founders and thus the reading interests of its subscribers. The majority of the books consisted of modern and classical history, philosophy, literature, and science, including the usual suspects, Locke, Thucydides, Tacitus, Polybius, Addison, Pope, Cervantes, and Swift. The smaller group of theological tracts consisted of Christian Hebraists, natural philosophers, enlightened skeptics, and deists, such as Shaftesbury, Newton, the Mather(s), Bacon, Boyle, Penn, and Wollaston. In sum, the library's books reflected the commitment to freethinking, moral humanism, enlightened sociability, tolerance, rationality, and natural and revealed religions of its local readers, including elite Jews. David Franks, for example, applied to the Library Company's directors for membership. Thomas Cadwalader, Hugh Roberts, Benjamin Franklin, and others held a meeting and voted unanimously to include Franks as a member—one more manifestation of the benefits of patronage and friendship between elite Jews and gentiles. Joseph Simon and Levy Andrew Levy, meanwhile, subscribed to a public library on the frontier. The Lancaster Library Company was modeled on Franklin's in Philadelphia, and later became the Julianna Library.²⁶

A shared commitment to erudite learning, liberal thought, and enlightenment sociability gained Jews entrée into the voluntary associations and social clubs of polite society, which provided them with genteel respectability and social validation. They became, in other words, a

portraits, see *Facing the New World: Jewish Portraits in Colonial and Federal America*, Richard Brilliant and Ellen Smith, eds., (Munich, 1997).

²⁶ Wolf, "Franklin," 11-31. Of the 375 books, 84 were gifts, which meant the men purchased 291 books, of which 200 were history, literature, and science. Harvard College, by contrast, held 75% theological tracts, see Meeting of Directors, February 11, 1754, *AJD*, 7; Pencak, *Jews*, 182; Hirsh, "Lancaster," 96-97; Hühner, "Jews in Connection," 122-24.

part of Philadelphia's cultural elite. Unlike in Newport, for instance, where Jews felt compelled to create their own social clubs that excluded non-Jews, in Pennsylvania Jews joined the social clubs of their gentile neighbors, which brought them even closer together. Levy owned a violin, for example, and was a gifted musician. The famed Maryland physician, Dr. Alexander Hamilton, noted Levy's wonderful skill in his oft-quoted travel narrative. Upon arriving in Philadelphia, Hamilton wrote, "One Levy there played a very good violine," alongside "Tench Francis," who was also involved in the local library. Strong evidence suggests that Dr. Hamilton had heard Nathan Levy play the violin. Members of the Franks-Levy family were talented singers, musicians, and artists. Richa (sometimes Richea, Ritchie, or Richie) played the "harpsicord," and studied music with the famous musician Theodore Pachelbel. Moses and David played the "fiddle" and "flute," respectively. As an adult, David played with a chamber music group for operas spearheaded by the American Company in Philadelphia. Moses wrote poetry. The lot of them learned to sing—some learned to paint. Considering the enlightened and cosmopolitan dispositions of the patriarchs and matriarchs of the Levy and Franks families, along with the musical and other artistic talents of its members, Nathan was probably the Levy that Dr. Hamilton mentioned in his journal. Nathan, after all, owned a violin worth £50 and 25 books of music. When Dr. Hamilton heard Nathan's violin, he had entered a session of the Music Club of Philadelphia at the Assembly Room. In 1738, Pennsylvania's Attorney General Tench Francis, a founder of the Library Company, established the club. When George Whitefield condemned the public gatherings as blasphemous, popular outcries forced attendees to continue the tradition in the private homes of Richard Bache (Benjamin Franklin's son-in-law), Reverend Richard Peters of Christ Church, Francis Hopkinson, and John Penn. No other club was more prestigious at that time. Levy, therefore, played the violin alongside Francis to an

audience of the most genteel respectability. He did so, most important, as a professing Jewish leader of Philadelphia's small, private congregation.²⁷

Levy was not alone in obtaining membership in social clubs, mutual aid societies, and voluntary associations. Joseph Simon became a founder of Lancaster's Union Fire Company. David Franks and Benjamin Levy gained membership in an exclusive fishing club, whose members included Governor James Hamilton and Lieutenant Governor John Penn. Along with his uncle, Franks obtained membership in the exclusive aforementioned music club. Because Philadelphia remained a vibrant destination for immigrants, Jews joined mutual aid societies, such as the St. George Society that assisted transients from the United Kingdom. Benjamin Nones, a Sephardic émigré from France and enlightened polyglot, joined the French Benevolent Society to assist his fellow Frenchmen ravaged by their own violent revolution. Naphtali Phillips, the son of German-born émigré and American Whig Jonas Phillips, led the Philadelphia Society for the Information and Assistance of Persons Emigrating from Foreign Countries. Samson Levy and David Franks became members of Philadelphia's exclusive Dancing Assembly, a genteel club, whose members, which included such notables as Mayor William Plumsted, met in "Andrew Hamiltons House" on the wharf. So exclusive was this club, in fact, it boasted only 59 members in 1748, and just 65 members a year later. Franks remained a member for the next twenty-five years, until the outbreak of the revolution created paranoia that destroyed old friendships and partnerships.

²⁷ Newport Jews founded a club for card-playing, see "A Club Formed by the Jews," November 25, 1761, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 8, AJA; Levy's Will, *AJD*, 8-10; *EAJ*, II, 8; Packard, *Charter Members*, 5-12. For quote and Hamilton's travel narrative, see Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress: The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton, 1744* (Chapel Hill, 1948), 191; quotes Abigaill Franks to Naphtali Franks, June 15, 1735, December 12, 1735, and December 3, 1736, Moses Franks Poetry, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 1 and 13, AJHS; *CAJ*, III, 1207-08; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 27, 1753; *JOP*, 34-5; Bridenbaugh, *Rebels*, 155-56; Packard, *Charter Members*, 5-12.

Nine gatherings occurred in the first year. Social dancing at such balls fostered personal friendships and business connections among Philadelphia's elite that surmounted religious and ethnic differences. Members paid £3 per year to dance and play cards with governors, mayors, legislators, judges, and prominent merchant-traders. The membership rolls read like a who's-who among prominent families of Philadelphia's polite society, including the Binghams, Hamiltons, Hopkinsons, Plumsteds, Shippens, Franklins, and others. Franks therefore gained an exclusive opportunity to not only socialize with the colonial gentry but to self-fashion his own public persona along class lines in their image. Gender made little difference in membership, for the social club welcomed men over the age of 21 and women over the age of 18. Members checked their religious scruples at the door, for one's class, and apparently nothing else, determined their membership because it excluded "the families of mechanics, however wealthy." Benjamin Franklin, for example, found himself excluded because he was a mechanic—as a printer, he worked with his hands—but his scientific endeavors and political voice earned him membership soon enough. Franklin's son, William, became a member without question, ironic indeed, because his father's notoriety, wealth, and influence, not his own, ensured his elitism and thus his membership in the club. Although Lancaster certainly did not have a developed cultural scene to such a degree as Philadelphia, a gentile traveler noticed the gentility of Lancaster's Jews when he remarked, "The only young ladies fit for a gentleman to dance with were the Jewish ladies."²⁸

²⁸ Hirsh, "Lancaster," 96-97; *AJD*, 7; Manuscript Minute Book of the Library Company of Philadelphia, I, 168, MS., LCP; "The Mount Regale Fishing Company of Philadelphia," *PMHB* 27 (1903), 88-9; Bridenbaugh, *Rebels*, 156; *Charter and By-Laws of The Society of the Sons of St. George* (Philadelphia, 1840), 7, 44-56, copy in AAS; *JOP*, 264-67; quotes Watson, *Annals*, I, 276-84; "The Philadelphia Dancing Assembly," *PMHB* 34 (1910), 243; Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, May 3, 1749, "Notes and Queries," *PMHB* 23 (1899), 529-31; Stern, *Franks*, 46-47; William Pencak, "The Beginning of a Beautiful Friendship: Franklin, Whitefield, the Dancing School Blockheads, and a Defense of the Public Sphere," *Proteus* 19 (2002), 45-50; last quote idem, *Jews*, 181-82.

The cultural legacy of Quakers' community-engagement, which included the Almshouse for the Relief and Employment of the Poor, was not lost on Jewish philanthropists, whose own activities assisted in the development of the moral reform and humanitarian movements that defined the decades after 1783. But, much of this activity, while somewhat altruistic, was also self-serving to some extent because Jews came to recognize such community outreach as another method to demonstrate to their neighbors their worthiness for equality and emancipation. David Franks contributed to the construction of Franklin's hospital for "Relief of the Sick Poor and Cure of Lunatics," and Mathias Bush donated £10 to Franklin's Pennsylvania Hospital. Others contributed to the Society for the Visitation of the Sick and Mutual Assistance, which offered financial assistance but also fraternal fellowship to those in distress. Cognizant of the reform movements that defined antebellum America, David G. Seixas, son of Gershom Mendes Seixas, founded Pennsylvania's Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, and Jacob Gratz secured its charter from the assembly and directed the institution.²⁹

Perhaps the greatest Jewish philanthropist, Rebecca Gratz, whose life set the gold standard for moral humanitarianism which was celebrated in her lifetime by both Jews and Christians, founded or assisted in the development of several charitable organizations, which included the Female Association for the Relief of Women and Children in Reduced Circumstances, the Philadelphia Orphan Asylum, the Hebrew Sunday School, the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society (the first charitable organization founded by Philadelphia's Jews), the Jewish Foster Home, Fuel Society, Sewing Society, among others. Such community

²⁹ Quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 29, 1755; *JOP*, 42, 267-70; David G. Seixas, 1821, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 14, Folder 32, AJA; Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz, January 21, 1821, *LRG*, 43-45. For religious dimension of moral reform, see Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination* (Oxford, 1994). For transatlantic commitments to humanitarianism, see Amanda B. Moniz, *From Empire to Humanity: The American Revolution and the Origins of Humanitarianism* (Oxford, 2016).

outreach and renewal set Philadelphia apart from other urban cities of the period. Both Jews and Christians came together for the benefit of the less fortunate, such as the jointly organized home for orphans that publicly announced it made “no distinction...in the admission of children...on account of the religious persuasion of the children, or their parents.” Unlike the hostile sectarianism and almost-militant evangelicalism exhibited by some Christian benevolent societies, Rebecca’s philanthropic organizations remained Jewish in its moral imperatives but non-sectarian in its administration and public functions. The orphan home, for example, was located at the local Presbyterian Church under the auspices of the Reverend William White, who preached a dedication sermon full of Old Testament allusions. Such cross-religious cooperation was common and mitigated further the marginalization that some Jews felt in civic culture.³⁰

In practice, Rebecca never denied aid or employment based on religious scruples. Her communal ethos was more a product of her class and gender than her religion, though she did find love and refused to renounce her faith to marry a gentile, Samuel Ewing. Rebecca, in fact, remained committed to women’s rights. Not only did she personally oversee the activities of her organizations but she also brought 23 other women (both Jews and Christians) into the public sphere along with her, including Rebecca Mendez Phillips, wife of Jonas Phillips, Miriam Marks Nones, wife of Benjamin Nones, and Rebecca’s mother Miriam Simon Gratz and sisters, Rachel, Richea, and Sarah, among others. The Gratz brothers, well-educated and ambitious, passed on to their children a substantive educational tradition rooted in a moral humanism that emphasized civic virtue, an ethos of social justice that their elite gentile neighbors shared and respected. In the antebellum decades, Rebecca became the most recognizable Jewish philanthropist and

³⁰ Ashton, *Rebecca Gratz*, 13, 61-64, 100-07, 121-48, 209-38. For philanthropy, see O.A. Pendleton, “Poor Relief in Philadelphia, 1790-1840,” *PMHB* 70 (1946), 161-72; quoted *Philadelphia Gazette*, January 30, 1822; *JOP*, 270-73; William White, *A Sermon on The Drawing of Moses out of the Waters. Delivered Before the Orphan Society of Philadelphia, On Sunday, the 5th of March, 1815* (Philadelphia, 1815), copy in AAS.

intellectual, which earned the admiration and respect of reform-minded Anglo-Americans of the period. In her honor and memory, her brother Hyman founded Philadelphia's Gratz College, which continues Rebecca's philanthropic legacy to this day. Unlike previous generations of Anglo-American Jewish women who acquiesced to traditional gender norms, Rebecca rejected marriage in favor of journalism and social work. Unlike previous generations of Anglo-American Jewish men who apostatized, Rebecca maintained and celebrated her Judaism in public life. Her confidence was such that, when a fire destroyed the orphan home, Rebecca drafted and sent a letter to the Pennsylvania Senate, whose members bestowed the home with a \$5,000 grant from public coffers. The movement of women, especially Jewish women, into the public sphere without fear of reprisal at the hands of Protestants demonstrates some of the benefits that patronage, fellowship, and friendship with gentiles had bestowed upon elite Jews, including female Jews.³¹

Freemasonry was perhaps the most significant cultural institution that brought together enlightened Jews and Christians in early Pennsylvania. The secret voluntary association bolstered Jewish confidence in public life. In large numbers, Jews joined the ranks of Masons, whose mission emphasized a shared commitment to a Judeo-Christian moral ethos and wisdom rooted in antiquity. The link between Masons and Judaism is truly an ancient one. Freemasonry borrowed its symbology and even terminology from ancient Judaism. Masons drew inspiration from the Romanized Jew, Flavius Josephus, whose architectural descriptions of the ancient Temple of Solomon inspired early modern designs of the Masonic Temple. Through their

³¹ *The Constitution of the Female Association of Philadelphia, for the relief of Women and Children, in Reduced Circumstances* (Philadelphia, 1803), 2-32, copy in AAS; *JOP*, 270-73; *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, February 20, 1822; Pencak, *Jews*, 178.

readings of Josephus, early Masons identified with King Solomon's craftsmen who built the Jewish Temple in ancient Jerusalem. Some lodges adopted the Hebrew calendar, borrowed from Old Testament history, and even adapted Jewish rites and rituals into Masonic cultural practices. Such an integral connection to Judaism inspired Jews to join a fraternity whose creed championed humanitarianism and philanthropy, religious inclusivity and tolerance, and enlightened sociability and equality. Freemasonry broke down barriers of difference among brothers and empowered Jews with additional feelings of belonging in their communities and a significant common ground with their elite neighbors. As historian Jacob R. Marcus has shown, "The Jew who became a Mason was part of a group...committed to his enfranchisement," and concluded, "the Jewish Mason...was involved...in working for his own political and social emancipation." For Jewish activists who agitated for social acceptance, religious freedom, and emancipation, Masonry functioned as an important cultural touchstone toward that end.³²

Masonic networks in the Anglo-American world was an important pillar that buttressed a transatlantic enlightenment culture, which informed Jewish Masons of their inherent natural rights, particularly religious freedom beyond Penn's "Liberty of the Mind." Jewish Masons therefore adopted a logical and rational approach to their religious convictions, which mirrored their interests in the liberal cabbalist tradition, while also redoubling their commitment to political activism in favor of emancipation. Pennsylvania's first lodge opened in 1727, and four years later, Philadelphia's brothers dedicated the third independent Grand Lodge in Anglo-America, behind England in 1717 and Ireland in 1729. Mysticism, sociability, science, rationality, and social status remained important links of interest between Masons and Jewish

³² Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730-1840* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 33, 59; Masonry, Jewish Masons Prior to 1871, undated, Oppenheim Collection, Box 14, Folders 20 and 21, AJHS; Marcus quoted *CAJ*, III, 1168-69.

cabbalists. Masonry brought them together in fellowship. The institution's preoccupation with antiquity "bore the marks of the long tradition of hidden wisdom that linked the Egyptian mysteries, the mystical Pythagoreans, Jewish Essenes and Cabalists," which "provided...powerful confirmation of a Judeo-Christian genealogy of learning" that sought to instill morality and wisdom into brothers. Masonry's "*Constitutions* and rituals firmly placed the Jewish biblical tradition at the heart of all Masonry and the subsequent history of knowledge."³³

Masons' intellectual roots, Jewish history and Enlightenments, produced rationalist and deist brothers who remained open-minded about religion, and who remained concerned about the plight of those marginalized for heterodox views, such as Jews. One early version of the *Constitutions* emphasized that brothers ought to believe "that Religion in which all Men agree," an allusion to natural religion or Nature's God. In the 1738 *Constitutions*, Masons even borrowed from the ubiquitous Maimonides, whose term "Noachida" described Christians who lived by Mosaic Law and thus earned salvation, which offered Jews and Christians additional common moral ground. One's religious views, then, did not bar them from the hallowed halls of secrecy and mysticism within Masonic Temples. Jews found pride in that their own Temple served as the blueprint for the Masonic equivalent, and thus held a unique position in the fraternity, not only because of the symbolic importance of Judaism to Masonry's cultural *éclat* but also because Jews made up a large percentage of Mason's membership rolls in Anglo-America. Jewish membership peaked after about 1768, chiefly due to the efforts of Jewish Mason, Moses Michael Hays. A liberal education and wealth defined Hays's youth, though he

³³ R. William Weisberger, "Freemasonry as a Source of Jewish Civic Rights in Late Eighteenth-Century Vienna and Philadelphia: A Study in Atlantic History," *EEQ* 34 (2001), 419-45; Manuel, "Israel," 33-51; Sutcliffe, "Myth," 107-26; Pencak, "Jews and Anti-Semitism," 367-68; idem, *Jews*, vii; Norris S. Barratt and Julius F. Sachse, *Freemasonry in Pennsylvania, 1727-1907, as shown by the records of Lodge No. 2, F. and A.M. of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1908), viii-xv; Bullock, *Brotherhood*, 12-21, quotes on 18 and 21.

held important leadership positions in New York's congregation, including *parnas*. Several years in Newport, Boston, and England brought him into the networks of enlightened Masonry. Under the authority of Frederick of Prussia, the titular leader of all Masons, Hays returned to the colonies as Deputy Inspector General and Grand Master for the North American colonies and played an integral role in the establishment of lodges in New York City, Newport, Boston, and Philadelphia. Hays appointed eight deputies under his continental authority, seven of which were his Jewish brethren. The explosion of Jewish Masonry after Hays returned from Europe was therefore no coincidence. Jewish participation in Masonry, with its emphasis on equality and emancipation, occurred at the height of Jewish political activism.³⁴

Pennsylvania's Christian Hebraists, freethinkers, and deists, whose interest in Jewish history and law remained essentially abstract before the eighteenth century, often first encountered actual Jews in Masonic networks of fellowship. Oglethorpe's connections to Jewish Masons, discussed in an earlier chapter, facilitated his kindness toward Jews and acceptance of Judaism in early Georgia—it remains just one example among many. Moses Seixas, for example, served as Senior Warden, Master, and Grand Master of Rhode Island's King David's Lodge. That George Washington was a fellow Mason encouraged Seixas to ask him, as the chief executive of the new nation, to uphold religious freedom for non-Christians. Washington, in reply, promised to do so, and even acknowledged his brother as a Mason and a Jew, an important observation, because Seixas maintained his Orthodox Judaism. Freemasonry, then, fomented comity even among conservative Jews and liberal gentiles. In any case, Jewish cabbalists and

³⁴ *The Constitutions of Free-Masons: Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, etc. of That Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity* (Philadelphia, 1734, original London, 1723), copy in AAS, quote 59; John Hamill, *The Craft: A History of English Freemasonry* (London, 1986), 64; James Anderson, *The New Book of Constitutions of the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons* (London, 1738), copy in AAS, 143; Masonry, Jewish Masons Prior to 1871, undated, Oppenheim Collection, Box 14, Folders 20 and 21, AJHS; Albert M. Friedenberg, "A List of Jews Who Were Grand Masters of Masons in Various States of this Country," *PAJHS* 19 (1910), 95-100; Moses Michael Hays, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 8, Folder 19, AJA.

Christian Hebraists held overlapping intellectual and religious interests, to say nothing of their self-defined elitism, similar moral ethos, and humanitarianism. It is little wonder that many Anglo-American Jews found the institution appealing. Freemasonry's commitment to charitable activities within communities mirrored Jews' own commitment to social justice. Pennsylvania's Grand Lodge, for example, raised monies for a Charity Fund. Such community services spoke to many Jews' social consciousness, but it also assisted them in their efforts to refashion their public images among Christian neighbors.

In 1731, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania elected its first Grand Master, William Allen, a friend and patron of Jews. Other officers over ensuing years included prominent gentiles who befriended Jews and patronized their businesses, such as Benjamin and William Franklin, Dr. Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Hopkinson, James Hamilton, William Plumsted, Joseph Shippen, Robert Hunter Morris, and William Smith, to name a few. Jews joined the Masonic ranks, including Israel Israel, Jonas Phillips, the Gratzes, Benjamin Nones, Haym Salomon, Isaac Franks, Isaac DaCosta, Simon and Seixas Nathan, Benjamin Seixas, Isaac Moses, Myer Myers, Solomon Bush, among many others.³⁵

Solomon Bush, whose father Matthias had migrated from Bohemia (today's Czech Republic) to Pennsylvania in the 1740s and fought in the French and Indian War, served as Deputy Inspector General of Masonry for Pennsylvania, and later as Grand Master—appointments made by his Jewish brethren and patron Moses Michael Hays. In an attempt to

³⁵ *Providence Gazette*, September 18, 1790; Samuel Oppenheim, "The Jews and Masonry in the United States before 1810," *PAJHS* 19 (1910), 1-23, 28-53. Washington corresponded with three other Jewish congregations, stressing his religious tolerance. Jacob Cohen, furthermore, attended Washington's first inauguration in 1789, along with thirteen other clergymen, see *DHJ*, 77-82; Barratt and Sachse, *Freemasonry*, xv; Wayne A. Huss, *The Master Builders: A History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania*, 2 vols., (Philadelphia, 1986), I, 281-83; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 3-8, 1730; Bullock, *Brotherhood*, 53; Masonry, Jewish Masons Prior to 1871, undated, Oppenheim Collection, Box 14, Folders 20 and 21, AJHS; Isaac Moses Masonic Certificate, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 16, Folder 28, AJA.

further the relations between Mason brothers in Philadelphia and London, Bush traveled to London and met with Masonic leaders there. A veteran of the revolution and deeply committed to enlightened principles, Bush unabashedly celebrated the opening salvos of the French Revolution from London in 1789. He recognized the liberality and general open-mindedness of his Masonic brothers, when he crafted a letter to fellow Mason Frederick the Great, King of Prussia and leader of the Grand Council at Berlin and Paris. Unlike Frederick, known for denying basic natural rights to German Jews, Anglo-American Masonry allowed Bush to join the highest ranks in the organization. The purpose of Bush's missive was less a letter to a head of state who happened to be a Mason than a list of Bush's Masonic titles and responsibilities to an anti-Semite who oppressed his Jewish brethren in Prussia. Bush proudly exclaimed, "I, Solomon Bush, Grand Elect, Perfect and Sublime Knight of the East and Prince of Jerusalem, Sovereign Knight of the Sun and of the Black and White Eagle, Prince of the Royal Secret, and Deputy Inspector General, and Grand Master over all Lodges, Chapters, and Grand Councils of the Superior Degrees of Masonry in North America within the State of Pennsylvania, etc." Considering Frederick's treatment of German Jews, many of them relatives of Pennsylvania's Jews, it was no coincidence that a second-generation Jewish migrant of German descent flaunted his accomplishments in the face of a notorious anti-Semite, Mason brother or no. Bush employed the language of enlightened discourses, which characterized Masonic principles and rituals. But the most important aspect of Bush's letter has less to do with enlightened ideas, and more to do with his avowal of Judaism. The two intellectual systems were more than compatible, because the one sustained Bush's adherence to the other.³⁶

³⁶ Bush Quoted *EAJ*, II, 81-2, 502-3; The Expulsion of Jews from Bohemia, 1745-6, Oppenheim Collection, Box 24, Folder 36, AJHS; *Pennsylvania Packet*, March 7 and October 1, 1788; *JOP*, 154-85.

Freemasonry did not demand a particular religiosity in return and offered inclusivity to non-conformist thinkers, but it also embraced professing Jews. Freemasonry served for Jews much the same function as churches served for Protestant Christians. It tied them to the community and gave them a sense of belonging. Unlike many churches, it offered a platform for intellectual discourses and social interactions, and it provided them a common purpose that reinforced their commitment to civic duties. For Bush, though, Freemasonry offered a platform for him to inform an enlightened monarch how Masons ought to treat those who believed differently than they did. By the 1770s, Philadelphia's Masonic lodges boasted a ratio of one Jewish member to every four gentile members, or 14 Jews out of 56 members. On twenty-four separate occasions, moreover, Jews served as Grand Master in Pennsylvania's Masonic lodges. Lancaster also boasted a Masonic lodge, whose members included Isaac Sollomon, Solomon Etting, Myer Solomon, Abraham Henry, Samuel Jacobs, and Michael Gratz's son, Simon.³⁷

Jewish Masons thus formed deeper emotional and intellectual bonds with important gentiles through a shared brotherhood that "offered the urban elite an important symbol of gentility and honor." An enlightened fraternity assisted Jewish "provincial elites to...build solidarity," which brought elite Jews closer to potential patrons and helped them to fashion public reputations as respectable members of colonial society. Not only did Jewish elites enjoy intellectual discourse with Christians and freethinkers, but the "fraternity intensified affectionate ties between its members...and helped provide the business and political contacts necessary in a rapidly expanding commercial society." Beyond socioeconomic benefits, Freemasonry was "a means of entering public life, of teaching the manners necessary for genteel behavior." When

³⁷ Oppenheim, "Jews and Masonry," 1-94; Weisberger, "Freemasonry," 419-45; Masonry, Jewish Masons Prior to 1871, undated, Oppenheim Collection, Box 14, Folders 20 and 21, AJHS; Friedenber, "List," 95-100; Julius F. Sachse, *Old Masonic Lodges of Pennsylvania*, 2 vols., (Philadelphia, 1912), I, 75; Barratt and Sachse, *Freemasonry*, 27, 38, 43, 52, 53, 67, 68, 71. For Jews and Masonry, see Oppenheim Collection, Box 25, Folder 15, AJHS.

Pennsylvania's Masons, for example, marched in a celebratory procession to Christ Church, a newspaper correspondent noted that it made a "genteel appearance." To some extent, then, Jewish Masons learned important lessons about how to behave as elites in public life, even though they remained officially excluded from civic culture. The ceremonial form had transformed by the eighteenth century. No longer did commoners participate in civic rituals, save as onlookers. Elites, increasingly, asserted their power by dominating processions as direct participants, which reminded spectators of the prevailing hierarchy and thus reinforced traditional structures of authority within the social order. Masons walked through the streets of Philadelphia with symbols of hierarchy borrowed from early modern civic rituals, such as swords that represented high social position and white stockings, gloves, and jewels that underscored Masonry's gentility. Such displays of dominance among an emergent cohort of Anglo-American leaders preserved their centrality in the political system. That elite Jews marched with them was symbolic of their impending religious freedom and emancipation.³⁸

At the same time Jews utilized the secular marketplace to refashion their public personae as useful Anglo-Americans, Masonry and enlightenment culture in general provided them more cultural tools with which they used to come to terms with their public self-presentations as elites with cultural authority. As Masons, Jews gained the intellectual confidence to think freely about religion and the cultural confidence to embrace and employ the enlightened language of natural rights. They also gained the knowledge and cultural clout necessary to carve out a public space for Jews and Judaism in Pennsylvania. Through Masonry, then, Jews demonstrated to their

³⁸ Bullock, *Brotherhood*, quotes 2-4; Masonry, Jewish Masons Prior to 1871, undated, Oppenheim Collection, Box 14, Folders 20 and 21, AJHS; quote *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 20 and 26, 1755; E.P. Thompson, "Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture," *Journal of Social History* 7 (1973-74), 382-405; Sean Wilentz, ed., *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics Since the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 1985); David Waldstreicher, "Rights of Rebellion, Rites of Assent: Celebrations, Print Culture, and the Origins of American Nationalism," *JAH* 82 (1995-96), 37-61.

neighbors, commoners and elites alike, that they deserved religious freedom and emancipation in public life.

Enlightenment culture's social spaces in the public sphere facilitated discussions between Jews and gentiles, especially those religious in nature. Yet, sometimes those spaces remained in the privacy of one's home. A native of Philadelphia and expatriate from Montreal, David Salisbury Franks had a sharp literary mind and rose to a respectable social position. His patronage connections, like his cousins David and Moses Franks, launched his career, not as a merchant but as a post-revolutionary diplomat. Like so many of his kinfolk, Franks socialized with the likes of Benedict Arnold, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams. Unlike his kinfolk, though, Franks focused his attention on Whig leaders who emerged from the revolution with cultural and political power. At dinner at Jefferson's Monticello, Franks participated in an enlightened but heated exchange regarding revealed religions, alongside Jefferson, Virginia Congressman William Branch Giles, Connecticut artist John Trumbull, and several other notables. When the conversation turned anti-religious, as Giles poked fun at Trumbull's New England Puritanism, Trumbull defended traditional notions of Christian theology, while Jefferson, a well-known skeptic, questioned the veracity of both the Old and New Testaments. Giles the deist even attacked the teachings of Jesus, at which point Franks defended the Christian Messiah's character. Trumbull remarked to Jefferson, "Sir, this is a strange situation in which I find myself," and concluded, "In a country professing Christianity, and at a table with Christians, as I supposed, I find my religion and myself attacked with severe...wit...and not a person to aid in my defense but my friend Mr. Franks, who is himself a Jew." That a Jew defended Jesus is less important than the fact that

Franks sat at a table with the most learned individuals of genteel respectability and without fear discussed matters of religion as an intellectual peer.³⁹

Enlightened Jews, Christian Hebraists, and other freethinkers debated matters of religion, sometimes on the streets of Philadelphia. Henry Melchior Mühlenberg, the father of Lutheranism in America and capable student of Hebrew, received Yiddish missionary tracts from Europe for use in his attempts to convert Philadelphia’s Jews, who he viewed as “practicing atheists.” When Mühlenberg’s amanuensis approached Nathan Levy and David Franks with literature regarding the “true Messiah,” one of the two Jews responded, “The most representative men in the city, with whom I associate, admit that their Messiah...was an impostor.” Either Levy or Franks dismissed this evangelical gesture with a pointed remark, “Give your writings to these gentlemen. I have no intention or time to read them.” Such comments underscore that Jews conversed amicably with enlightened skeptics in the city, and discussed morals, politics, and science with gentile elites. Considering that Levy remained committed to organized Judaism, it was probably Franks who reacted in such a radical, skeptical way toward Christian evangelists. In doing so, Franks demonstrated that he identified and associated with enlightened skeptics and deists and may have been a freethinker himself. The move toward rational religiosity mirrored the behavior of other colonial elites, such as Franklin, the Penns, Jefferson, Galloway, and others, who moved away from organized Christianity and toward the skepticism and religious universalism embraced by deists. Levy, though, confronted such skeptical ideas, as his ownership of Wollaston shows, thus it may well have been Levy, not Franks. In the end, it matters not if it was Levy or Franks who voiced their skepticism in public, because this

³⁹ Quoted *USJ*, I, 58; *JOP*, 158-64. Franks was a known poet, see Rebecca Franks as a Writer, undated, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 17, AJHS.

encounter demonstrates that erudite Jews, Christians, and freethinkers engaged in religious conversations, sometimes in the purview of the public, and often without incident.⁴⁰

Christian dissenters and other Hebraists engaged in Judaic learning; in particular, they learned Hebrew as a means to properly translate the Hebrew Bible. Christian Hebraists, in most cases but not all, turned to Hebrew literature in the cabbalist tradition to convert Jews in their midst. They may have, though the evidence remains inconclusive, sought out conversations with individual Jews about Judaism and its relationship to Christian Hebraism. The allegorical nature of cabbalist rabbinic studies allowed Christians to interpret Hebrew literature in such ways that supported their own theological assumptions, such as the Christian doctrines of the millennium and Trinity. For Quakers in particular, the cabbala's mysteries instructed them that Jewish scholarly expertise in Hebrew, the "original language of God," could bring them closer to a "configuration of divine light." In this way, Quakers' belief that individuals have a direct conduit to Providence, the "inner light," was strengthened by their Hebraic studies in the cabbalist tradition. Quakers, as a previous chapter examined, emphasized the *Inner Light* of all individuals, and Friends' believed in the divisions of Adam's soul, which had fragmented, they believed, and resided within each member of the Society. The cabbalist tradition also emphasized introspective investigations and underscored their belief in the division of Adam's soul(s).⁴¹

Learned Jews recognized these connections as well. Isaac Miranda owned texts that dealt with esoteric mysticism, such as metempsychosis, or the belief that souls passed from one body to another. Miranda may have recognized the parallels between cabbalist teachings and certain

⁴⁰ Quotes in Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Doberstein, trans., 3 vols., *Journals of Henry Melchior Mühlenberg* (Philadelphia, 1942-58), I, 139, II, 684-85; *CAJ*, III, 1153, 1564; *EAJ*, II, 54-55; *JOP*, 43.

⁴¹ Manuel, *Broken Staff*, 37-65; quotes Katz, *Philo-Semitism*, 73; Hoberman, *New Israel*, 8; Miranda's Will, *AJA*; Peters, *Print Culture*, 1-12; *CAJ*, III, 1204.

components of Protestant theology, especially that of Quakerism because he was exposed to it often through his friendship with Logan and other Quaker patrons. Exposure to such ideas may have offered learned Jews a bridge from one religion to the other, or a way for them to reconcile Judaism with Christianity without cognitive dissonance. Miranda owned two polemics that compared and contrasted Judaism and Christianity, which is the greatest evidence of his interest in the parallels between them. If Miranda did not engage in theological conversations with Logan and others, he very well could have read about Quaker doctrines in the pervasive literature, written and disseminated by prominent Friends. In any case, the evidence suggests a close theological association between Judaism and Quakerism in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania.

In light of these common interests, religious ideas among enlightened thinkers—Jew, freethinker, and gentile—were more fungible than previous scholars have noticed. They owned Hebraic *and* Christian texts, and works of skeptical, enlightened inquiry. They shared books and newspapers and other polite literature with each other and the community. And they engaged in enlightened discourse, in private and in public spaces. These are important observations that demonstrate the close relationship between enlightened Jews and Christians in Pennsylvania. The cultural and social interactions between Jews and gentiles had a profound effect upon Jewish migrants, who were attracted to enlightened ideals and used them to make sense of their shifting notions of what it meant to be Jewish in a Christianized imperial and continental frontier environment. At the same time that Jews struggled to define a coherent religious identity within the cultural constructs of the Anglo-American world, they internalized the humanism, egalitarianism, universalism, and skepticism of the Enlightenment, espoused and disseminated by Christian Hebraists, Jewish intellectuals, and enlightened freethinkers. These were the

cultural resources necessary for the to reform Judaism, which loosened strict commitments to *Halakha*.

CHAPTER FIVE POLITICAL JUDAISM: NEWSPAPER POLITICS & EMANCIPATION

Political and print culture—newspaper politics—joined the secular marketplace and enlightened sociability as social and cultural spaces in the public sphere that allowed Jews to refashion their public personae and to cultivate positive reputations in Pennsylvania. The normalization of Jews and Judaism, made possible in part through Jewish participation in newspaper politics and Jews’ socioeconomic connections to important and powerful gentiles, culminated in full emancipation at the state and national levels of government. But Jewish partisans and pundits had to fight for it. In response to an increased Jewish public presence, politicized Protestants, clergy and laity, wielded the Shylock trope once more to discredit Jewish partisans. An emergent United States and recently politicized Protestants produced a reactionary movement rooted in Protestant notions of American nationalism, which restricted political power to Protestants alone. Whig leaders placed constrictive boundaries around their definitions of republican citizenship, chiefly at the state levels of government. They excluded political dissidents, religious nonconformists, and “others” of all stripes, along religious, gender, class, ethnic, racial, and even ideological lines. Jewish partisans, however, did not sit on the political sidelines as passive victims; rather, they became political activists in the unfolding of their own religious equality and political emancipation. Newspaper politics thus became a means to that end. Jews who came of age amid the imperial crisis developed a consciousness rooted in the politics of dissent that defined the early stages of the republican experiment. As Whigs, Jews believed that all individuals deserved their basic human rights, dignity, and equality, which they argued aligned with the principles of the new republic. The successes they had experienced in the colonial period emboldened them to make the final push for Jewish emancipation.

Pennsylvania's Jews recognized their unique opportunity to expand their political freedom in the realm of popular politics and the direct wielding of political power. Jews therefore put ink to paper, protested in the streets, joined political organizations, among other political activities. Newspaper culture, petitions, political patronage, and formal political parties and clubs became essential in their attempts to challenge political anti-Semitism.¹

Jews' political activism and patronage demands included newspaper appeals, which established their reputations and honor as Whig Republicans in local politics and provided them with a platform to defend Judaism. Newspapers also provided Jews an opportunity to underscore their masculinity as Whig soldiers during the war and as masculine defenders of revolutionary idealism thereafter. Jewish partisans petitioned governments and its leaders, in which they demanded religious equality in public life and political emancipation. Jews also pointed to their recent military services in the French and Indian War and War of Independence, which, they

¹ Print culture was central to Habermas's conception of the public sphere, see *Public Sphere*. Anderson shows that print culture was central to the development of early modern solidarity and nationalism, see *Imagined Communities*, especially chapters 2-4. Charles E. Clark demonstrates the British origins of print culture and its transatlantic connections between London, New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia. Clark examines two processes fomented by newspaper culture, a process of "Anglicization," because newspapers emulated English culture, and "Americanization," because newspapers also differentiated provincial environments from the British metropole, see *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740* (Oxford, 1994). For Anglo-American Jews, these two processes defined their experiences in Pennsylvania, because newspapers provided them a public platform to cultivate their own identities, which gradually altered their neighbors' attitudes toward Jews and Judaism. For "moral establishments" that limited the rights of minority groups, see Sehat, *Myth*. For the role of print culture and crowd activities in the development of nationalism, see David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill, 1997). For the politicization of Protestant clergy and their interpretation of nationalism, see McBride, *Pulpit*, especially chapters 3-5. Like the rise of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British nationalism that fomented anti-Catholic attitudes, and unlike Anderson's positive portrayal of the relationship between print culture and nationalism, the rise of American nationalism during the revolutionary era led to a revival of anti-Jewish prejudice, see Casino, "Anti-Popery," 279-309; Newman, "Good will," 457; Hill, *Upside Down*, 231-68; Miller, *Popery*, especially chapter 4; Reay, *Revolution*, 64-78; Smolenski, *Friends*, 61-177. For the transition from English definitions of citizenship to American ones, see Kettner, *Citizenship*. Douglas Bradburn shows that revolutionary ideology produced a concept of union—individual, sovereign states in particular—which mattered more than the idea of 'nation,' because it was American state leaders who, as gatekeepers, reformulated their conceptions of American citizen from English subject, not necessarily national leaders, see *The Citizenship Revolution: Politics and the Creation of the American Union, 1774-1804* (Charlottesville, 2009). Robert W.T. Martin has shown that early Americans grappled with a fundamental tension between the political dissent of minority groups and the popular consent of the masses, suggesting that dissenters, such as Jewish partisans, were the most important to a healthy political culture, see *Government by Dissent*.

argued, equipped them with leadership and management skills. Jewish veterans thus wrote private letters to gentile patrons, usually Republicans but not always, that requested government employment. Almost all of Pennsylvania's Jews identified with an emergent faction of political dissenters, first as Republicans in local politics, as Federalists when public debates raged over ratification of the U.S. Constitution, and eventually as Republicans in national politics.

Democratic-Republicans, as the coalition became known, championed a literal interpretation of the egalitarianism espoused by enlightened thinkers and embodied in the nation's founding documents—principles, they believed, formed the bedrock of American republican politics.

Jews joined the ranks of Democratic-Republican Societies, and a formal political party when it arose in the 1790s, essentially en masse. Although Pennsylvania's 1776 constitution excluded Jews from holding political power as elected officials or public appointees, Jewish political activism in part led to their full emancipation on the national stage in 1789, reinforced with the passage of a Bill of Rights that sanctioned religious freedom and political equality a few years thereafter. In 1790, Pennsylvania's newest state constitution eliminated, finally, all religious tests for citizenship and public service. Full political emancipation led Jews to embrace the hyper-partisan atmosphere of the 1790s. Although Jewish public activities sometimes produced comity between elite, liberal Jews and gentiles and even led some Christians to defend Jews and Judaism, conservatives, usually Protestant Christian pundits of the Federalist faction, refashioned Shylock once more to discredit their Republican political foes, Jews and non-Jews alike. Far from being intimidated by the politicization of the Shylock trope, however, Jews increased their activism in popular politics, placed pressure on their Whig and Republican patrons in positions of authority to reward Jewish partisans' loyalty with government jobs, and defended Jews and

Judaism in newspapers and petitions. As a result, Jews solidified their substantive public roles in both state and national politics by the antebellum decades.²

Print culture played a fundamental role in the normalization of individual Jews and Judaism in political life and provided a public forum for Jews to demand full political freedom and equality. In late 1757, just days after Frederick's Prussia defeated the Austrians, Berlin's chief Ashkenazi Rabbi David H. Fränkel—known as the “German Socrates”—delivered a sermon on the Sabbath, in the tradition of thanksgiving sermons. Fränkel's reputation as a scholar was ensured with the publication of his *Korban Ha'Edah*, a commentary on the Palestinian Talmud, a work that had escaped the attention of Ashkenazi scholars. Fränkel also introduced his peers to novel ideas found in midrashic sources of the cabbalist tradition, such as the *Mishneh Torah* and the *Guide to the Perplexed*, among other works of Maimonides, mostly ignored by conservative Ashkenazi scholars of the (conservative) *Halacha* tradition. Moses Mendelssohn, Fränkel's protégé, wrote the sermon, which reflected the liberal interpretations of cabbalists, though mysticism gradually gave way to eighteenth-century rationality. The sermon also illustrates the commitments of both teacher and student to the ultimate destruction of Jewish cultural isolation, the intellectual underpinnings of nineteenth-century German Reform Judaism. Fränkel and Mendelssohn hoped to bring Judaism into contact with an increasingly globalized and secularized world, a primary objective of the liberal dimensions of the Jewish *Haskalah*. Correspondents translated the sermon to the vernacular and the German press printed and widely

² Saul Cornell has shown the rise of an opposition to centralized authority in the early republic, see *Other Founders*. White Protestant Americans precluded Jews from political office holding until the nineteenth century, though a small number of Jews held minor positions in local and state politics in New York, Georgia, and South Carolina before 1800, see *DHJ*, 41-2; *USJ*, I, 52-3, 78-9. Prejudices resemble the experiences of Jewish revolutionaries in the aftermaths of the French Revolution of 1789 and Russian Revolution of 1917, see Arno J. Mayer, “The Perils of Emancipation: Protestants and Jews,” *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 40 (1995), 5-37.

distributed copies for consumption by the general public. It generated such excitement that an English translation appeared a year later, and its popularity among an English-speaking audience inspired a second printing. The sermon was reprinted in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and printed ten times more in the next five years. William Bradford printed a version in his *American Magazine*, which headlined “*Instance of a remarkable Sermon preached at Berlin, by a JEW.*”³

By the late 1750s, such enthusiastic responses to an obscure but important sermon show that the printed word had made a substantive impact on the Anglo-American cultural scene. Fränkel celebrated Prussian successes in the Seven Years’ War in Silesia, and underscored Jewish contributions to the war effort, which gained the attention of several Jewish families in Pennsylvania, including the Gratz and Henry brothers and the Bush and Phillips families, whose extended families in Germany relied upon their continual support. Jews had embraced the war in the Ohio River Valley and performed similar functions in America, much as their Prussian brethren had done in Europe. Fränkel’s sermon also shows that print culture could impact the ways in which common folk thought about the important cultural issues they encountered in their daily lives, such as the role of Jews in American culture. Andrew Steuart, a prominent Philadelphia publisher, was mindful of the substantive contributions of his Jewish friends. In the preface to his 1763 translation of Mendelssohn’s sermon, Steuart encouraged his predominantly

³ Kohut, “Early Jewish Literature,” 116-17. An English translation of the sermon, published by Andrew Steuart in 1763, along with several other versions in English and the German original, are found in the collections of the HSP/LCP, perhaps the first of Moses Mendelssohn’s many writings translated into a foreign language, see Morris Jastrow, Jr., “The First Publication of a Jewish Character Printed in Philadelphia,” *PAJHS* 1 (1893), 63-64; B. Felsenthal, “A Sermon By Moses Mendelssohn, Printed in Philadelphia 130 Years Ago,” *PAJHS* 2 (1894), 31-32; Alexander Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn: A Biographical Study* (Philadelphia, 1973), 12-19, 68. David Sorkin shows that a shift away from mystical interpretations of Jewish texts began in mid-eighteenth century, and a rational form of interpretation dominated mainstream Judaism until about 1800, see “The Case for Comparison: Moses Mendelssohn and the Religious Enlightenment,” *Modern Judaism* 14 (1994), 123-25; Snyder, “Place,” 393-96; quoted *American Magazine and Monthly Chronicle for the British Colonies* 1 (1758), 441-45.

Christian audience to read the sermon, because it “will excite all Christian people... to treat them [Jews] with Kindness.” A sermon that argued for Christians to accept Jews and Judaism represented the thinking of thousands of marginalized Jews, whose commitment to equality and cultural integration hardened with the arrival of Mendelssohn’s sermon on American shores. That “this sermon should have attracted sufficient attention to occasion its being presented in an English garb to a non-Jewish public” demonstrates that Jewish presence and usefulness had already begun to alter Anglo-Americans’ attitudes. Commoners and elites read the sermon with enthusiasm; that it resonated with Pennsylvania’s Ashkenazim, Sephardim, *and* Christians, as it did in Berlin and London, shows the gains Jews had made in the early modern period, as well as the real prospects for Jewish emancipation by the late eighteenth century. Mendelssohn, a Jew, and Christian Wilhelm von Dohm, a Christian and well-connected Prussian public servant, supported their arguments for Jewish emancipation with the humanitarian ideals of the Enlightenment, and especially Maimonides, whose ideas mitigated the ancient cultural and theological barriers between Jews and Christians. That Jew and gentile worked together toward emancipation pointed the way toward a future cooperation among them, and gave hope to thousands of Jews, in Europe as in America.⁴

The wide circulation of Mendelssohn’s sermon underscores the cultural power of the printed word and the explosion of printed materials in the Atlantic world after about 1750, the most productive avenue toward emancipation because it gained the attentions of so many people. The Enlightenment impulse to diffuse knowledge far and wide won the hearts and minds of

⁴ Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, December 6 and 21, 1757, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 19, AJHS; Fish, *Gratz*, 2-6; Jonathan Bloch to Solomon Henry, June/July 22, 1757, and Jonathan Bloch to Jacob Henry, February/March, 1756, McAllister Collection, HSP; Michael Gratz to Hyam and Jonathan Gratz, undated, *BMG*, 9, 40; quotes in Jastrow, “First Publication,” 64. For a radical new interpretation that privileges revolutionary consciousness above the “Religious Enlightenment” in French Jews’ emancipation, see Jonathan Israel, “Ideology and Social Change: Jewish Emancipation in European Revolutionary Consciousness (1780-1800),” in David J. Wertheim, ed., *The Jew as Legitimation: Jewish-Gentile Relations Beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism* (New York, 2017), 83-102.

Anglo-Americans. Ninety-two newspapers operated nation-wide in 1790, for instance, a number that increased to 235 ten years later. Institutional factors, such as an emergent (and ever growing) public sphere, and cultural factors, such as eighteenth-century liberalism, wrought unprecedented social and cultural transformations. Such changes offered dissenters opportunities to widen the boundaries around religious freedom and citizenship, but not for Protestant Christians alone but also for non-Christians, including Jews. The cultural meanings of newspapers, then, went far beyond the diffusion of information. The rise of newspaper and partisan politics in the late eighteenth century provided Jews yet additional public forums to contest their marginalized statuses and to reshape their public reputations. With their cultural power on the rise, Jews boldly stepped into the public square unlike ever before.⁵

Ahead of their appearance on the political stage in full force, Jews established their reputations among gentiles and obtained social acceptance through the marketplace and enlightenment culture. By the mid-eighteenth century, newspapers also became a viable public option to cultivate positive images of Jews and Judaism. Jewish partisans and pundits then utilized their reputations and credibility as Whigs to increase their participation in political culture and to demand emancipation. The experiences of Ludwig Weisz and Barnard Jacob

⁵ Alfred M. Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America* (New York, 1937), 715-17. Scholars have shown how cultural institutions, such as the tavern, social club, and print culture have shaped the collective public life of British North America, which helped to foment solidarity in an imagined community, see Conroy, *In Public Houses*; Shields, *Civil Tongues*; Michael R. Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publications and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, 1990); Jeffrey L. Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville, 2001). In chapter 4 of her Brandeis dissertation, Holly Snyder explores how Jews in Rhode Island, Georgia, and Jamaica utilized such institutions to challenge the social constructions that placed them on the margins of public life, see Snyder, "Place," 141-204. Historians have demonstrated that periodicals grew at an astounding rate in eighteenth-century America and could be accessed by colonists in many ways. Keith Pacholl has shown that subscriptions were the obvious and most easily accessible method for Anglo-Americans to gain information quickly and on a steady basis, but it was not the only one. Public libraries also offered periodicals and books to patrons for a minimal monetary cost, which allowed public access to information across the social spectrum. Colonials disseminated information through word of mouth as well as through reading, see "American Access to Periodical Literature in the Eighteenth Century," *The International Journal of the Book* 4 (2007), 1-2.

underscore the intersection of ethnicity, religion, and newspaper politics in the eighteenth century. Even in the colonial period, political partisans made verbal warfare on each other, but Jews enjoyed a cordial, even esteemed, relationship with Benjamin Franklin, among other men of his status and influence. Franklin, for his part, was neither friend to Quaker political leaders nor their German supporters. In 1764, he and his ally Joseph Galloway lost their bid for an assembly seat, and Quaker partisans probably had something to do with it. Franklin made less than flattering remarks about German immigrants, because he feared their cultural mores and language might supplant those of his Anglo-American brethren. Upset at Franklin's remarks, a printer in Germantown, Christopher Saur, disseminated them in newspapers, in hopes of undermining the proprietary faction's election bid. In response to Saur's missive against Franklin, Ludwig Weisz, a misguided Franklin supporter, sought to deflect attention away from Franklin by stoking anti-Jewish sentiment. Weisz misunderstood the respectability that Jews enjoyed among proprietary partisans and patrons, as well as their importance to the coalition. Weisz attacked Jews in a German newspaper, but the periodical was sympathetic, not to the Quaker faction but to Franklin and his proprietary allies, including Jews. "I have unquestionably been a declared enemy of the Jew landlords," Weisz pronounced, because Jewish economic practices had ruined "ten or twenty German families." Wielding the Shylock trope as a political tool to deflect heat away from Franklin, Weisz, for all his naïve enthusiasm, misunderstood the positive views that many of his neighbors harbored toward German Jews. And many of those Jewish supporters were willing to defend their Jewish friends' honor and reputations.⁶

⁶ Quotes in *Philadelphia Staatsbote*, May 12, 1766, translations in *JOP*, 44-50. Pencak argues this prejudice arose because of Scots-Irish and Germans who fought the recent war on the frontier, see, Pencak, *Jews*, 192-95. For Franklin's anti-German remarks, see Franklin, "Observations."

That Weisz used ethnic Judaism as a counterpoint to Franklin's ethnic jabs at Germans fit contemporary patterns, but more important was how Franklin's supporters responded to the Jewish affront. Readers of the pro-Franklin paper recognized that prominent Jews, such as David Franks, the Gratzes, and others, supported Franklin, Galloway, and other proprietary partisans. And those readers demanded that the paper's publisher, the future Lutheran army chaplain Henry Miller, halt the publication of such anti-Semitic missives. In response, Miller banned all anti-Semitic ethnic slurs from publication in the newspaper. Dedicated bigots, however, could pay a substantial fee for the publication of anti-Jewish missives, not in the newspaper but in a supplement. A public defense of Jews by any non-Jew, though, remains the greatest evidence that Jews' activities in the public sphere had altered the attitudes of at least some of their neighbors. As a result, Jews reinforced their methods and redoubled their activism.⁷

Barnard Jacob (sometimes Jacobs) defended in newspapers, not only his own reputation but that of his gentile friend, the famous German immigrant, lawyer, and native intermediary during the French and Indian War, Conrad Weiser. A merchant on Pennsylvania's frontier, Jacob, known as the "Jew Rabbi at the Mill Creek," had cultivated a respectable reputation among local Germans, evidenced by his close friendship with Weiser who was well respected in the German community. Weiser's German brethren established a £500 lottery to fund the construction of a church, a common practice in the eighteenth century. They asked Jacob to manage those funds, an uncommon practice among Christians but one more common in Pennsylvania than elsewhere, which underscores the trust between them. Jacob's German friends, however, accused him of stealing £40 of the proceeds. Jacob turned to newspapers to

⁷ *Philadelphia Staatsbote*, June 9, 1766. For Miller, see *JCC*, XI, 507-08.

defend his honor and reputation. In newspaper accounts of the situation, which ran four consecutive weeks, Jacob claimed he had handed over a £500 bond to “Joost Hoffman,” who represented the church, but the bond was nowhere to be found. Jacob maintained his innocence, despite their negative aspersions that stereotyped him as a “greedy Jew” in the mold of Shylock. Jacob’s defense of his reputation was rooted in his attempt to turn the “Jew” into a positive rhetorical tool by casting in a negative light the “good Christian” with “red hair,” for his anti-Semitic remarks. The Christian, not the Jew, was greedy and dishonest, a public strategy replicated by Jews later in the eighteenth century. Jacob may well have also used an ethnic slur against Hoffman because Germans disliked the Scots-Irish migrants in the region—hence the allusion to red hair. It must have worked out well for Jacob, though the outcome of the dispute remains unknown, because Jacob was never charged in the incident and his reputation remained unsullied. But prejudice endured, as Hoffman’s friend, Jacob Schaub, referred to Jacob as a lying “Jew” in newspapers. With the assistance of newspapers aimed at his diverse neighbors, Jacob recovered his reputation, at least enough to have left behind an enduring legacy. Lancaster, for instance, erected a public plaque in honor of Jacob’s frontier entrepreneurship.⁸

By the onset of the imperial crisis, the fourth stage of Jewish migrations commenced; the continuous influx of Jewish émigrés altered the class and ethnic dynamics of Pennsylvania’s Jewish communities and offers a glimpse into just how important Jewish reputations and honor

⁸ Quote in *Philadelphia Staatsbote*, August 19 and September 16, 1765, but also see, December 1, 1760, February 13, 1761, and November 14, 1766; Pencak, *Jews*, 193-95. Solomon and Jacob Henry wrote about lotteries incessantly, see Solomon Henry to Jacob Henry, August 19, 1757, December 6 and 21, 1757, Jacob to Solomon, July 10, 1757, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 19, AJHS; Malcolm H. Stern, “Two Jewish Functionaries in Colonial Pennsylvania,” *AJHQ* 24 (1957), 29-35. Jacob’s reputation among his Christian neighbors was far superior than among some of his brethren. A fellow Jewish merchant in nearby Reading, Meyer Josephson, referred to Jacob as a “scoundrel” who ruined the “butter business,” see Myer Josephson to Barnard and Michael Gratz, 1760, McAllister Collection, HSP, Fish, *Gratz*, 32-33.

had become to their cultural integration. Once almost exclusively elite businesspeople from Germany, the Ashkenazim, Jewish migrants now included commoners and craftspeople, such as tailors, peddlers, and other artisans from Poland, Lithuania, France, Spain, Ireland, and the Caribbean—Sephardim among them. Confidence men of German extraction, whose tactics threatened the standing of respectable Jews, also arrived with them, including Emmanuel Lyon who posed as an instructor of Hebrew and Isaac Jacob who absconded with his fellow Jews' cash and merchandise. Some migrants were genuinely poor, including at least three Yiddish-speaking indentured servants; the poor placed a financial burden upon elite Jews because eighteenth-century custom demanded that religious denominations care for their own poor. Unlike their merchant counterparts, these working-class immigrant and transient Jews, unfortunately, did not leave behind letters and correspondences or advertise in newspapers. An advertisement by Lazarus Isaac, a "Glass Cutter and Engraver upon Glass...in Walnut-street," was uncommon among skilled Jewish artisans. As a result, the little information known about them derives from the class biases indicative of letters written by members of the Jewish business community.

Elite Jews viewed recent arrivals with disdain, chiefly because the poor undermined Jewish credibility in the realm of public opinion and held the potential to manifest a latent anti-Jewish sentiment. Haym Salomon, a wealthy Polish émigré, flat out told a relative in London to remain there. Mathias Bush complained that "New Jews" threatened the reputations of "the few old Jews settlers," and asked Barnard Gratz in London to "hinder, any more of that sort to come" to Philadelphia. Bush forbade the poor arrivals from entering his home, a remarkable gesture because he led private prayer services there, which meant he refused to admit them as members of the small congregation. Affluent Jews believed that poor migrants risked their networks of patronage and reputations, essentially their standing in the community. Myer Josephson

complained about a fellow Jew in Reading, “Reb Mordecai,” who was on the verge of debtors’ prison. Josephson vowed “to keep him out of jail,” for he was “an honest man with no brains.” Because “no Jew here has been in prison,” Myer paid Mordecai’s debts “and offered him to remain here in the house with me,” in addition to providing “him clothes and money free.” Josephson recognized that poor Jews held the potential to reverse some of the gains elites had made toward social acceptance and cultural integration. Josephson also made concerted efforts to reach out to Christians in his community as a means to strengthen bonds between them—he hired, for example, “a Gentile clerk here in the house.” Josephson kept his gentile amanuensis, even after Barnard Gratz found him a Jewish apprentice in Philadelphia. Although the arrival of poor Jews caused some strife, both commoners and elites identified as Whigs and Republicans, which outweighed their national, ethnic, class, and even religious differences. A shared commitment to the language of natural rights might explain why most Jews (of all classes) embraced Whig ideology, and why many working-class Jews followed their elite Jewish brethren (who had fled the Federalist Party after 1793) into the Democratic-Republican ranks.⁹

The revolutionary period opened up additional opportunities for Jews to transform their second-class status on the periphery of civil society. Central to the general effectiveness of these transformations was how Jews exploited the relationship between abstract language and political practice in newspaper politics. Enlightenment natural rights discourse and a growing literary public sphere allowed them to formulate a political consciousness with which to challenge their

⁹ Isaac quoted *Pennsylvania Packet*, May 17 and 24, June 7, 1773; Pencak, “Jews and Anti-Semitism,” 365-408; idem, *Jews*, 196-200; *JOP*, 54-58; Bush quoted Mathias Bush to Barnard Gratz, November 7, 1769, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 5, Folder 36, AJA. For Lyon and Jacob, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 16, 1769 and July 19 and 29, 1772; other examples, see November 27 and December 4, 1760; indentured servants and poor, see May 5, 1763, January 10, 1771, January 9, 1772, June 30 and November 25, 1773, May 3 and March 29, 1775, January 10, March 21, and August 21, 1776; *New York Gazette*, July 13 and 27, 1772; quotes Myer Josephson to Barnard Gratz, February 18, 1764, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, AJHS, translation in Neumann, “Letters,” 91-94. For communal philanthropic organizations in Philadelphia, see *JOP*, 264-81; *CAJ*, especially Vol. II; Haym Salomon to Uncle, July 10, 1783, *AJA* 27 (1975), 212-13.

marginalization in public life. Whereas Jews utilized newspaper advertisements to craft their professional identities as merchants, by the revolutionary era newspapers functioned as essential tools for Jews to craft reputations that gained them political credibility as Whig partisans, and to express for the first time their identities as republican citizens, not subjects of a king. Yet another avenue toward cultural integration was military service. When war finally came, the British military required officers to swear a Christian oath. No such requirement existed for American officers. All American soldiers swore an oath upon enlistment—an oath not to Christianity but to the new national government. Jews enlisted in the Continental Army and Pennsylvania militia, including Isaac Franks, Solomon Bush, Benjamin Nones, Mordecai Sheftall, Jonas Phillips, Levy Andrew Levy, David Salisbury Franks, among others. Levy Andrew Levy oversaw prisoners at Lancaster and was charged with rooting out suspected Tories. Some enlisted as surgeons and physicians, such as Philip Moses Russell. Mordecai Levy publicly apologized for his previous claim that the Continental Congress was both radical and extralegal. Levy now claimed that his conduct “proceeded from... the rights of human nature.” Levy continued, “I am sorry for my guilt, and am ashamed,” but “I now believe... that Kings are no longer to be feared or obeyed” and “a corrupted British Ministry” must not “reduce the American Colonies to the lowest degree of slavery.” David Franks could have learned from Levy’s about-face and use of revolutionary language for cultural ends, namely to preserve his honor and reputation.¹⁰

A pervasive culture of fear and paranoia prevailed as Pennsylvania’s radical Whigs terrorized their neutral and loyalist neighbors. Radicals forced everyone in Pennsylvania to swear allegiance to the new government. Those who refused were stripped of their citizenship

¹⁰ *USJ*, I, 46, 67; *Pennsylvania Archives*, 5th Series, IV, 566, 6th Series, I, 46, 58, 63, 81, 188, 195, 261, 368, 591, 744. Levy quoted in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 19, 1775, and Andrew Levy, July 7, 1779.

and property and exiled. Samson and Moses Levy went further when they signed their names to a document renouncing their allegiances to the king. In Philadelphia, Quakers, whose pacifism led them to reject independence, felt the brunt of the hysteria. For their attempted neutrality, Quakers, whose influence dominated the colonial assembly leading up to the war, experienced brutal retaliation, murder, banishment, and disfranchisement at the hands of the radical wartime government, controlled now by zealous patriots and Protestant Christians who seized Quakers' assets at whim. Even Protestant clergy acted as intermediaries between Whig lay, middling folk and Congress and other Whig leaders; they espoused the moral dimensions of revolutionaries' providential destiny. When Protestant leaders declared a day of fast in Philadelphia to achieve this end, Quaker merchants refused to close their businesses. Radicals thus attacked Quakers' shops in retaliation. Quakers petitioned Whig leaders to restore their freedoms and property, which availed little. Friends enjoyed equality again only after 1786. In this atmosphere, the signing of the Declaration of Independence was an important moment for Jews, many of whom came to identify their own fight for equality with Whigs' fight against Great Britain.¹¹

Yet, the revolution did not achieve political equality for Jews. It held, however, the promise of equality in the Declaration of Independence, a document in which Jefferson made moral claims to natural rights for all citizens. Haym Salomon, confidant of Robert Morris, declared that he was "warmly attached to America...[and] to the revolutionary cause," adding "all men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights...enjoyment of life and liberty...happiness and safety." Isaac Franks, Salomon's brother-in-law, friend of

¹¹ Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, especially chapters 6-7. For treatment of loyalists, see Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York, 2011), 5-109. Anti-Quaker violence and prejudice, see Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, 207-8, and Frost, *Perfect*, 64-73; Tara Strauch, "Open for Business: Philadelphia Quakers, Thanksgiving, and the Limits of Revolutionary Religious Freedom," *Church History* 85 (2016), 133-39; McBride, *Pulpit*, 31-32, and chapters 2-3 for politicization of Protestant clergy. For Levys, see Certified List Renouncing Allegiance to King, August 9, 1778, Levy Papers, AJHS.

Morris and Rush and aide to Washington, enlisted in the Continental Army and when he heard the Declaration of Independence read aloud, Franks declared, “we *all*, as with one voice, declared that we would support and defend the same with our lives and fortunes.” In Philadelphia, a local printer and enlightened moderate, John Dunlap, printed handbills of an emergent nation’s mantra, that Nature’s God bestowed natural rights to all without exception. Jonas Phillips, a storeowner in Philadelphia, purchased Dunlap’s handbill. So excited was Phillips at the language and the freedoms it promised that he enclosed the handbill with a Yiddish letter sent to his mother in Amsterdam. Phillips also sent a copy of the Declaration of Independence to a friend in Amsterdam because “Americans have already made themselves like the states of Holland.” The inclusive nature of such comments and behavior shows that Jews’ ideals and language mirrored those of enlightened moderates. When volunteering to fight against the British, Jewish soldiers expressed their belief in the “leveling” nature of the revolutionary message. Jews also recognized the same lucrative financial opportunities that imperial warfare offered the merchant class in the colonial period and took advantage of renewed warfare much as they had during the French and Indian War and the frontier skirmishes thereafter.¹²

The promise of equality was reaffirmed when the First Continental Congress ensured Catholics in Quebec, that “the transcendent nature of freedom” rose above religious

¹² Pencak claimed that “every Jewish male in Pennsylvania with the possible exception of David Franks... joined the Revolution.” Immigrant Jews from Holland, three of whom indentured themselves, arrived in Philadelphia, joined the American cause and thus earned their physical freedom, see Pencak, *Jews*, 186, 203; *AJD*, 399-401; Salomon and Franks quoted in *USJ*, I, 46, 67. Numerous Jewish merchants supplied the Continental Army with provisions and never received compensation, and thus petitioned Congress, see *JOP*, 76-8, 82-3. Phillips in *Pennsylvania Packet*, December 18, 1776; Samuel Oppenheim, “Letter of Jonas Phillips,” *PAJHS* 25 (1917), 128-31. For Franks, Rush, and Morris, see “Narrative of Revolutionary War Service,” unpublished manuscript, April 6, 1818, Rush Recommendation for Franks, undated, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 14 and 17, AJHS. Franks also loaned money to the War Department, which was repaid much later, see Office of Accounts of Isaac Franks, 1779, War Department, March 25, 1812, Payment to Franks, January 10, 1788, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 15, AJHS. Salomon married Rachel Franks, Isaac’s sister, see Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 58, AJA.

discrimination. As Benedict Arnold prepared to invade Quebec, George Washington admonished him, “to protect and support the free exercise of the religion of the country.” “While we are contending for our own liberty,” Washington noted, “we should be very cautious not to violate the rights of conscience in others.” Those committed to the moderate Enlightenment, like Washington, Benjamin Rush, and Franklin, saw religion as a fountain of moral standards, which served a useful social function, but they also tended to oppose states paying churches. They promoted the proliferation of religious institutions as a form of social stability but they also feared religious zealotry. Such sentiments pointed the way for eventual Jewish equality, protected in law. At the local level, Philadelphia’s moderates became members of the Republican faction. But the process of state formation created ambiguity between the laws of the states and the laws of the national government, or the Continental Congress. In many ways, such discrepancies resembled those between Parliament and colonial governments. Congress passed a law that required “members” of the colonies to swear allegiance to the laws of the “United Colonies,” which made adult Jewish men “members” but not citizens of the body politic. Because states enjoyed autonomy and sovereignty within their borders, minority groups of all kinds (not only Quakers) found themselves excluded from Pennsylvania’s political culture.¹³

At the outset of revolution, Pennsylvania’s politics resembled a civil war, which complicated the implementation of religious freedom and emancipation for non-Christians because a rival faction, the Constitutionals, built a political coalition with Protestant clergy and laity, including Henry Mühlenberg. When Constitutionals adopted a single-chamber assembly, too much democracy led to religious fanaticism at the hands of politicized Protestants. Although most political thinkers at the time espoused rhetoric in favor of rule by the people,

¹³ Washington quoted in Chyet, “Rights,” 20-22, quotes on 21; Congress quoted in *Journals of Continental Congress* (Yorktown, 1778), I, 118, Vol. II, 229, 367; Sehat, *Myth*, 17.

most also feared that the masses could not be trusted because of their moral lasciviousness and licentiousness. The genteel classes had ruled traditionally as a check on democracy, which, they believed, restrained social decay. But the new constitution removed the aristocratic chamber and thus silenced elites who believed that mob-rule tended toward immorality and social ruin. These considerations led Protestant clergy to begin espousing political principles and revolutionary ideology in providential terms, which meant protecting the body politic from subversive moral forces, like infidel Jews. Benjamin Franklin led the moderate Republicans who now looked to religion, albeit a more universal one than Protestantism, as a means to constrain the masses. Religion, many believed, offered a form of social control which checked the worst excesses of democracy. Franklin once remarked, “[T]alking against religion is unchaining a tiger; the beast let loose may worry his liberator.” Moderates like Franklin, whose Enlightenment sensibilities led them to favor protections against religious control of the state, fought back, often with the political theories espoused by Jefferson and Madison—the debates over separation of church from state. Popular sovereignty thus needed an inclusive religion to harness democracy and to ensure social tranquility and good governance. The state of Pennsylvania, however, also needed to harness religion, Protestantism in particular. This required a radical departure from conventional wisdom because it sought to place a wide range of behavior and belief out of the reach of the coercive arms of state power. But, as the previous chapters have shown, the malleability of religious freedom allowed Jews entrée into public social spaces. With more opportunities for various personal religious expressions in public life, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, and Presbyterians advocated for state monetary support of their

churches and moral legislation to shield the social order from corruption. As a result, proponents of separation persuaded few people, at least at first, to the chagrin of their Jewish friends.¹⁴

The leader of German Lutherans, Henry Mühlenberg led the group of radical Presbyterians and Lutherans within the Constitutionals' coalition, who took control of the functions of government. Armed with a new state constitution and a heightened awareness of infidels in their midst, radicals persecuted dissenters, Quakers, Catholics, and other nonconformists, and passed moral legislation rooted in a Protestant ethos, which ensured their definitions of civic virtue dominated the social order. But they also eliminated property requirements for the franchise and, what became a major benefit to Jewish public freedom, they also affirmed in Article VII all property rights for religious bodies. Although radicals intended to protect only Protestant churches, it became landmark legislation that paved a legal path toward construction of a Jewish public sanctuary. Despite this, elites, Jew and gentile, spoke out against excessive popular power and Protestant moral superiority, and a coalition was born in opposition, the Republicans. Jews identified as local, not national (at least not yet) Republicans, as did most of their enlightened and moderate patrons. Unlike the colonial period, the radicalism of the revolutionary period—especially after 1776 when local politics devolved into chaos as factions battled for power—emboldened Jews to act in ways unthinkable in the recent past.¹⁵

Pennsylvania's new state constitution dominated newspaper editorials and sparked public debates between Republicans and Constitutionals regarding the proper place of Jews in popular politics. Section 2 reaffirmed Penn's "Liberty of the Mind" thesis, which ensured

¹⁴ Sehat, *Myth*, 16-17; Schlereth, *Infidels*; McBride, *Pulpit*, 17-19; Wood, *Creation*, 83-90; Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (New York, 1996), 310-16. Franklin quoted in Merle Curti, *The Growth of American Thought* (New York, 1964), 104-08, quote on 107.

¹⁵ Sehat, *Myth*, 4; *EAJ*, I, 251-54; Frank George Franklin, *The Legislative History of Naturalization in the United States* (New York, 1969), 1-2; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 253-61; Frost, *Perfect*, 64-75; Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1992), 145-68.

freedom of worship and disestablishment; Section 6 stipulated that males over age 21 who resided in Pennsylvania could vote after taking an oath. Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Paine ensured that Section 10 required a religious test oath, but one that mirrored the religious universalism of deists and Unitarians, not the exclusionism of Christians: “I do believe in one God, the Creator and Governor of the universe.” Local Christians and their clergy leaders, including Henry Mühlenberg and Moravian Bishop John Ettwein, wasted little time mobilizing an opposition faction, whose agenda was to bar from public offices all non-Christians and freethinkers and to establish a state-sanctioned Christianity. According to Pennsylvania’s Bill of Rights, only a man “who acknowledges the being of a God” would enjoy civil rights. A Christian oath contradicted this provision. Protestants attacked the oath’s liberality in newspapers anyway. Once more, a correspondent borrowed from Shylock to underscore a fear that Jews might “become in time not only our greatest landholders, but principal officers in the legislative or executive parts of our government,” which might lead to Christian “slavery.” This was an allusion to a popular Whig trope tied to British tyranny, which Protestant pundits refashioned and applied to Jews.¹⁶

A writer who assumed the penname “A Follower of Christ” invoked William Penn, whose political theories ensured that only professing Christians served as political leaders. “This was a bar against professed Deists, Jews, Mohamedans, and other enemies of Christ,” this conservative pundit exclaimed, “which is now removed if the declaration, section ten, remains unaltered.” Another worried, “If blasphemers of Christ... may be Legislators... and Presidents in Pennsylvania, Wo unto the city! Wo unto the land!” Radical Protestants wanted protections that

¹⁶ Correspondent and constitution quoted in *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, September 10, 24, and 26 1776; Frost, *Perfect*, 64-65; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 255; quoted in Sehat, *Myth*, 17-18. For slavery trope, see Bailyn, *Ideological*.

an immoral unbeliever would not assume any office. Mühlenberg spoke on their behalf when he noted that religious liberty did not protect, in Sehat's words, "the rampaging godless...the forces of wickedness...always ready to mount an assault upon godly moral norms." Mühlenberg and other radicals saw the liberal language, "as if a Christian people were ruled by Jews, Turks, Spinozists, Deists, [and] perverted naturalists [atheistic materialists]." Much of this religious rhetoric mirrored London's public debates regarding the 1753 "Jew Bill" when Protestant pundits worried aloud about the Jewish erosion of their moral authority.¹⁷

Mühlenberg sent a representative to Franklin who underscored that religion, Protestant morality in particular, was necessary to cultivate virtue in a republican society. Franklin, Rush, and Paine fought diligently once more to keep the deist language intact but lost the battle. Because most state leaders of the radical faction were Protestant artisans, mechanics, and farmers they fell under the sway of popular pressure and thus reworded the oath to require deference to Christianity, which excluded nonconformist and non-Christian thinkers: "I do acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration." The constitution also connected Protestant moralism to virtue. "Laws for the encouragement of virtue, and prevention of vice and immorality, shall be made and constantly kept in force, and provision shall be made for their due execution," it read. The Protestant clergy led by Mühlenberg had won but they wanted even more explicit protections for Protestant privileges. Radicals thereafter reinforced their Protestant "moral establishment" with punitive moral laws, not unlike those implemented by early Quakers. Jews, though, were not without advocates for their

¹⁷ Quoted *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, September 26, 1776; quoted *Pennsylvania Packet*, October 29, 1776; Mühlenberg quoted in Sehat, *Myth*, 18. For other examples, see *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, October 10, 1776. For similarities between "Jew Bill" and Pennsylvania's 1776 constitution, see Justin Champion, "Toleration and Citizenship in Enlightenment England: John Toland and the Naturalization of the Jews, 1714-1753," in Ole Peter Grell and Roy Porter, eds., *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), 133-52.

equality. Concerned by the new constitution's tether to Christianity, Rush, a moderate with Unitarian sympathies, claimed it contradicted the state's bill of rights, which required only a belief in God to obtain civil rights. A newspaper correspondent, likewise, criticized Mühlenberg as a demagogue. Although most adult white males, assuming they met specific requirements that varied from state to state, voted in most states, eleven of the thirteen states at the end of the revolution forced all political office holders to swear a Christian oath of allegiance. Jews refused to take Pennsylvania's Christian oath save Levy Marks, a local tailor, Mason, and cousin of the Gratz brothers and Benjamin Nones's father-in-law. Most therefore remained excluded from wielding political power. To make matters even worse, when news that Jews planned to build a public sanctuary reached Mühlenberg, who was imprisoned by the British for his Whig sympathies, he led a movement from prison in protest of a Jewish house of worship. To the relief of Jews, though, the public debate over the proper role of religion in politics in Pennsylvania did not dissipate, it became enflamed.¹⁸

Jewish partisans, however, did not sit idly by and allow their politicized Christian neighbors to deprive them of their natural rights, much as they did in the colonial period. Instead, they crafted defenses of Jews and Judaism in newspapers, cultivated public reputations, and delivered petitions to Whig leaders that demanded political emancipation. Jews became active participants in an emergent dissenting tradition and age-old honor culture. In light of the recent scholarship by Saul Cornell and Joanne Freeman, whose work focuses on the public

¹⁸ Quotes in Sehat, *Myth*, 14-20; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 19, 1777; *JOP*, 81-2; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 253-55; *USJ*, I, 80-1; Thompson Westcott, *Names of Persons Who Took the Oath of Allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1865), xv-xvi, 3; *EAJ*, II, 521; Second Will of Michael Gratz, June 15, 1765, *BMG*, 74-75; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 13, 1767; *Pennsylvania Archives*, Third Series, XIV, 164, 193; Nones, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 7, AJA.

sphere's functionality, it is important that scholars consider how Jews used the public sphere to achieve emancipation and political integration. Doing so underscores Jewish agency, not victimization, in this gradual unfolding of equality. Freeman has shown that elites utilized their reputations and honor as political currency that they could spend to further their political careers. Jews did so, too, and utilized the social and literary spaces of the public sphere to establish patronage networks that provided them credibility to mold opinion and eventually favors from Whig patrons.¹⁹

Beyond financial advantages, one's honor in elite culture could foment political favors from Whig patrons, which meant first government employment and, eventually, emancipation. The Gratz brothers sought to gain a public office from long-time associate and friend, George Croghan, but this was unusual because most Jews looked to rising Whig patrons, not to fading imperial patrons. David Franks learned this lesson the hard way. More important still, Solomon Bush, David Franks and his cousin David S. Franks, and Jewish émigrés who recently arrived in Pennsylvania, such as Benjamin Nones and Haym Salomon, utilized newspapers to underscore their public masculinity as soldiers and defenders of Whigs from the chains of British tyranny. Masculinity as soldiers strengthened their characters, honor, and reputations, which is why they stood a better than good chance of gaining patronage, while the Gratzes did not. To their chagrin, though, the results were mixed. Solomon Bush, like many other Jews, believed his sacrifices on the battlefield and, later, his loyalty to a political party, earned him and his Jewish

¹⁹ The wide dissemination of newspapers, a medium for mass public consumption, transformed the American public sphere, a process that intensified throughout the eighteenth century, especially in the decade of the 1790s. Jews took advantage of print culture and an emergent opposition coalition, the Democratic-Republicans, whose success "was due to their recognition that control of the public sphere was crucial," Cornell wrote. Elsewhere, Cornell argues that 35 Democratic societies formed, reinvigorating the public sphere, its members viewing "the press and the Democratic-Republican Societies as a way to empower the people to fulfill their role as guardians of their liberty," see *Other Founders*, 74-82, 99-105, 109-20, 173, 196, 217; Pasley, *Tyranny*, 105-131; Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*, 114-26, 148-58.

brethren, not social acceptance and economic favors alone but also political patronage. Veteran Jewish officers, then, believed the war had equipped them with the requisite leadership skills to serve as public servants and thus requested government jobs from their Whig patrons. And because the national government, under the authority of the Continental Congress, did not require a religious oath to obtain an appointment, Jews turned their attention to the national political stage during the 1780s.²⁰

Solomon Bush, whose father Mathias arrived in Philadelphia from Prague and fought in the French and Indian War, enlisted in the Continental Army as a captain. Bush fought, in his words, to “revenge the wrongs of my injured country, and became adjutant general of Pennsylvania’s militia.” Promoted to major, Bush was shot in the leg during the defense of Philadelphia, and thereafter promoted to lieutenant colonel. He was taken prisoner when the British took Philadelphia. Following his release, Bush petitioned the Continental Congress for a position in the Treasury, but no position was available. Bush, undaunted, applied for a position as health officer in Pennsylvania. Passed over again, Bush traveled to London, where he sought medical attention for his war wound that had left him nearly crippled. Bush learned of New York’s Captain Watson and his crew who were seized and impressed by the British Navy. Bush intervened and successfully negotiated the release of Watson and his men. Believing that he had finally demonstrated his mettle for a diplomatic post, Bush exclaimed to Washington his love of the United States “whose liberties I have bled in her cause.” For his efforts, Bush requested political patronage. “I doubt not of rendering my country many services,” Bush wrote, because “I have nothing in view but the prosperity of America.” Although Bush had a large family, and his injured leg limited his ability to perform physical tasks, he couched his letter to Washington in

²⁰ Fish, *Gratz*, 81-132; Kettner, *Citizenship*, 213-47.

the idealistic language of Anglo-American Whigs. “I do not speak from interested or pecuniary principles,” Bush noted, for “I will undertake to serve my country from the same principles I step’d forward to the field.” In return, Bush did not say, he expected favors from the likes of Washington. Unlike Jefferson who did not reply to Nones, Washington replied to Bush and thanked him for his loyalty and services to the country but made no mention of an available post. Bush, though, applied again to Washington for a position in the naval office at Philadelphia, listing Robert Morris as a reference. Later, when Washington promoted Timothy Pickering to Secretary of War, Bush applied for the vacated position of Postmaster General. Washington once more did not offer the job to Bush.²¹

David Franks, whose social and economic standing in Philadelphia was great by any standard, provides an example of how difficult it was for Jews with deep connections on both sides of the Atlantic to navigate the storms of war. Despite the fact that many of his Jewish brethren benefitted tremendously as veterans and supporters of the war, Franks played a dangerous game of duplicity as military supplier. His brother’s firm in London, Nesbitt, Drummond, & Moses Franks, received yet another contract from the imperial government. Moses appointed his brother as their agent to supply British troops, which made David a conspicuous outsider among Constitutionalist Whigs. General Howe appointed Franks the official supplier of their American prisoners as well. With a commercial and professional network already in place, Franks appointed as sub-contractor his most trusted partner, Joseph Simon, in Lancaster; he also appointed Myer Hart as agent at Easton. At about the same time,

²¹ Quoted Solomon Bush to Henry Lazarus, November 15, 1777, *EAJ*, II, 56-81; “A Letter of Miss Rebecca Franks, 1778,” *PMHB* 16 (1892), 216-18; *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, July 16, 1776; Bush, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 5, Folder 36, AJA; Samuel Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots: The Jews in the American Revolution* (Westport, 1975), 25-7; Gaillard Hunt, *Calendar of Applications for Office during the Presidency of Washington* (Washington, D.C., 1901), 20, 46.

George Washington, who had known Franks since their time working together during the French and Indian War, requested that Franks appoint a deputy to supply British prisoners held in Massachusetts. By June 1777, Congress, encouraged by Robert Morris, Washington, and Benjamin Franklin, appointed Franks deputy to the Commissary-General of Prisoners, Elias Boudinot. Franks's position, however, was a precarious one because Franks eventually supplied Washington's troops and, after Howe captured Philadelphia, he supplied British troops as well. Congress, though, approved of Franks's duplicity because a notation in the journals of their proceedings refers to Franks as "agent to the contractors for victualling the troops of the king of Great Britain," though many Whig leaders questioned Franks's competency. The problems for the Franks brothers resembled their problems as "Suffering Traders" because they advanced their own money to fulfill the terms of their contracts and the British once more failed to pay them.²²

While the British occupied Philadelphia, Rebecca, David's daughter, and her cousin, Oliver DeLancey, Jr. entertained Howe and his officers during extravagant fêtes and parties. The famous spy, Major John André, painted her picture. To David Franks, a genteel socialite and influential member of Philadelphia's merchant class, it was not so easy to shed his identification as a British subject. His family's wealth and influence depended upon it. Not only did Franks's social connections and business associates include ruling elites of Great Britain and America but also included soldiers and officers of both armies—to say nothing of his familial connections, which was a web of personal relationships woven through the social fabric of Philadelphia, New York City, and London. Perhaps his positive reputation and social prestige among both colonials

²² In 1775, Whigs established prison stockades in Easton, Reading, and Lancaster, then Congress approached Franks regarding provisioning them, quote Stern, *Franks*, 113-35; Articles concerning Franks's Three Arrests and Subsequent Banishment to New York for Alleged Pro-English Loyalties, various dates, Franks Small Collection, SC-3637, AJA; Account with Joseph Simon regarding supplying British Prisoners at Lancaster, PA, November 6, 1777, Meyer Hart's certificate regarding David Frank's treatment of British Prisoners, March, 19, 1778, Washington to President of Congress, February 14, 1776, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 8 and 17, AJHS; Pencak, *Jews*, 204-05; JOP, 86-87; JCC, IV, 116, VIII, 422; EAJ, II, 94.

and British leaders led him to make attempts to profit from both sides; perhaps he figured the war would end in stalemate. Moses even warned David not to trust the British, considering their history of non-payment; this time, it amounted to £7,000. Shortly thereafter Moses and his Christian partners in London declined to sign a new contract. Whatever his reasons, David, to his detriment, persisted and accumulated a £20,000 debt. The fraternization with British dandies at the height of revolutionary fervor nearly ruined Franks financially, tarnished his public reputation, undermined his masculinity as a Whig defender of republican principles, and placed him under grave suspicion after Whig leaders returned to Philadelphia in late 1778. The Continental Congress removed Franks from office and ordered General Benedict Arnold, the commander of the American forces in Philadelphia, to imprison Franks “for writing letters of an improper nature and dangerous tendency to the enemy.” Joseph Simon, whose letters to his long-time friend and partner became cold, assumed Franks’s former position, probably at Washington’s behest. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court set bail at £5000. Simon paid half of the bail and, one among many of David’s gentile patrons, General John Cadwalader of the Pennsylvania militia, paid the other half. That a staunch Whig Republican risked his own reputation to assist his Jewish friend underscores the closeness of their friendship, but also shows that David was no ordinary merchant. He and his family had been military suppliers for at least four decades and well-connected in London, New York, and Philadelphia. But these considerations were not enough to save Franks’s honor from the suspicion of radical Constitutionalists.²³

²³ Quotes in *JCC*, XII, 1032-33, 1070, 1076, XIII, 123; *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, October 21, 1778; *JOP*, 86-92; *EAJ*, II, 94, 108-09; Pencak, *Jews*, 204-05; Transcript of order for Arrest of David Franks, February 8, 1778, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 8, AJHS; Stern, *Franks*, 1-5, 136-77. In January 1778, Joseph Simon wrote a letter to Elijah Etting at York, requesting that Etting speak to members of Congress regarding back payments to Franks. Simon then demanded that Franks pay with specie. Franks was caught in an impossible situation with both sides demanding payment in specie but paying their own debts in depreciated Continental currency, see Joseph Simon to Elijah Etting, January 29, 1778, Joseph Simon to David Franks, April 9, 1778 and May 12, 1778, *BMG*, 168-70.

In two letters, Franks mildly criticized the actions of Congress. He attempted to keep them hidden, perhaps his greatest error, but Whigs intercepted them, and one in particular gained their attention. Congress passed a resolution: “the contents of the said letter manifest a disposition and intentions inimical to the safety and liberty of the United States,” therefore, “Mr. Franks...abused the confidence reposed in him by Congress.” After a week or so, Franks’s imprisonment ended and Congress, at the behest of Jewish patrons like Morris and Franklin no doubt, acquitted him of any wrong-doing. But his problems had just begun. Although Franks’s letter revealed nothing of importance to the British, he addressed it to his brother, Moses, whose close ties to imperial authority raised Whigs’ eyebrows in Philadelphia, to say nothing of his close connections to Howe, André, and other familial connections to British royalty. The war had made it impractical for David to send it directly to Moses, and he could not very well send it directly to his brother-in-law, Oliver DeLancey, by this time a brigadier general in charge of a loyalist brigade. Instead, Franks chose to send the letter to his wife’s cousin, Captain Thomas William Moore, who served under DeLancey. Moore was to give the letter to DeLancey, who in turn was to give it to Moses in London. In early 1779, Pennsylvania’s radical Constitutionalists arrested Franks again and the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania tried him “on a charge of misdemeanor in giving intelligence to the enemy at New York.”²⁴

From prison, Franks petitioned the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania for permission to settle his accounts with the British authorities at New York City. Unsure of Franks’s loyalty, state leaders forwarded his request to Congress whose leaders, many of them

²⁴ Quotes in *JCC*, XII, 1032-33, 1070, 1076, and publicly broadcasted in *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, October 21, 1778; *Pennsylvania Archives*, III, 395-96; Stern, *Franks*, 1; *Pennsylvania Packet*, October 22, November 17, 1778; Joseph Simon to Board of War, November 5, 1778, *BMG*, 173. Radicals’ worst fears were affirmed when, in 1781, David’s son, Moses, enlisted in the British ranks, see Rebecca Franks to Abigail Hamilton, August 10, 1781, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA.

patrons of Franks and other Jews, approved it. His clerk, Patrick Rice, traveled to New York to demand payments in specie, not worthless paper money, from British commanders. Once his family's closest patrons, the British refused to pay all of their debts to him. With mounting debts, Franks again sent a letter to his old friend Major André, by this time Adjutant-General of the British Army. Franks also petitioned Congress several times but was repeatedly ignored. Moses, meanwhile, worked his connections in London on his brother's behalf. The Lords of the Treasury referred the matter to Sir Henry Clinton who, not knowing how to act, referred it back to London. From prison, Franks continued his quest for remuneration, much as he did in his quest to recoup losses he sustained as a "Suffering Trader," as well as the many lands seized by Whigs. Forms of patronage had worked for Franks and his family time and again during the colonial period and it worked once more, at least in part. His brother, Moses, asked his close friend and former classmate, Sir Henry Clinton, to use his influence to free David from prison. David was released but a culture of fear and radicalism fomented by war led Franks to miscalculate the measure of his influence among Whig leaders and, because his brother-patron Moses could do nothing more for him, that miscalculation cost him dearly.

Franks's trial was short and the jury delivered a not guilty verdict, which infuriated radical Constitutionalists, especially the anti-Semitic German congregation led by Mühlenberg. In an attempt to mold public opinion against Franks and his Republican supporters, Constitutionalists published the contents of Franks's letter in newspapers, which sparked public debate regarding Franks's honor. In it, Franks celebrated the acquittal for treason of "Billy Hamilton," the brother of his son-in-law—his daughter Abby had married Andrew Hamilton—of the loyalist Hamilton family. Franks also told Moses, "People are taken and confined at the pleasure of every scoundrel. Oh, what a situation Britain has left its friends." Franks's admission

that he was sympathetic to the British, not Whig revolutionaries, probably aroused the ire of his political opponents against him, especially Protestant anti-Semites. It did not help Franks's case that his other daughter Rebecca married Sir Henry Johnson, a British officer in the war. A former Quaker turned beer brewer, Timothy Matlack, radical Whig Constitutionalist and Secretary of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, wrote public missives that lambasted Franks, his Republican allies, and the jury's verdict. Matlack argued that Franks's letter amounted to treason because it sought to inform the British that commitments among Philadelphians to the patriot cause was waning, and Congress's ability to continue the war was limited. Matlack publicly suggested that Franks be hanged as a spy, the eventual fate of Franks's friend Major André. He even questioned the prudence of due process for traitors during wartime, a curious gesture because he had helped craft the new constitution. Other radical pundits joined Matlack in denouncing Franks as a traitor.

Newspapers, though, provided Franks's Republican defenders with an opportunity to regain his reputation and honor as a Republican Whig partisan. Davis Bevan defended Franks but also defended juries as central to emergent notions of revolutionary idealism. Addressed "To the Public," "A.B." defended Franks's character; pointed out that Congress had approved of Franks's services to the British; underscored that the letter was addressed to his brother, Moses, and sent privately because of familial channels already in place; and, finally, "A.B." offered a counterpoint to Matlack when he claimed that "trial by Jury" was a cornerstone "of good order in society." Another defender pointed out that a close reading of the letter reveals nothing to suggest that Franks was a Tory. And that Franks was correct in pointing out that due process was necessary in a purported "free society," or it risked masking tyranny as patriotism. Other moderate Republicans defended Franks's credentials as an enlightened merchant and defended

juries against Matlack, whose rhetoric reflected his working-class credentials as a Constitutionalist partisan. As historian William Pencak points out, such debates reflect two rival visions of revolutionary idealism. Elites of Republican circles, including Jews, recognized that exchanges among belligerent gentlemen was normal and justified because elites trusted the honor and honesty of their social equals, the very elitism that Matlack, a notorious cockfighter whose many business failings landed him in debtors' prison, found treasonous and against the principles of the revolution. Although he lost his Whig commission, Franks was acquitted of treason. Yet the British refused to reimburse him, though Franks was not without his supporters in Republican ranks. Early in 1780, Franks even brought "Suffering Traders," many of them Republican partisans, to a meeting in his Philadelphia home to scheme once more at plans for remuneration but, in Philadelphia's radicalized milieu, radical Whig Constitutionalist seized his fortune and assets and expelled him from Pennsylvania. Franks not only lost his reputation, honor, fortune, and Whig credentials, but also his manhood as a defender of enlightened, if elitist, revolutionary idealism. Republicans, though, enjoyed the last laugh because they removed Matlack from office after the war and revised the constitution which, fittingly, emancipated Jews.²⁵

Especially instructive is the comparison between Franks's fate with that of Samuel Seabury, an unapologetic loyalist and Anglican cleric. Seabury was a vocal critic of the patriot cause in New York, accusing Congress of acting in the interests of the merchant class alone, ironic because Franks was a prominent merchant who felt the brunt of class antagonisms from

²⁵ *JCC*, XIII, 123; *Pennsylvania Archives*, VII, 180; *JOP*, 89-91; quotes in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 12, 1778; *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 29, May 13, 20, 1779; "A True Whig," "Matlack," "A Juror," "Diogenes," "A Citizen," "Sidney," "Davis Bevan," and "Cato," *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 30, May 1, 4, 6, 13, 18, 20, 1779; Nesbitt, Drummond, and Franks to David Franks, March 6, 1779, *AJD*, 241-60. Matlack's vitriol was directed at Franks's behavior, not his Jewishness, see Solomon Bush to Timothy Matlack, September 27, 1779, *EAJ*, II, 74-76, 94, 108-9, despite Pencak's suggestion that Franks's ordeal was driven by anti-Semitism, see *Jews*, 204-08.

disgruntled working-class partisans. When American forces liberated New York, Seabury did not experience retaliation from radicals but Franks certainly did. In fact, Seabury fled New York to Connecticut where he received another high-level position in the Protestant Episcopal Church, which underscores the double standard between Protestantism and Judaism in the war-torn early republic. Whereas Seabury's prestige as an Anglican rector shielded him from jingoistic expressions of Whig nationalism, Franks's determination to obtain the debts owed him, unfortunately, squared with the prevailing Jewish stereotypes among some Protestant radicals who now controlled Pennsylvania's politics. Radicals' smear campaign (or character assassination) of David Franks was rooted in the revolutionary fervor of the time, not exactly sustained anti-Jewish attacks. Many Philadelphians experienced such treatment, regardless of their religious persuasions. But his Judaism did nothing to help his case. That Franks was cast as an opportunistic Jewish Tory merchant and subsequently lost all and Seabury, who certainly acted in his own self-interest, enjoyed post-revolutionary affluence as a clergyman despite his vociferous denunciations of Whigs underscores the consequences of individuals' decision-making amid the uncertainties of war. Often it was not a simple choice between patriotism and loyalism because, as David Franks demonstrates, local politics and even one's religion among a slew of other factors complicated such decisions. In a domestic civil war, newspaper culture, friendship, and patronage, which had worked so well for Jews, had significant limitations.²⁶

Aware of those limitations, other Jews bypassed both newspapers and petitions in their demands. David Salisbury Franks returned to Philadelphia with General Benedict Arnold, along

²⁶ David Franks to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, November 7, 1778, David Franks to Major André, December 2, 1779, Franks Small Collection, SC-3657, SC-3655, AJA; Moses Franks to Sir Grey Cooper, December 22, 1778, Harold Korn, ed., "Three Early Letters," *PAJHS* 27 (1922), 254; *JOP*, 86-92; *EAJ*, II, 94, 108-09; *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 13 and 29, and May 13, 1779; *JCC*, XII, 123; *Pennsylvania Archives*, VII, 180. Major André was executed as a spy by American forces for his part in Arnold's defection. For Seabury and decision-making among clergy in the war, see McBride, *Pulpit*, 68-80.

with nearly one thousand Jewish refugees who had fled regions occupied by British forces. Franks demonstrated his radicalism when, after years of infighting among Whigs—radicals, Constitutionalists, and Republicans—for control of Pennsylvania’s government, the economic turmoil caused by warfare led to mob violence. Radical Whigs, who espoused an egalitarian vision, argued for governmental price control, and accused loyalist merchants of price gouging. The debate spilled into the public square when a hundred or so militiamen, Franks among them, captured five loyalist merchants. Marching them through the streets of Philadelphia, the militia passed by the house of James Wilson, a conservative lawyer and politician who eventually defended the loyalists, when a shot rang out. A skirmish ensued, leaving eight men dead, another seventeen wounded. Franks was arrested, but quickly pardoned, which shows his influence among leaders in the government, particularly Robert Morris. That Franks participated in mob action suggests that some Jews were prepared to use violence to achieve their demands when mere rhetoric did not redress their grievances.²⁷

Although David Franks’s results were of a decidedly mixed nature, his cousin utilized newspapers in far more productive ways. David S. Franks met Benedict Arnold in Montreal, where Franks lived before moving back to his native Philadelphia, and later served under him at West Point. Becoming his primary benefactor, Arnold promoted Franks to major. But Arnold’s patronage came with steep costs. He and Franks planned to enter into business together at war’s end but Arnold got them both into trouble when his profiteering from an embargo placed on loyalists entered the purview of the public. Franks saved his reputation by claiming in newspapers that the document which suggested Franks’s involvement was nothing but his plans to enter into business with Arnold. It worked. Franks regained his honor and continued in the

²⁷ Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 51; *JOP*, 92-93.

army. As an officer, Franks gave orders of a menial nature to none other than Timothy Matlack's son William who complained aloud but to little avail. Arnold's defection to the British, however, caused some to question Franks's loyalty to the Whig cause, not unlike his cousin's experiences—charges probably led by the Matlacks once more. To clear his name, Franks requested an official investigation. At the military tribunal General Henry Knox testified to Franks's loyalty and it exonerated him. His reputation, though, was tarnished by the episode. Franks turned to George Washington for support to recover his damaged honor. Of Franks's character, Washington wrote that it “reflects the highest honor on him as an officer, distinguishes him as a zealous friend to the independence of America, and justly entitles him to the attention and confidence of his countrymen.” Franks made explicit the importance of his public image because “I had here nothing but a Name unspotted I trust, until Arnold's baseness” undermined his honor. Franks felt compelled to explain “the extraordinary conduct of my late General [Arnold]” to his “countrymen.” “Assertions without proof have been received as established facts,” Franks wrote, “and my reputation on this account injured and aspersed.” He had returned to Philadelphia to defend his “honour, and exonerate...[his] character.” Franks hoped to “merit the good opinion of my fellow citizens and countrymen.” Newspapers were central in his quest to regain his credibility among Whig partisans, which worked out in his favor. With his honor regained, he continued to serve the Continental Army and remained a respected Whig partisan. His honor and masculinity as a soldier determined his agency in politics.²⁸

David S. Franks shows the intersection of newspaper culture with popular politics, the value of one's reputation, and how such considerations could lead to the favors of powerful

²⁸ Washington quoted Reznick, *Patriots*, 28-30; Franks quoted *Pennsylvania Packet*, October 14, 1780; *JOP*, 95; David S. Franks to John Jay, January 29, 1779; Franks to Elisha Sheldon, August 9, 1780; Franks to George Washington, July 4, 1778, October 16, 1780, November 24, 1780; Washington to Franks, October 21, 1780, David S. Franks Small Collection, SC-3661, AJA; Pencak, *Jews*, 209-10.

Whig patrons. Franks signed a Canadian petition sent to London requesting a representative assembly for the province, and then volunteered in the American army when it retreated from Canada. Following the first skirmishes at Lexington and Concord, Franks was imprisoned at Montreal for expressing his Whig sympathies by insulting the king in public. When American General Richard Montgomery invaded Canada and took control of Montreal, Franks, who was released from prison, provided the soldiers with supplies, loaned money to Montgomery, and even paid American soldiers with his own funds. Years later, Franks, in a short biographical sketch of his life delivered to President Washington, wrote, “My good offices and purse were ever open to them, at a time when they had neither friend nor money.” But Franks had bigger plans, and thus turned to his friends, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and others for professional support and references. He had to wait for a diplomatic post of his own, but as a courier Franks delivered to France the ratified Treaty of Paris, which brought him into the orbit of several potential diplomatic patrons, such as Robert Morris, the Superintendent of Finance, who sent Franks on multiple diplomatic errands. Franks therefore met Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin in Paris, John Adams in London, and John Jay in Madrid. “I should certainly prefer being employed,” Franks told Jefferson, “in the service of my country to all others.” He admitted to John Jay that he asked the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Robert R. Livingston “to use his influence to get me employed as a Consul abroad.”²⁹

Regarding Franks, Jefferson wrote to James Madison,

My stay here has given me opportunities of making some experiments on my amanuensis Franks, perhaps better than I may have in France. He appears to have

²⁹ First Quote *MAJ*, I, 45-8; David S. Franks U.S. Applications for Office Under Washington, May 12, 1789, David S. Franks to Jefferson, February 11, 1787, April 23, 1787, Franks to Congress, September 12, 1782, David S. Franks Small Collections, SC-3661, AJA; Rezneck, *Patriots*, 28-34; *EAJ*, I, 251-54; *USJ*, I, 57; *JOP*, 42; second Quote Franks to Jefferson, January 1, 1785, *The Jewish Experience in America*, Abraham J. Karp, ed., 4 Vols. (Waltham, 1969), II, 36; third quote Franks to Jay, September 28, 1782, ed. Richard B. Morris, *John Jay: The Winning of the Peace, 1780-1784*, Vol. II (New York, 1980), 469.

a good enough heart, an understanding somewhat better than common but too little guard over his lips. I have marked him particularly in the company of women where he loses all power over himself and becomes almost frenzied... This is in some measure the vice of his age but it seems to be increased also by his peculiar constitution.

A few days later Madison concurred with Jefferson's assessment of Franks's odd demeanor and eccentric personality. But Franks had cultivated positive relationships with numerous patrons, whose honor and clout carried some significant weight. Jefferson finally recommended Franks as Vice Consul at Marseilles. He even loaned Franks money. "If I have been rightly informed, his [Franks's] services and sacrifices during the war have had their merit," Jefferson wrote to James Monroe, and concluded, "I promised him that I would communicate his wishes to some of my friends, that his pretensions might not be set aside for want of being known." In 1785, Franks accepted his post as Vice Consul at Marseilles, and a year later on behalf of his nation he successfully participated in trade negotiations with Morocco. Upon his return to Philadelphia, Franks petitioned President Washington for another diplomatic position, again pointing to his military services and diplomatic experience. "I have devoted Eleven Years of the best Part of my Life to the Service of my Country," Franks boasted, "I am bold to say, that I have ever been actuated by a disinterested zeal for her honor and prosperity." Washington, well aware of Franks because he had already publicly defended his honor in the Arnold affair, did not offer him a job, probably because he had no job to offer him. Franks turned once more to Jefferson—believing the two had "many marks of Friendship"—and requested to serve as the Secretary of State's personal assistant. Although Jefferson did not hire Franks, the two men remained friends.

That Franks refashioned his public image with the assistance of patrons and newspapers paid some dividends. Whereas elites continued to utilize the duel as a means to defend their

reputations and honor well into the nineteenth century, Jewish use of eighteenth-century newspaper culture to achieve similar results shows that the transition away from violence in honor culture had begun in earnest during the revolutionary crisis. And, most important, their non-violent use of print culture worked. Congress reinstated David S. Franks to the army and subsequently promoted him to lieutenant colonel, before Robert Morris sent him abroad as a diplomatic courier, which led to his consular appointment. One's reputation could surmount the limitations of their ethnicity and religious persuasion. Franks's public letter to his neighbors, then, demonstrated the cultural power of newspapers and pointed the way for Jews who utilized them in similar ways. If David Franks had been more mindful of his honor and the usefulness of newspaper culture in defending his reputation, he may well have regained his enviable position among Whigs in the community. For Jews, friendship with enlightened gentiles could surmount differences of ethnicity and religion and could even lead to political patronage beyond the socioeconomic benefits of the secular marketplace. But it was neither absolute nor uniform in its applicability. David S. Franks's experiences, though, portended a future that did not require Jews to hide their Judaism to achieve equality and government employment.³⁰

Benjamin Nones also took advantage of newspapers to defend his honor as a member of the merchant class. A Sephardic émigré born in Bordeaux, France, Nones migrated to America and fought in the revolution. He moved thereafter from Charleston to Philadelphia where he

³⁰ First quote Jefferson to Madison, February 14, 1783; Madison to Jefferson, February 18, 1783; Franks to Jefferson, June 17, 1785; Jefferson to Franks, June 17, 1785; Franks to Jefferson, September 2, 1785, second and fourth quotes Jefferson to Monroe, November 11, 1784, Franks to Jefferson, February 8, 1790, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed., Julian Boyd, (Princeton, 1952), VI, 241-44, 251-52, VII, 510, VIII, 225, 470-71; Franks to Franklin, December 10, 20, and 23, 1781, January 26, 1782, Franklin to Franks, December 17, 1781, Franks to D. Coxe, March 20, 1779, Franklin to Franks, January 25, 1782, David S. Franks Small Collections, SC-3661, AJA; third quote MAJ, I, 48-9; Franks to Washington, May 12, 1789, *Papers of George Washington*, eds., W.W. Abbot, et al. (Charlottesville, 1987), II, 278-80; Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*; David S. Franks to President of Congress, July 8, 1784, David S. Franks to Congress, May 20, 1781, Robert Morris to Willink & Co., January 23, 1784, David S. Franks Small Collection, SC-3661, AJA; USJ, I, 57-8; Morris U. Schappes, "Excerpts From Robert Morris' Diaries in the Office of Finance, 1781-1784, Referring to Haym Salomon and Other Jews," *AJHQ* 67 (1977), 9-49, 140-61.

exhibited an entrepreneurial spirit as a broker and merchant. Nones accused Abraham Levy, a local Jewish merchant, of cheating him. A public battle ensued. Whereas elites utilized political pamphlets to facilitate conversations with like-minded folks of equal status, newspapers were directed at a popular audience, which meant that Jewish use of them reached a much larger and versatile audience. Newspapers, then, could alter far more minds toward Judaism and individual Jews than pamphlets. Nones acted as a broker for Levy to obtain goods from an unknown merchant, a transaction from which he expected to receive a commission. But Levy did not meet his obligations, according to Nones who asserted, “without doing injustice to my own character, I could not avoid” defending myself. His reputation as a merchant, “in which I have been reputably engaged for ten years past,” was at stake. Ezekiel Levy, Abraham’s son and business partner, responded to Nones, “I am exceedingly surprised, that a man, who so lately commenced trade, should so early addict himself to such... falsehoods.” Nones explained why he had filed for bankruptcy on several occasions. He felt compelled to do this, probably because at that time bankruptcy was seen as an act of public humiliation. Years later, for example, when a Federalist partisan employed anti-Semitic language to emphasize Nones’s failure to pay his debts, Nones admitted, “I am *poor*,” but he refused to disguise his financial misfortunes, and instead used them as a rhetorical tool to underscore that his determination to succeed exhibited his ingenuity, a hallmark trait of the Anglo-American merchant class. No evidence suggests that Nones paid his debts, but he understood the platform that newspapers provided him to define himself to the public. Nones’s use of newspaper culture pointed the way for their future use by Jewish political partisans who sought to mold public opinion in favor of Jews and Judaism.³¹

³¹ Nones quoted *Independent Gazetteer*, November 12, 1782 and *Aurora*, August 13, 1800; Levy quoted *Independent Gazetteer*, November 9, 1782; *Independent Gazetteer*, September 27, December 6, 13, 20, 27, 1783, July 10, 1784, November 10, 1787; *Pennsylvania Evening Herald*, August 13, 1785; *Pennsylvania Packet*, June 21, 1783, February 26 and March 6, 1784; Malcolm Stern, *First American Jewish Families: 600 Genealogies, 1776-*

Newspapers and petitions remained central to the dissemination of Jews' struggle for natural rights to a wider—and now a national—audience. Unlike ever before, Jews made articulate pleas for the reasons why Jews deserved equality. Shakespeare's Shylock fomented anti-Jewish sentiment, wielded now by disgruntled Protestant partisans to discredit Jews and Judaism. Jews responded to popular anti-Jewish stereotypes that arose in public debates about Jewish emancipation. Miers Fisher, a Quaker lawyer, publicly attacked Haym Salomon, a wealthy merchant-trader and financial broker with close ties to France. Salomon was a Polish émigré who arrived in Philadelphia during the war and worked with Robert Morris and fellow Jew Benjamin Levy as a broker for the Bank of North America to secure funds from France. Salomon also befriended James Madison, Gouverneur Morris, and Washington. Salomon loaned money to Madison and to Washington on several occasions to pay troops in the field. Fisher, though, believed that investments, especially from foreign Jews like Salomon, undermined the autonomy of both the bank and government. Although Fisher's letter is no longer extant, Salomon's response as a "Jew Broker" survives. Salomon wrote, "You not only endeavoured to injure me by your unwarrantable expressions, but every other person of the same religious persuasion I hold." Salomon, injured by Fisher's aspersions, defended the honor of all Jews and suggested to his readers that Jewish Whigs during the late revolution were "second to none in our patriotism and attachments to our country!" Salomon pointed to the "laws of the country" that

1865 (Baltimore, 1991), 233; *Independent Gazetteer*, October 22, 1782. Bernard Bailyn's magnum opus focused on political pamphlets directed at an elite audience, which led other scholars to counter Bailyn by examining newspaper culture directed at popular audiences, see *Ideological*; idem, ed., *Pamphlets of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, 1965); idem, ed., *The Press and the American Revolution* (Worcester, 1980); Lawrence H. Leder, "The Role of Newspapers in Early America: 'In Defense of their Own Liberty,'" *HLQ* 30 (1966), 1-16; Lawrence W. Levine, "The Folklore of Industrial Society: Popular Culture and Its Audiences," *American Historical Review* 97 (1992), 1369-99; David Gellman, "Race, the Public Sphere, and Abolition in Late Eighteenth-Century New York," *JER* 20 (2000), 607-36; Charles E. Clark, "Boston and the Nurturing of Newspapers: Dimensions of the Cradle, 1690-1741," *NEQ* 64 (1991), 243-71. Nones claimed to have arrived in America as early as 1772, but this is improbable because he does not appear in newspaper advertisements until 1782, see "NONES and COHEN, BROKERS," *Pennsylvania Journal*, June 8, 1782.

allowed him to proudly claim, “I am a Jew.” Salomon concluded, Pennsylvania’s “glorious toleration and liberty of conscience have allowed...[me] to indulge” in Judaism. As Salomon celebrated the rise of a new nation that allowed Judaism to flourish, he was also frustrated by Protestants who sought to undermine their Jewish neighbors in popular culture and who withheld political rights from them. Salomon’s relationships with prominent gentiles, which included Robert Morris and Benjamin Rush, unfortunately, did not mean equality or emancipation for Jewish partisans. It would take years longer and more Jewish political activism to achieve this goal. But it was a useful step toward that end.³²

Jews continued to draw on literary forms and revolutionary language as a means to further their political ends. Gershom Mendes Seixas, a New York rabbi who led Philadelphia’s congregation during the war, bought copies of every state constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Articles of Confederation. He studied them thoroughly, and even jotted marginalia that betrayed his erudition, though he was not a learned rabbi by European standards. Seixas wrote of Pennsylvania’s constitution, “No Jew can be a member of the General Assembly” due to the Christian oath for officeholders. Seixas wanted to dissent in some way, thus he discussed options with Barnard Gratz and Haym Salomon, both of whom agreed with Seixas that their political exclusion was at variance with republican principles and even the egalitarianism indicative of significant parts of the state constitution. They believed Jews

³² *Independent Gazetteer*, March 13, 1784. For Salomon’s gentile connections, see David G. Dalin, “Jews, Judaism, and the American Founding,” in *Faith and the Founders of the American Republic*, Daniel L. Dreisbach and David Hall, eds., (Oxford, 2014), 67; Nathan M. Kaganoff, “The Business Career of Haym Salomon as Reflected in his Newspaper Advertisements,” *AJHQ* 66 (1976), 35-49; Schappes, “Excerpts,” 9-49, 140-61. Madison spoke highly of Salomon, see Madison to Haym M. Salomon, January 20, 1827, James Madison Papers, Series 1, Library of Congress. Levy befriended Morris when he resided in Philadelphia and helped Morris raise funds for Continental Congress; he offered his home to Morris if the British forced Congress to leave. Levy named his last child Robert Morris Levy, see Benjamin Levy to Morris, December 13, 1776, Levy Family Bible and Pearce-Levy Bible Records, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 11, Folders 1 and 6, and Moses Levy Family, Box 11, Folder 2, AJA.

deserved legal equality. Seixas therefore wrote a petition and submitted it to the state government. It lamented the Christian oath that required representatives of the General Assembly to “acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration.” “This religious test,” the petition continued, “deprives the Jews of the most eminent rights of freemen” and “disables them to be elected by their fellow citizens to represent them in assembly.” Jews had no complaint in acknowledging the divine origins of the Old Testament, of course, but refused to acknowledge it for the New Testament. Political exclusion along religious lines was unacceptable, according to the petition, chiefly because the “behaviour of the Jews,” it argued, “has always tallied with the great design of the revolution.” Jews had served in the “continental army,” the “militia,” and they “pay taxes.” That Jews could not hold public office was “a stigma upon their nation and religion.” In light of this, the petition requested that a state convention be called “for revising the constitution.”³³

Seixas turned to newspapers in an attempt to mold public opinion in favor of eliminating the religious test. He made certain that three Philadelphia newspapers printed the petition. The *Independent Gazetteer*'s editorial read, “It is an absurdity, too glaring and inconsistent to find a single advocate, to say a man, or a society is Free, without possessing and exercising a right to elect and to be elected.” By a vote of twelve to ten, though, the Council of Censors made no recommendations for a constitutional change. But a public debate commenced. In response to the Jewish petition “a friend to Christianity” wrote favorably of the Christian religious test, arguing “It would tend to the propagation of Christianity, by impressing the minds of the Jews” of the inherent truth of the New Testament. Later in the year, Reverend Charles Crawford paid

³³ Seixas's original copies, along with marginalia, are in the Mikveh Israel Archives in Philadelphia. Photocopies in Gershom Mendes Seixas Papers, MS-134, AJA. His notations appear in *The Constitutions of the Several Independent States of America* (Philadelphia, 1781), 102; quotes in Petition for Equal Rights to the Council of Censors, Philadelphia, December 23, 1783, *DHJ*, 63-6, 582.

for a reprint of Quaker founder George Fox's popular seventeenth-century missionary book, in which the preface encouraged Jews to convert to Christianity. On the surface, Crawford's solution was for Jews to abandon their religion. Yet, for reasons unknown, Crawford had a change of heart. Rather than forcing Jews to convert to Christianity, Crawford lobbied on behalf of his Jewish neighbors when he requested that the Council of Censors eliminate the religious test. It did not work. But a conservative Christian had defended the natural rights of Jews, an outcome that could have only emboldened Jewish partisans to ratchet up their activism which gained momentum thereafter.³⁴

After peace in 1783, political activism brought Anglo-American Jewish communities together in the face of oppression. New York's Jewish congregation joined voices with their Pennsylvanian brethren when they petitioned Governor George Clinton. No religious group, they insisted, "has Manifested a more Zealous Attachment to the Sacred Cause of America, in the late War with Great Britain." As a result of such loyalty to their nation, Jews "expect to enjoy...the inestimable Blessings of Civil, and Religious Liberty," which New York's Jews enjoyed but Pennsylvania's Jews did not. Unlike New Yorkers, most Christians were not yet ready to bestow minority groups with political rights, especially those they viewed as a threat to Christian-controlled public morality, such as Jews and Judaism. Jews thus redoubled their activism to obtain their natural right to hold public offices as professing Jews.³⁵

The experiences of Jonas Phillips show the importance of the petition, alongside newspapers, as cultural tools to achieve civil rights. Jonas Phillips fled the Prussian Rhineland in the 1750s and arrived first in London, where he anglicized his name from Feibush to Phillips.

³⁴ Quoted *Independent Gazetteer*, January 17, 1784; *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 17, 1784; *Journal of the Council of Censors* (Philadelphia, 1783), 20. "A Friend to Christianity," in *Freeman's Journal*, January 21, 1784; George Fox, *A Looking-Glass for the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1784), vi-vii.

³⁵ Quotes Address of Israelites to Governor Clinton, January 1784, *DHJ*, 66-7.

After migrating to Charleston, several parts of Canada and New York, Phillips settled in Philadelphia in 1773. A war veteran, Phillips became the *only* individual to petition the delegates at Philadelphia's Constitutional Convention; he pointed out that Pennsylvania's constitution deprived Jews from "holding any publick office or place of Government," and violated the "natural & unalienable Right to worship almighty God according to the dictates of their own Conscience." The Christian language in the oath, according to Phillips, was "absolutely against the religious principles of a Jew," it was "contradictory to the bill of rights," and urged the delegates to preserve religious equality at the national level. Phillips, like many Jews before him, pointed to the fact that "Jews have been true and faithful whigs, & during the late Contest with England...they have supported the cause, have bravely fought and bled for liberty which they can not Enjoy." Phillips's words did not fall upon deaf ears because national leaders had already moved toward protecting such freedoms.³⁶

In 1787, for instance, the Northwest Ordinance was the first federal law that attempted to institutionalize Jefferson's moral claims to natural rights in the Declaration of Independence. The law created the territorial government northwest of the Ohio River, and extended to it "the fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty, which form the basis whereon these republics, their laws and constitutions, are erected." If doubt remained, Congress made its point explicit, "no person...shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship." The idea of civic, or classical, republicanism, inherited from the ancient Greeks and Romans, swayed the minds of many that civic virtue was necessary in a free society. But the pressing question was the source of virtue's moral content. Protestant religion, Mühlenberg and others believed, was

³⁶ Quotes Jonas Phillips to the Federal Constitutional Convention, September 7, 1787, MS-382, Jonas Phillips Papers, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 21, AJA. For Phillips's history, see Notarized Letter of Recommendation by Moses Lindo for Phillips, July 13, 1773, *ibid*.

the fountain of morality that ensured a stable citizenry and society. Whereas classical republicanism defined virtue as citizens' ability to surrender their self-interest to the common good, Mühlenberg's interpretation of virtue demanded that citizens uphold the moral law of God as revealed in Scripture, both Old and New. Debates between civic republicans and Protestant republicans centered on the permissible boundaries around non-Protestant public religious expressions. In Pennsylvania, this connection of virtue to Protestantism prevailed. Delegates at the state conventions, called to ratify the new national government, debated the prudence of equality for marginalized groups, including Jews. Liberal-minded delegates—from New York, New Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania—argued that provisions did not go far enough to protect the natural rights of minority groups. Conservatives, especially from the Puritan establishments of New England, scoffed at such moral pluralism, claiming it undermined the social (and Protestant Christian moral) order within their states. Moderates with Enlightenment sensibilities carried the day when they achieved ratification of the U.S. Constitution and thereafter adopted the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Article VI, section 3 prohibited all religious tests for public service in the federal government, which put these debates to rest, at least in legal debates at the federal level. Thereafter Congress reaffirmed these principles in the territories of the Old Southwest, which ensured similar protections in Kentucky and Tennessee, in addition to Ohio and Indiana. Following the Louisiana Purchase, the development of the Indiana and Mississippi territories, and the acquisition of Florida from Spain, Congress again and again acted to ensure equality in those territories, including the future states of Mississippi and Louisiana. Despite such efforts, Louisiana's numerous constitutions had no provisions for full equality for all citizens until reconstruction. Although constitutional protections for religious liberty did not at that time protect the natural rights of minorities in the

states, such as overtures provided Jews and others with the confidence to engage in political activism, in the attempt to alter states' laws that excluded them from public office holding.³⁷

Jewish leaders recognized this watershed moment in the unfolding of their natural rights on the national stage. In Richmond, Virginia, for example, the Jewish congregation held a banquet to toast the ratification of the Constitution. The thirteenth toast declared, "May the Israelites throughout the world enjoy the same religious rights and political advantages as their American brethren." The language of this toast referred to "religious rights" of which most Jews enjoyed, but political rights were still to be earned, for in the late 1780s those rights were not guaranteed at all but remained only "political advantages" bestowed by individual states at whim. Jewish congregations from New York and Philadelphia in the north, to Charleston in the south, sent a joint-letter to newly elected President George Washington, applauding the freedoms that the Constitution secured them. The ratification of the U.S. Constitution and inclusion of a Bill of Rights was national affirmation of their definitions of equality for which they had fought since the war. In Philadelphia, Jews participated in fêtes that celebrated the ratification of the Constitution. As well they should because Jews indeed had earned the respect of many of their Christian neighbors and played substantive roles in the redrawing of the boundaries around their political participation.

The U.S. Constitution separated church from state and protected some natural rights, but at that time it applied only to the national government—not to states—thus Jewish visions for emancipation in Pennsylvania remained unfulfilled. Jews, however, remained painfully aware of

³⁷ Quotes Confederate Congress, July 13, 1787, An ordinance for the government of the territory of the United States northwest of the river Ohio, Section 13, Howard W. Preston, ed., *Documents Illustrative of American History, 1606-1863* (New York, 1899), 246; Jonathan Elliot, ed., *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, as Recommended by the General Convention at Philadelphia in 1787* (Philadelphia, 1866), II, 178; Chyet, "Rights," 23-24, 53-60; Sehat, *Myth*, 21-22; Schlereth, *Infidels*, 24-25. For republicanism, see Wood, *Creation*; Bailyn, *Ideological*; Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*.

this unfortunate fact and thus lobbied their friends and patrons in positions of political authority and embraced political activism to achieve emancipation in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania's Protestants, especially old-line Congregationalists, compromised when they acquiesced to the separation of the institutional church from state, but they hoped to use the coercive arms of state power to silence undesirable (and from their view immoral) religious persuasions in public life, including Jews and Judaism. Civic republicans of the moderate Enlightenment such as Benjamin Rush and Benjamin Franklin and Christian republicans such as Mühlenberg, however, could not agree on a singular definition of religious liberty in civil society. The former defined religious freedom as the right of individuals to believe what they wanted without state interference and sought protections against religious bodies using the government to violate the rights of minorities; the latter defined it as rooted in Protestant Christianity which buttressed institutional religious rights and expressions in public for Protestants alone. As historian David Sehat has shown, an extralegal Protestant "moral establishment" and eventually a legalized one regulated public behavior and fostered Protestant religious observances in public life. To the excitement of Jews, though, many of the same civic republicans who participated in the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights were the same leaders who pushed for a revised Pennsylvania constitution. Advocates included Robert Morris and Benjamin Franklin, staunch patrons and friends of Jews and, most important, men committed to the emancipation of their Jewish friends.³⁸

³⁸ Quoted *USJ*, I, 82, 85; Address of the Hebrew-Congregations in the cities of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Richmond to George Washington, December 13, 1790, *DHJ*, 82-3; *JOP*, 150-51; Chyet, "Rights," 22. New York eliminated religious tests in 1777, Georgia in 1789, South Carolina in 1790, Pennsylvania in 1790, Delaware in 1792, Vermont in 1793, Connecticut in 1818, Maryland in 1826, Virginia in 1830 (decades after Jefferson's Bill for Religious Freedom in 1786), Massachusetts in 1833, Rhode Island in 1843, New Jersey in 1844, North Carolina in 1868, and New Hampshire in 1877, but informal moral establishments remained in place, see Sehat, *Myth*, 20-26, 50-56; Frost, *Perfect*, 74-77, 144-50. Morris invested £8,000 with Gratzes, Franks, Simon, and other Jews, see Meeting Illinois-Wabash Company, November 8, 1779, *BMG*, 179.

Jonas Phillips once again led the way when he sent another letter to Philadelphia's assembly. State leaders read it aloud and debated its contents. Delegates thereafter convened to revise the 1776 state constitution; they subsequently removed the Christian language from the oath, though how much Phillips's petition impacted debates remains difficult to measure. Pennsylvania's decision, undoubtedly, led to a domino effect as states one after the other removed religious tests from their constitutions, as well as other impediments to the inclusion of minorities in political culture in their states. Phillips was close to Robert Morris, as were many other Jews, which may have inspired moderates like he and his friends Franklin and Rush to remove the Christian language. Thomas Mifflin, future first governor of Pennsylvania under the new 1790 constitution, was a patron of Jews and presided over the state committee which eliminated the Christian dimensions of the oath. Did Mifflin have his Jewish friends in mind? It is impossible to say so with certainty, but it is likely because Republican leaders rewarded their Jewish allies with patronage after the "Revolution of 1800," which began with midterm elections two years before when waves of electoral victories swept Republicans into state and national offices. In any case, the new clause read, "no person, who acknowledges the being of a God and a future state of rewards and punishments, shall, on account of his religious sentiments, be disqualified to hold any office or place of trust or profit under this commonwealth." It now only excluded atheists and agnostics. Article VIII ensured that all citizens had a "natural...right to worship God according to conscience, and that no one could be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship," which reaffirmed once more Penn's "Liberty of the Mind" thesis and disestablishment.

Jewish partisans and pundits utilized newspaper culture to silence their detractors, to fashion reputations, and to alter public opinion in their favor, which resulted in *de jure* religious

liberty and political freedom. The 1790 Pennsylvania constitution, finally, removed the last vestiges of political discrimination against Jews, who could now legally vote and hold public offices as full citizens. Whereas the Protestant clergy had won in 1776, Jews and their moderate and enlightened civic republican allies had won in 1790. But because bigotry was a symptom of cultural attitudes equality protected in law did not always apply in practice. And, though they lost the battle for institutional establishment and state-sanctioned Christian leadership, Protestant republicans shifted their attention to the maintenance of a “moral establishment” whose laws rooted in Protestant moral precepts—such as blasphemy and Sabbath statutes and mandatory Bible readings in public schools—restricted religious freedom for non-Protestants. Politicized Protestants, fearful that their moral authority would continue to deteriorate, now refocused their attention upon the corrupting forces of immoral infidels in their midst, as well as drawing new boundaries around permissible religious expressions in newspaper politics. Cultural prejudice therefore abounded. As historian Eric Schlereth has shown, the popular politics of the early republic redefined “infidel” beyond non-Christians to include any religious persuasion that Protestant pundits deemed subversive to the body politic, forms of deism in particular but also Judaism. Seen in this light, Protestants may well have been victorious once more. According to Schlereth, though, “infidel controversies,” or public debates between Protestants and non-Protestants, made religious differences in public discourse politically tolerable and even useful, especially in building coalitions in the antebellum decades. Additional personal religious expressions in the public sphere produced manifold public opinions about religion and morality, but it also led Protestant pundits to wield anti-Semitism as a means to constrict the boundaries around tolerable religious language in the public square.

Spencer McBride, similarly, has shown how the politicization of religious language, rituals, and even Protestant clergymen built an ideology of nationalism that sought unity and solidarity among Protestants—the results, though, were mixed. But jingoistic nationalism rooted in Protestantism also produced anti-Semitic language of exclusion for Jews. In the 1790s, Jewish partisans and their (now) national Republican allies played central roles in a transformation of the public sphere, essentially a widening of public spaces (voluntary associations, clubs, and formalized political parties, for example) that allowed a wide variety of personalized religious opinions to flourish, collide, and reform. Popular partisans refashioned traditional religion into a publicly contested “civil religion” through verbal combat in newspaper politics, which better suited an early republic of substantial diversity, political and religious. To obtain power, or the cultural authority to mold public opinion and the political authority to effect changes in laws, Protestant partisans waged a religious war of words with Jews, deists, and often Catholics in public forums. Opportunistic partisans and politicians adopted such religious language to achieve decidedly political ends, and Protestants wielded political language to achieve decidedly moral ends. As a result of such cultural transformations, by the antebellum decades the public sphere within civil society had changed to accommodate this new contentious and very much public “civil religion,” its vitriolic rhetoric and manifold personal religious opinions, as well as the public institutions and voluntary associations that manifested its cultural and political power.³⁹

³⁹ The Phillips letter is no longer extant but lawmakers made note of it in the official records of Philadelphia’s assembly, “a letter from Jonas Phillips, in behalf of himself and others, Israelites, was read,” see *Proceedings Relative to Calling the Conventions of 1776 and 1790* (Harrisburg, 1825), IV, quotes on 163, 376; Chyet, “Rights,” 46; second quote Frost, *Perfect*, 75, 112-14; Morris to Phillips, April 18, 1802, February 16, 1812, Notarized Document between Morris and Zalegman Phillips, December 24, 1794, MS-382, Phillips Papers, AJA; Schappes, “Excerpts,” 9-49, 140-61; John Ferling, *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800* (Oxford, 2005). Sehat shows that Pennsylvania’s legal moral establishment endured well into the twentieth century, see *Myth*, 51-69, and chapters 9-12. Schlereth shows that Protestants fused the terms infidel, which applied to Muslims and Jews, and heretic, or a misguided Christian with heterodox beliefs, into the term deist that described both. He also examines

Jews recognized the discontinuity between the highly abstract ideals of Enlightenment thought embodied in the laws of Pennsylvania and the U.S. Constitution and the reality of political exclusion in practice at the hands of Christians in the new republic. After about 1790, the prejudices against Jews operated outside the realm of *de jure* law, particularly in the contours of newspaper politics, a realm where partisans fought for credibility to mold public opinion, especially in terms of the politicization of ethnicity, nationality, religion, and class in relation to citizenship standards. Although Jews enjoyed full equality before the law in Pennsylvania and enjoyed some federal political appointments, they did not wield political power directly as *elected* officials at any level of government—at least not yet. A culture of fear and paranoia did not diminish following the revolution, because the French Revolution unleashed its own radicalism and violence; if anything, it increased, which culminated in the passage of the infamous Alien and Sedition Acts. An increased conservatism in republican politics—in many ways the results of an emergent Federalist and Protestant interpretation of American nationalism that sought to withhold citizenship and public credibility from anyone not an adult white man of affluence who embraced Protestant Christianity, led many Jews to join the national opposition party, the Democratic-Republicans. With this party affiliation, they voiced their dissent even louder in newspaper politics. Protestant clergy feared that religion, more to the point Protestant morality, was in danger and therefore stepped onto the political stage alongside Jews to defend it and the nation from godless heathens, infidels, and skeptical deists.⁴⁰

how contentious religious conflict led to non-state-sanctioned enforcement of the limits of religious freedom by popular pundits; the result was widened spaces for religious expressions, see, *Infidels*, 4-7, 18-44, 237-41. McBride, *Pulpit*, especially chapters 1 and 5. For civil religion, see Robert N. Bellah and Phillip E. Hammond, *Varieties of Civil Religion* (New York, 1980).

⁴⁰ For culture of fear, see Rachel Hope Cleves, *The Reign of Terror in America: Visions of Violence from Anti-Jacobinism to Antislavery* (New York, 2009). For politicized editors in newspaper politics, see Pasley, *Tyranny*, 105-131. For nationalism and politicized clergy, see McBride, *Pulpit*, 127-47; Schlereth, *Infidels*, 18-141.

Public debates about permissible personalized religious expressions in public life became pervasive. Federalist Protestants feared that the lower orders of American society and godless infidels, including Jews, might participate in politics alongside their so-called social betters, whose suspect morality, they agreed, disqualified them from a public voice and political participation more so than their inferior social status. From recent debates about religious liberty, they asked how much tolerance was needed to balance a commitment to moral and social order and wide-ranging religious opinions. Their answer was not much. They therefore politicized Shylock to silence Jewish public voices. Their concerns transcended class biases and included religious bigotry when the Federalist Party acquiesced to the infusion of Protestant clergy partisans in its ranks. Federalists welcomed them into the coalition with open arms. They aimed much of their vitriol at Jewish partisans and their deist allies who embraced an emergent opposition party, with Jefferson as its titular leader. Nonconformist thinkers and dissenters, ethnic, racial, and religious minorities, and immigrants and non-elites found themselves excluded from political culture, patronage, and influence. In the hyper-partisan 1790s, Federalist newspaper editors and publishers adopted such contentious religious language and put it to political uses. James Rivington, a well-known polemicist, remarked that the entire Republican cohort looked “like...the tribe of Shylock.” Bigotry aside, Rivington’s remark underscores the large numbers of Jews who identified with an emergent opposition faction, including elite Jews and their working-class brethren. Other pundits adopted anti-Semitic language as well. Joseph Dennie, a veteran publisher, referred to Republicans as “canting and cheating Jews.” For his many public defenses of his Jewish friends and allies, Protestant polemicists labeled William Duane, an Irish immigrant and editor of a prominent Philadelphia newspaper, a “Jew.” William Cobbett, known pseudonymously as “Peter Porcupine,” referred to the entire dissenting

opposition as “Jews.” Such anti-Jewish prejudice depicted Jews as dangerous “foreign aliens” who threatened social order and Protestant purity. In the view of Federalist Protestants, the excesses, licentiousness, and radicalism of middling folk and godless heathens such as Jews called into question the “leveling” nature of the recent revolution and legal redefinitions of religious freedom after 1789. Jews’ oversized presence in popular politics insulted their notions that the new American republic was a “Christian Nation.”

By the last decade of the eighteenth century, Jews utilized newspaper politics to project republican (and now Republican) identities and to defend Judaism from popular aspersions by politicized Christians. Newspapers thus provided a public rhetorical battleground for political partisans to engage in battles of words in an effort to shape popular opinion in favor of their respective visions for the future of popular politics in a free democratic society. But more than that, such a platform for dissenting points of views allowed Jews to earn credibility and to craft reputations that afforded them cultural authority among their neighbors, as well as access to political power through patronage appointments. Such prospects became a real possibility when their Republican patrons swept the midterm elections in 1798 that laid the groundwork for Jefferson’s “Revolution of 1800.” Personal and vitriolic in nature, political discourses became commonplace in newspapers. To voice their dissent, large numbers of Philadelphia’s Jews joined the Democratic-Republican ranks and waged verbal warfare in newspaper politics.⁴¹

Benjamin Nones, a Sephardic émigré from France, and a Federalist hack writer offer us a glimpse into this world of verbal mudslinging. Ahead of the elections in 1800, Joseph Dennie sent a reporter to a meeting of Philadelphia’s Democratic-Republican Society. A writer who

⁴¹ Rivington quoted Schappes, “Anti-Semitism,” 114; Dennie quoted Philip S. Foner, *The Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800: A Documentary Sourcebook of Constitutions, Declarations, Addresses, Resolutions, and Toasts*, (Westport, 1976), 39-40, 418-19; Cobbett quoted *Gazette of the United States*, July 16, 1800; *Rush-Light* (New York, 1800), I, 1, II, 78; *USJ*, I, 526-28; Pencak, *Jews*, especially 231-59.

assumed the penname “An Observer” cautioned his neighbors of the “ignorance and stupidity” emanating from “these miserable wretches” who are “the very refuse and filth of society.” Such scathing insults are surprising considering that men of repute attended the meeting, such as Dr. Benjamin Rush, a pioneering physician and respected citizen. The author, undeterred, accused Rush of “*black innocence*” for his antislavery efforts. “An Observer” caricatured the Democratic-Republican members as drunkards and buffoons, indeed so disordered they remained unable to elect their officers. A member supposedly bemoaned, “Order, citizens, order,” but it was “impossible,” for “Billy” had passed out from too much drink. “Citizen Sambo” replied, “Ah massa he be move off already,” ensuring his counterparts that the meeting could proceed as planned. “Sambo” was probably Cyrus Busthil, a prominent free black man and merchant in Philadelphia. The racist tone in this missive was transparent. That white men engaged in political conversation with black men *and* ethnic Jews surely undermined their political judgment, perhaps more than their ignorance, drunkenness, and general disorderliness. At the end of the meeting members donated money to defray the costs of the gathering, to which Benjamin Nones claimed to be too poor to contribute. “Citizen N[ones]—the Jew” was made to say, “I hopsh you will consider dat de monish is very searsh, and besides you know I’sh just come out by de Insholvent Law.” The writer alluded to the recent Bankruptcy Act of 1800, and made Nones speak broken English, either drawing a parallel to “Sambo,” or possibly alluding to Shakespeare’s Shylock trope. In either case, the author wished to undermine Nones’s credentials as a permissible partisan in popular politics. The author underscored Nones’s status as a dangerous alien, one that could not be trusted for his foreignness, poverty, and Jewishness any more than for the company he kept.

“An Observer” addressed Nones as *Citizen*, alluding not to his American citizenship (lest we forget that “Sambo” also held the title of *Citizen*), but instead to his French heritage.

Revolutionary France abolished titles of nobility, referring to all French people as *Citizen* to underscore the egalitarian nature of the movement. Indeed, there was considerable support for the French Revolution among Republicans because France’s struggle they believed closely resembled their own. Members widely published lists of toasts to revolutionary France in newspapers. Such democratic language by heathens threatened Christians’ moral visions of a civil society dominated by Protestant ethics and led them to associate Republicans with French violence and radicalism. For many Protestant Christians, Republicans and their Jewish allies sanctioned such radical violence in France and sought to use it as a means to further their own democratic and religiously subversive ends in the United States.⁴²

“An Observer’s” personalized rhetoric gained the attention of his partisan opponent. Nones responded with an oft-quoted letter of his own. Nones sent his reply to the *Gazette*, but its publisher, Caleb P. Wayne, a Federalist anti-Semite and Protestant sympathizer, refused to publish it. William Duane, whose *Aurora* quickly became a popular voice for the Republican agenda and a partisan known to be friendly with Jews, published Nones’s letter. “I enclose you an article which I deemed it but justice to my character to present,” Nones wrote to Duane, “in reply to some illiberalities which were thrown out against me.” Nones asserted, “I am accused of being a *Jew*, of being a *Republican*, and of being *Poor*.” Nones proudly admitted, “I am a *Jew*.” Nones argued that that admission alone made him worthy of equal treatment in a free society. “I

⁴² Quoted *Gazette of the United States*, August 5, 1800; *JOP*, 209; Foner, *Societies*, 418; Cleves, *Reign*; Pencak, *Jews*, 233. Examples include: “To the fraternal union of the French,” “The French Republic and National Convention,” and “The American citizens who have celebrated the successes of the French.” The same article named Nones as an active officer and printed the toasts in French above its English counterpart, see *Dunlap’s American Daily Advertiser*, February 9, 1793.

am so,” Nones confidently wrote, “and so were Abraham, and Isaac, and Moses and the prophets, and so too were Christ and his apostles,” concluding, “I feel no disgrace in ranking with such society.” By actively practicing his religiosity, Nones believed he was doing nothing more than that promised by the ideals unleashed by the revolution and embodied within the nation’s founding documents. Nones provides us perhaps the most detailed Jewish response to the cultural barriers that impeded Jews’ political integration in the early republic.

Nones also understood his religion to sustain his republicanism. Jews remained scapegoats, hated and persecuted in every corner of the world, Nones insisted, because “we are...ranked with Turks, Infidels and Heretics.” In European kingdoms, Jews “are hunted from society...[and] thrust out.” Nones alluded here to the persecutions of the Sephardim on the Iberian Peninsula (an auto-da-fé had occurred in Portugal as recently as 1791), a painful and long history of forced conversions to Christianity, murder, and expulsions that tore apart friends and families. His native Bordeaux, for example, became a community of Spanish and Portuguese Jewish refugees. In light of this, Nones shed his French identity and replaced it with an American, republican one. At the same time, the enlightened language of natural rights he discovered, and for which he subsequently fought, in the revolution probably explains his devout republican idealism and celebration of the French Revolution. Nones and his Jewish brethren redefined themselves as republican citizens, unlike anywhere in Europe. Nones, after “three and twenty years,” held no intentions of changing his “political, any more than...[his] religious principles,” precisely because “on religious grounds I am a republican.” In sum, Nones refused to compromise his faith so that he might participate in popular republican politics, a massive departure from the experiences of Isaac Miranda, for example, who had abandoned his Jewishness to achieve political equality earlier in the eighteenth century.

Nones admitted, “I am *poor*,” and argued that it was a fundamental trait of republicanism to extend equality to all citizens, regardless of class, ethnicity, or religion. “How then can a Jew but be a Republican,” Nones offered. This rhetorical move—casting aside the pejorative label of Jew indicative of the Shylock trope and recasting his focus on the nature of republicanism and its compatibility with his faith—underscored that the nascent republic’s egalitarian ethos was at variance with the political anti-Semitism that he and his Jewish brethren experienced in Philadelphia. Nones, though, signed his name to the letter, and took personal responsibility for such profound claims in a newspaper. His letter continued to draw the ire of political pundits, suggesting that Nones gained the attention of a large audience in Philadelphia. In the presidential election of 1800, the Jews of Philadelphia remained on center stage. In response to the continuous use of the word “Jew” as a pejorative label by Christians in the campaign, William Duane went out of his way as editor of the *Aurora* to defend his Jewish friends. For his criticisms of Federalist Protestants in power, Duane was arrested and indicted under the provisions within the Sedition Act. Most important, he offered his paper as a public mouthpiece for Jews to combat anti-Semitism. Newspaper politics, in sum, provided Nones an opportunity to defend himself and Judaism from the scathing missives written by his political foes.⁴³

Other Jews, meanwhile, became newspaper editors and publishers, which brought them closer to Republican politicians who could reward Jewish partisans with patronage. John and Samuel Israel joined the ranks of Philadelphia’s Democratic-Republican Party, along with

⁴³ Nones quotes *Aurora*, August 13, 1800; Cyrus Adler, “A Political Document of the Year 1800,” *PAJHS* 1 (1892), 111-115. Pencak and Schappes offer the best analyses of the letter, see *Jews*, viii, 243-45, and “Anti-Semitism,” 129-30; *DHJ*, 92-6; *JOP*, 97, 209-12; *USJ*, I, 78-79, 85, 528-29; Pasley, *Tyranny*, 176-95; Foner, *Societies*, 419. The letter was printed as a broadside and widely distributed in Philadelphia. For responses to Nones, see *Philadelphia Gazette*, August 13, 1800. The author cynically implied that Nones defended his reputation for nothing more than to earn himself a patronage appointment; indeed, Nones was well-known for his continual pursuits for office. Debates about Jews and their political participation continued in Philadelphia up to the eve of election day in October of 1800, see *Aurora*, September 1, 10, 13, and October 7, 1800, and *Philadelphia Gazette*, September 5, 10, and 11, 1800. For Duane, see James Morton Smith, “The *Aurora* and the Alien and Sedition Laws,” *PMHB* 77 (1953), 3-23.

hundreds of other Jewish partisans, and learned the printing trade from Benjamin Franklin's grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache. Their father Israel operated a tavern frequented by staunch Republican partisans and politicians with whom the Israel family identified politically. The Israel family joined Democratic-Republican clubs en masse. John fled to Washington in western Pennsylvania, where he befriended such Republican politicians as Albert Gallatin (a Swiss émigré) and Thomas McKean. John established the partisan newspaper, *Herald of Liberty*, which emulated the newspaper politics of Philadelphia's editors, like Duane, who campaigned for Republican office-seekers and defended Jews and Judaism from popular anti-Semitic barbs. John's newspaper was instrumental in disseminating political propaganda that proved decisive in the elections of Gallatin to Congress and McKean to Pennsylvania's governorship, both of whom rewarded political patronage to Jewish partisans who had helped them in their election bids. So impactful was John's printing press on popular politics that a judge from John's hometown of Washington, Alexander Addison, led the Federalist movement to silence Republican editors by penning his own pamphlets. When Bache, the editor of Philadelphia's *Aurora* and patron of Jews, was arrested for sedition, officials set bail at \$4,000, an enormous sum paid in part by John's father, Israel. And when William Duane took over the editorship of the *Aurora*, the Israel family and other Jews remained staunch supporters. John's efforts earned him the patronage of Governor McKean, who appointed him register of wills and recorder of deeds for Washington County. Newspaper politics and its vitriolic language made possible, in no small part, such Republican electoral successes. And Jews sat on the vanguard of those cultural transformations.

Jews not only entered newspaper politics to offer counterpoints to Federalist Protestants' hegemony and to combat anti-Semitism but also to further their own political careers. The Nones and Israel families show that Jews had achieved some progress toward political

integration as public servants, not newspaper partisans alone, despite contending with political bigotry. Nones pointed to his career as a soldier as proof that he was deserving of patronage. In 1776, Benjamin Nones arrived in Charleston, South Carolina and took “the Oath of Allegiance to that State and to the United States,” and entered militia service under General Benjamin Lincoln until Great Britain’s southern campaign led him to volunteer for General Casimir Pulaski’s “foreign legion.” Nones fought “in almost every action which took place in Carolina, and in the disastrous affair of Savannah,” which ended with his capture by the British. His attempt to fashion himself as a dutiful Whig and Republican partisan deserving of government employment was one shared by many of his contemporaries, Jew and non-Jew alike. Following the war, Nones moved to Philadelphia, where he married and began a family that grew to thirteen children, including one named Jefferson. Believing himself worthy of patronage, Nones pleaded with Thomas Jefferson “for an Office.” This request was “prompted by...[his] Wish to be useful...to the public.” “Possessed of the rights of a Citizen,” he continued, “[and] amidst all the revolutions of Opinion, my political principles remained pure and unchanged.” However much his “Zeal & attachment to the republican Cause,” Nones admitted to Jefferson that he and his coreligionists experienced prejudices “brought about chiefly by the tyranny of opinion” leveled on he and his brethren by politicized Protestant anti-Semites who used his Jewish heritage against him. Nones stressed to Jefferson that, despite the aspersions heaped on his character, he was deserving of patronage. Jefferson ignored Nones, likely because he had no job to offer him. Nones, undaunted, wrote Jefferson once more, and reaffirmed that “his principles have been uniform in the Cause of Republicanism.” Jefferson ignored him again. Desperate for a government position, Nones requested a position on the Board of Commissioners for bankruptcy in Philadelphia, an ironic request because Nones had recently filed for bankruptcy again.

Jefferson ignored him yet a third time. Although Jefferson was no anti-Semite, a scarcity of jobs tied his hands. Vacant positions remained highly competitive. But Nones's persistence paid off, for himself and his Jewish brethren.⁴⁴

David S. Franks and Benjamin Nones defended (and thus regained) their reputations by crafting written defenses in newspapers. These men took advantage of their honor, which granted them political capital, currency they spent to further their careers. Franks earned a diplomatic post and eventually a clerkship in the Bank of the United States, probably with the assistance of Robert Morris and Albert Gallatin. Jefferson and Washington had no federal jobs to offer Nones and Solomon Bush, respectively, but Jefferson briefly considered Moses Levy as his attorney general. Jefferson, though, did not turn his back on his Jewish friends. He turned instead to his political allies, Pennsylvania Governors Thomas Mifflin and Thomas McKean, staunch Jeffersonian partisans and patrons of Jews, who commissioned Isaac Franks to Lieutenant Colonel in the Pennsylvania militia (Franks eventually earned a clerkship to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania) and appointed Nones Notary Public of Philadelphia, respectively. Later, Nones served as interpreter of Spanish, Portuguese, and French for Pennsylvania's Board of Health. With influence among Republican patrons, Nones also secured the future careers of his many sons in the Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Adams administrations. Several other Jews enjoyed the patronage of Republicans, including Reuben Etting, Mordecai Manuel Noah, Moses M. Russell, Nathan Levy, among many others.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *Aurora*, July 13, 1798; Pasley, *Tyranny*, 98, 112-16, 119; Bennett Muraskin, "Benjamin Nones: Profile of a Jewish Jeffersonian," *American Jewish History* 83, (1995), 381-85; *CAJ*, I, 259, III, 1305; Autobiography, Sketches of Henry Clay and Albert Gallatin, Joseph B. Nones Papers, MS-403, Michael Israel, Nones, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Boxes 9 and 13, Folders 26 and 7, AJA. Nones sketched a short biography of his life when he solicited patronage from Thomas Jefferson, quotes Nones to Jefferson, March 18, 1801, November 11, 1801, July 18, 1802, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, XXXIII, 356-57, XXXV, 356-58, 608-09, XXXVIII, 95; *USJ*, I, 528; Nones quoted *Aurora*, August 13, 1800; *JOP*, 97.

⁴⁵ *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, April 1, 7, 1803; *Federal Republican*, February 15, 1812; *New York Gazette*, July 14, 1803; Notary Document, June 23, 1803, Joseph B. Nones, Correspondence, Biographical Sketches,

The reactionary conservatism and anti-Jewish rhetoric espoused by Federalist Protestants in the main (though not exclusively) inspired Jews to take further action to dispel such prejudice and bigotry. Debates of the period focused on what it meant to be a white non-Christian in a world dominated by white Christians. Ideology, most Jews claimed, made one deserving of equality, not religion, ethnicity, class, gender, or geographical space per se. Liberal Jews internalized the egalitarianism of eighteenth-century liberalism, whether mere rhetoric or not, and for them it transcended all other things. At the heart of the revolution lay the assumption that society and culture might be changed for the better—indeed, Enlightenment optimism flourished. To many members of a group ethnically sensitive and religiously devout, who were persecuted for centuries and displaced across the Atlantic World and beyond, this ideology probably seemed a godsend. The questions of race, religion, gender, class, ethnicity, and nationality in determining citizenship remained tenuous and ambiguous well into the nineteenth century and beyond. We grapple with such questions still. Not all Jews, of course, embraced an ideology that granted Jews cultural integration and equality. Conservative Jews, for example, remained unwilling to compromise their traditional identities and cultural habits. Jewish conservatives disdained the shallow nature of American culture—its values, institutions, and practices—and referred to Jews who embraced American ways of life as “assimilationists.” Yet,

Miscellany, Autobiography, 1810-1829, Nones Papers, Box 1, Folders 1, 3-10, AJHS; Biographical Sketches, Joseph B. Nones Papers, MS-403, John Q. Adams Letter, December 29, 1818, Levy Family Bible and Pearce-Levy Bible Records, undated, Moses Levy Family, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 7, Box 11, Folders 1, 2, AJA; James Monroe to John Quincy Adams, December 1820; David Nones to James Monroe, December 9, 1822; Benjamin Nones to James Monroe, January 3, 1823, *A Comprehensive Catalogue of the Correspondence and Papers of James Monroe*, Daniel Preston, ed., 2 vols., (Westport, CT, 2001), II, 877. Solomon Bush was the most well-known example of a Jewish office-seeker, alongside Nones, Haym Salomon, Isaac Franks, and Benjamin Levy, see *EAJ*, II, 70-6; *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, July 16, 1776; Hunt, *Calendar*, 20, 46; *Philadelphia Minerva*, June 13, 1795; *USJ*, I, 56, 68, 78-121, 608-09, 638; *JOP*, 216, 289-90. Isaac Franks was aide to Washington, rented his home to Washington during the yellow fever epidemic, and remained close to General Jacob Morris and the Supreme Court, see Jacob Morris to Franks, April 26, May 10, May 31, 1784, Narrative of Revolutionary War Service, Judges of Supreme Court to Franks, September 24, 1821, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 14, AJHS.

for more liberal-minded Jews the inclusive power of American sensibilities created fluid and dynamic Jewish identities. Unlike Polish migrants to Germany, for example, who stood out as culturally different, Jews fit easily into (indeed became an integral part of) a culture of increasingly substantial religious and ethnic diversity. Jews demanded acceptance in their communities and earned the respect of their neighbors. That respect, finally, manifested in the form of emancipation, religious freedom, and political integration.

In the colonial period, Jews in Pennsylvania remained unequal members of the body politic but enjoyed physical and social mobility, social acceptance, cultural integration, and almost unbounded economic freedom. The revolutionary period loosened some of those boundaries, as Jews served in militias and as officers, publicly voiced their religion, voted, sat on juries, and practiced law in Pennsylvania. But a religious test in the constitution of 1776 precluded Pennsylvanian Jews from holding public office. After a new constitution in 1790 emancipated them entirely, Jews experienced the politicization of Shylock once more, even after having won full equality before the law. The Protestant majority attempted to tarnish Jewish reputations by molding public opinion against them, a means to discredit Jewish attempts to attain political and cultural power and equality. The same print culture that conservative pundits utilized to discredit Jews was the same arena that Jews utilized to counter those anti-Jewish missives. Newspapers, letters, petitions, and the institutions of political culture functioned for politically astute Jews as useful platforms to dissent from the conservative forces that impeded their integration. They provided Jews a platform to cultivate and defend their honor and reputations, which further altered the attitudes of their Christian neighbors, whose close

interactions with Jews led some of them to openly defend Jews and Judaism in public forums.

But such an outcome was not without cultural costs, to which we now turn our attention.

CHAPTER SIX CULTURAL JUDAISM: THE LIMITS OF ETHNICITY & THE MANY FACES OF JUDAISM

In reference to early modern European Jews, the Christian theologian John Dury, friend of Menasseh Ben Israel, observed, “Jewes come into Christian Common-wealths, not as members thereof, but as strangers therein, and yet forme a societie, or kind of Common-wealth amongst themselves.” Ezra Stiles, a close friend of Jews in Rhode Island, concurred, “Jews will never become incorporated with the people of America.” In stark contrast to both Dury and Stiles, Dr. Benjamin Rush, a friend and patron of Pennsylvania’s Jews, imagined a future when Jews “shall unite with Christians with one heart and one voice.” Whereas Dury and Stiles could not have been more wrong about Jewish migrants who called Pennsylvania home, Rush recognized that Jews and gentiles lived together in relative harmony. Pennsylvania’s Jews prospered as businesspeople who fostered westward migration, cultivated enlightened dispositions and cosmopolitan worldviews, enjoyed the friendship and patronage of elite culture on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, and became essential members of their communities. Jews, whose families had embraced their roles as “outsiders” thrust upon them by Europeans, had no intentions of living lives apart from their adopted cultures on American shores. As a result of their commitment to shed Jewish cultural insularity, they inadvertently reshaped the nature of Judaism in Pennsylvania to better suit an American milieu on the continental and imperial frontier. Those cultural transformations laid the groundwork for a reformed Judaism in Pennsylvania. As they continued to refashion their religiosity and themselves, Jews settled into their new homes.

But cultural integration came at a steep cost. Migration transformed the religious experiences and cultural practices of émigrés. Migratory patterns—the arrival of individuals, for

example, rather than family units and lack of organized congregations—created new opportunities for cultural change and religious syncretism. Most eighteenth-century Jewish migrants to Pennsylvania were young male bachelors who came of age in a globalized world; they traveled across the Anglo-American and European worlds, the Mediterranean, Africa, Middle East, and even Asia; and most of them adopted liberal, enlightened worldviews. Few of them arrived with extensive educations in Judaic customs and ritual practices. These migrants did not expect, nor did they find, educated rabbis (at least by European standards) on the frontiers of a global empire. Migrants committed to traditional Jewish customs and *Halakah* thus devoted their own time and expertise in the performance of ritual practices. Because individuals experienced new frontier environments in different ways, religious thinking and behavior varied widely among migrants.¹

Although a dearth of extant sources impedes a closer examination of “popular” or “lived” religion among Jews, if we define culture, not as a singular meaning but instead as a web of many meanings in constant change, various versions of Judaism emerge in stark relief—Orthodox Jews, Jewish converts to Christianity, Crypto-Jews, and “Creolized Jews” among them. At times, migrants maintained Orthodox Judaism and commitments to family and community, while they also embraced the language and principles of enlightened discourses, such as Matthias Bush, Manuel Josephson, Nathan Levy, the Gratz and Henry brothers, Barnard Jacob, Benjamin Nones, Haym Salomon, and Gershom M. Seixas. At other times, the ethnic and religious dimensions of their Jewish identities often became impediments to their acceptance. As a result, some Jews converted to Christianity, married Christians, raised their children in the

¹ Quoted John Dury, *A Case of Conscience. Whether it be lawful to admit Jews into a Christian Common-wealth?* (London, 1656.) 1-10. Stiles quoted Synder, “Place,” 147; quoted Benjamin Rush to Julia Stockton Rush, June 27, 1787, *PAJHS* 42 (1952), 189-92; Smolenski, *Friends*, 2-5; Kenny, *Peaceable*; Nash, *Quakers*, 3-10, 49-56.

Christian fold, and integrated into the dominant culture to pursue their own socioeconomic and political interests, similar to the experiences of Isaac Miranda, Phila Franks (and, at times, her brother, David), Solomon Bush, David Nones, and Samson and Benjamin Levy. Yet, to their dismay, even apostates contended with the limitations of their own ethnicity, because some Christians ignored their conversions and utilized their Jewish ethnicity to discredit them. In Pennsylvania, “Liberty of the Mind” allowed some Jewish migrants to abandon organized Judaism, or at least to hide their Judaism from their Christian neighbors. Such a reality makes it difficult for historians to know when Jews genuinely converted and when Jews hid their Judaism behind a public image as Christians. Converts and crypto-Jews associated with the emergent social and cultural worlds of their coreligionists *and* Christian neighbors, not unlike the experiences of David Franks, Nathan Levy, David S. Franks, and Jonas Phillips. An emergent liberal worldview among some migrants, and their removal to a frontier environment or port-cities without a synagogue, led to a less than stringent commitment to *Halakah*, which further eroded conservative Judaism, such as the experiences of Levy Andrew Levy and Myer Josephson. For strict adherents of Mosaic Law, “Liberty of the Mind” was therefore both a positive and negative aspect of Pennsylvania’s culture that, paradoxically, integrated Jews into the cultural fabric of Anglo-America, but also wrought dissension and rebellion within the Jewish fold.²

² Historians of early American religion heeded the advice of Max Weber and Clifford Geertz and now distinguish between the beliefs of elitist clergy and common folk who often experienced religion in very different ways than the affluent and powerful. Although scholars now recognize “two Christianities” as Hall puts it, the following shows that various versions of Judaism based on individual preferences emerged in Pennsylvania, see Pasquier, *Fathers*, 7; David Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (Cambridge, 1989), 4-5; Robert Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (New Haven, 1985), xx; Arthur Aryeh Goren, *Freedom and Its Limitations: The Jewish Immigrant Experience* (Philadelphia, 1979), 1-3, published by Gratz College, copy of pamphlet in AJHS. Goren focuses upon twentieth-century migrants, but it applies to colonial period migrants as well.

Scholars have assumed that only Sephardic émigrés engaged in crypto-Judaism. In Pennsylvania, however, Sephardim and Ashkenazim set aside their ancient feuds and learned how to cooperate with each other, which essentially eliminated the “marital barriers between the proud Sephardim and their humbler Ashkenazic brethren.” These two traditions represent distinct subcultures within Judaism, and are rooted in ethnic identities, cultural practices, and shared histories of members and descendants of specific Jewish subgroups within particular regions. Whereas Ashkenazim identified as ethnic descendants of Jews from France, Germany, and Eastern Europe, Sephardim identified as ethnic descendants of Jews from Spain, Portugal, North Africa, the Mediterranean basin, and the Middle East. Other subcultures, such as the Mizrachim, identified as ethnic descendants of Jews from North Africa and the Middle East, but not the Iberian Peninsula. Sephardim and Mizrachim had shared common histories and ethnic identities, until Muslims lost control of Iberia. In the 1490s, when Christians expelled Jews from Spain and Portugal, many Sephardim moved to North Africa and Middle East and assimilated into established Mizrahi communities.³

Jewish-gentile relationships that facilitated comity also applied to relationships among Jews of different backgrounds and subcultures. The greatest differences between Ashkenazim and Sephardim remained their ethnic identifications and national histories, which became slowly one and the same in Pennsylvania. This was especially so among second- and third-generation descendants who shared common histories and cultural experiences in America. Migrants—

³ Most scholarship on crypto-Judaism concentrates on Iberian Sephardim, see Jonathan Israel, *Diasporas Within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the World Maritime Empires, 1540-1740* (Boston, 2002); Richard L. Kagan & Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Atlantic Diasporas: Jews, Conversos, and Crypto-Jews in the Age of Mercantilism, 1500-1800* (Baltimore, 2009); David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia, 1996); quoted in *CAJ*, II, 601; Pitcock, “Commerce,” 27-29. In 1773, Isaac Touro, Sephardic rabbi and leader of Newport’s Jewish community, married Reina Hays, daughter of Ashkenazi parents of Dutch origin, see Snyder, “Place,” 207-08. Other Jewish subgroups include Yemenite, Ethiopian, and Oriental, see Milton Steinberg, *Basic Judaism*, (New York, 1965).

regardless of their ethnicities, religious preferences, or histories—arrived in London and Amsterdam, learned English, liberalized their worldviews, and anglicized their cultural habits, names, and dress, before they embarked on the transatlantic voyage. An earlier chapter has shown how the Lopez brothers changed their names, but they were not the only ones. The Gratz brothers' cousins, Solomon and Jacob Henry, changed their surname from Bloch (sometimes Bluch) to the anglicized Henry when they arrived in London. Benjamin Nunez, likewise, became Nones and Jonas Feibush became Phillips. For eighteenth-century Jewish émigrés, a change in a family's surname was not uncommon, and reveals the anxiety and self-consciousness of transplanted Jews who struggled to define themselves. When Michael Gratz wore silver “buckles” on his shoes fit for an English gentleman, Solomon Henry remarked, “Time enough for you to wear such things when you are worth a hundred thousand.” German migrants noticed such Anglicization among Ashkenazim, who remained unrecognizable without “beards and costume,” because they “are dressed like the other citizens, shave regularly, and also eat pork.” Such cultural changes serve as a reminder of Jews' long history as marginalized outsiders, as well as their desire to fit into their ever-changing cultural and social milieus.⁴

Extensive travel among émigrés exposed them to various intellectual traditions and thus forced them to change their identities and assumptions. Migrants therefore remained influenced by at least two streams of consciousness—one Anglo-American, the other distinctly Jewish. Many of them voluntarily internalized and emulated the cultural éclat of enlightenment culture and sometimes even Christians and Christianity. A result of intimate contact with Sephardim, at least a few Ashkenazim learned how to feign their conversion to Christianity publicly and how to

⁴ “Acquisitions,” *AJA* 5 (1953), 59-60; *JOP*, 11-12, 19-20; *EAJ*, II, 3-6; Pitock, “Commerce,” 3-4; *BMG*, 9; Fish, *Gratz*, 2-6; Jonathan Bloch to Solomon Henry, June/July 22, 1757, and Jonathan Bloch to Jacob Henry, February/March, 1756, McAllister Collection, HSP; quote Solomon Henry to Michael Gratz, February 16, 1760, *BMG*, 45; second quote *CAJ*, III, 1188; Nones, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 13, Folder 7, *AJA*.

embrace their Judaism privately. Parsing these identities is a difficult task and, in many ways, the true belief of several émigrés remain beyond the prying eyes of scholars. Some Jews, conversely, genuinely converted to Christianity or embraced forms of freethinking and deism. Christian conversion, real or contrived, benefitted migrants and their offspring because they enjoyed social acceptance, economic progress, and full inclusion in civil society as professing Christians. But Jews simply could not shed their ethnic identities as easily as they did their religious ones. Most Christians continued to view them as Jewish because Jewish conversions to Christianity made no difference to their bigoted neighbors.⁵

Isaac Miranda's experiences point the way toward future patterns of Jewish behavior, as well as the difficulties associated with measuring the genuineness of conversions. Migrants found it difficult to define their religious identities, chiefly because of dislocation, itinerancy, and marginalization, the results of the early modern Diaspora. A less than coherent religious commitment among some migrants meant more open-mindedness and thus willingness to entertain novel religious doctrines. Cabbalist theology and its close links to Quakerism, as we have seen, could have provided Miranda an opportunity to privately retain his Judaism, while presenting himself outwardly as a Christian. Miranda's Iberian heritage suggests he was conditioned to hide his Judaism from his neighbors, but it is difficult to ascertain with certainty whether or not he continued to do so in Pennsylvania. Miranda's conversion, whether real or contrived, however, did not provide him immunity from prejudice. Friends maintained an unusual relationship with Miranda, who earned prominent Quakers' respect and thus their

⁵ Eli Faber, *A Time for Planting: The First Migration, 1654-1820* (Baltimore, 1992), xii; Pitcock, "Commerce," 17; Marcus wrote, "Jews in America looked upon themselves, unconsciously at least, as an ethnic, rather than a purely religious community," *CAJ*, III, 1027.

political and economic patronage. Regardless of his faith and political career, Miranda's ethnicity became a liability.⁶

James Logan demonstrates the limitations of ethnic Judaism. Two natives accused Miranda of cheating them, though the charges were dropped. James Logan thus knew of Miranda's reputation as a cutthroat businessman when the two partnered in frontier land speculation. Logan utilized Shylock mythology to undermine his partner's credibility for his own financial benefit. Logan told Henry Goldney, a mutual business associate, "the man [Miranda] ought in general to be guarded against, for all his motions in relation to you, if I mistake not, will be found Insidious." Logan referred to Miranda as an "apostate Jew or fashionable Christian proselyte," who "has some design" to obtain the lands for himself. Miranda's contemporaries, as Logan demonstrates, continued to view him as Jewish. And not just any Jew but a caricature borrowed from the enduring Shylock trope. Miranda's conversion and public self-presentation as a Christian did not matter to bigoted members of the body politic. Miranda's conversion allowed him to gain political patronage, influence, wealth, and social status in Philadelphia and Lancaster, which led to resentment among Quaker competitors such as Logan. Miranda's ethnic Judaism, despite his positive image in general, could still discredit him among his neighbors, regardless of his social position and enlightened disposition. Miranda requested a "Christian-like and decent burial" for himself, which suggests that he sought to shed his Jewishness even in death. Miranda, then, may well have genuinely converted to Christianity, despite his *Marrano* heritage. But Judaism functioned as both a religion and as an ethnicity. Logan's behavior shows that Miranda, whether or not he genuinely converted, could not shed the physicality, or ethnic dimension, of his Jewishness. That some Christians could not look beyond

⁶ Shields, *Civil Tongues*.

ethnic Judaism added an additional layer of cultural baggage for Jews to consider as they struggled to define themselves to the public.⁷

David Franks shows the contentious and often conflicted nature of Jews who struggled with conversion or attempts to hide their Judaism. Scholars have suggested that David Franks converted to Christianity, married a Christian, and remained affiliated with Judaism, not out of conviction or concerns about his public image but because of his father, Jacob, an elder in New York's Shearith Israel congregation. Considering that Jacob served as president of that congregation seven times in a twenty-year period and held a doctorate in divinity, he probably disapproved of David's marriage to an Anglican, Margaret Evans. But if David only cared about Judaism because of his father, why did he continue to support and visit Jewish synagogues after his father's death? David donated £5 annually to Shearith Israel, and along with Joseph Simon attended services there on occasion. He donated to the *sedaka*, an account devoted to funding maintenance, charities, and other communal activities of the synagogue. He owned a Bible in Yiddish, in which he inscribed the message "if it be lost...return it for it is mine" on the inside cover, suggesting that his interests in Judaism never wavered much, if at all. He even grew his beard for the requisite thirty days of mourning following his father's death. Franks donated money to Shearith Israel, which ensured him a permanent seat, number 60, in the congregation. Franks rose to the highest social ranks, and joined gentiles in enlightened fellowship, but if he had converted to Christianity, then why had he not, like Miranda, taken advantage of the additional freedoms in Pennsylvania that that conversion would have opened up to him? Franks probably attended Christ Church at Margaret's insistence, or at least to cultivate a Christian

⁷ Indian Complaint Ag't J[udge] Miranda, 1730, *Pennsylvania Archives*, First Series, I, 266-67; quoted Logan to Henry Goldney, July 3, 1723, *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, VII, 77; second quote Miranda's Will, AJA; JOP, 11-12, 19-20; EAJ, II, 5.

image among his neighbors, not because he had converted to Christianity. A decade and more after his marriage, Franks “being a Jew” was “Duly sworn on the five Books of Moses,” when he testified to the veracity of a distant cousin’s will.⁸

Unlike Isaac Miranda, David maintained a commitment to cultural Judaism all his life, though he may well have been an enlightened skeptic or even a genuine convert. Other evidence, though, shows that David retained his Jewishness. After he fled Philadelphia for London and a few years before his death, Franks was “sworn on the five Books of Moses (he being a Jew)” in an affidavit. Franks may have feigned his Christian conversion while residing in Philadelphia to refashion his public persona and reputation, which gained him access to prominent gentile patrons in the community who bestowed him with economic favors. This behavior certainly mirrored his closest gentile friends and associates. Franks may well have

⁸ Beginning in 1739, David’s name was absent from the list of subscribers to fund the construction of a steeple for Christ Church, although he and Margaret attended services there on occasion. Franks refused to donate money to purchase bells for the steeple, but one of David’s vessels carried from London to Philadelphia eight bells destined for Christ Church’s steeple, see Stern, *Franks*, 7, 18-22; *CAJ*, II, 901. David remained friends to Nathan Levy, Matthias Bush, Barnard and Michael Gratz, Joseph Simon, and Myer Josephson. David was more than a rudimentary scholar of Jewish history and the Hebrew Bible, see quote in Bible of David Franks, With Inscription, 1732-1733, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 11, AJHS; “The Earliest Extant Minute Books of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation Shearith Israel in New York, 1728-1786,” *PAJHS* 21 (1913), 44-45, 53, 62-63, 102. For Bush, see Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS; *EAJ*, II, 11; *JOP*, 32-33, 42-3; Pencak, *Jews*, viii. Members of Philadelphia’s Jewish community did not ostracize Franks for having married a Christian woman, which Anglo-American Jews were wont to do with apostates. Rather, they behaved quite the opposite. Philadelphia’s Jews looked to David for guidance and support. In 1761, David served as executor of Jacob Henry’s estate, an honor he carried out for other Jewish acquaintances on several occasions, see Will of Jacob Henry, April 14, 1760, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 22, AJHS; Register of Wills, City of Philadelphia, Will No. 66, Book M, 111; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 28, 1758 and April 2, 1761; Solomon Henry to His Father and Mother, January 14, 1763, *BMG*, 60. For examples of Franks as executor of Jewish wills, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 18, 1759 and November 21, 1765; quoted in Will and Inventory of Estate of Henry Benjamin Franks, December 13, 1758, David Franks Small Collections, SC-3641, AJA. David served as power of attorney and as arbitrator of disputes for his Jewish friends and associates no less than fifteen times, see Legal Documents and Correspondence Reflecting Franks’s Activities as Colonial Attorney, 1744-1778, David Franks Small Collections, SC-3643, AJA. David’s business associates and mentees for decades, Barnard and Michael Gratz, showed him the greatest sign of deference by always addressing him as “Mr. Franks,” and thus exhibited no signs of ill will toward David for his “conversion,” see the many letters between them in *BMG*, *LFF*, and the collections of the Gratz and Franks families in HSP, LCP, APS, AJHS, and AJA. The Evans family, moreover, embraced David as one of their own, despite his refusal to abandon Judaism. Margaret’s father, Peter, even lived with Margaret and David until his death in 1745. David thereafter assisted his brothers-in-law, John Evans and Peter Robinson, in settling Peter’s estate, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 4, 1745.

played a dual role as Christian in public and Jew in private. Crypto-Judaism among Ashkenazim may well have occurred more than historians are willing to admit. During the colonial period, for example, at least 189 Jews naturalized under the Naturalization Act of 1740 in all of British North America, of which eight naturalized in Pennsylvania. Of those eight, just four took the oath on the Old Testament alone. Regardless of the genuineness of the conversions of Miranda and Franks, Jews remained reluctant to announce their Judaism in such public forums as naturalization papers, open as they were to the purview of the public. As we saw in a previous chapter, however, their reluctance to voice their Jewishness dissipated with their increased political activities in the public sphere.⁹

Michael (who Anglicized his name from Midrach) Israel's sons and grandsons show additional limitations of ethnic Judaism in popular politics; often political considerations affected religious affiliations. Anti-Jewish prejudice remained pervasive, and thus many Jews remained open to conversion or crypto-Judaism. Michael migrated to Philadelphia in the 1740s and was one of the few Jews who naturalized and took an oath on the Old Testament alone. But he married an Anglican, Mary Paxton, and fathered three children, Israel, Abigail, and Joseph, all of whom were raised as Christians, though their names are decidedly Jewish. Michael, not unlike David Franks, refused to abandon his faith, but hoped his progeny would enjoy full equality as Christians. The German Lutheran Henry Mühlenberg baptized at least one of Michael's sons. Israel Israel grew up a Christian and married a Quaker, Hannah Erwin (sometimes Irwin). Israel became an ardent patriot in the revolution, and fathered a son, John, whose name—John Israel—literally represents the amalgamation of Jew *and* Christian. To underscore this unusual dual identification with Judaism *and* Christianity, Israel named his other son, Samuel, a decidedly

⁹ David Franks, Affidavit, December 26, 1792, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 8, AJHS; Hollander, "Naturalization," 112-17. The Inquisition prosecuted crypto-Jews as heretics, see Schlereth, *Infidels*, 6-7.

Jewish name. In the radicalized environment of the 1790s, Israel, John, and Samuel engaged in partisan politics on the side of Republicans, which drew the ire of their political opponents, the Federalists, who referred to them pejoratively as “Jews” in newspapers and broadsides. Similar to Miranda’s experiences, the Israel family’s conversion to Christianity made little difference to their political foes, who wielded their Judaism as a means to discredit them. The physicality of their ethnic Judaism was an aspect of their identity from which they could never escape, and the politicization of their religion in the 1790s shows not only the enduring legacy of Shakespeare’s Shylock but also the perils of identity constructions for Jews in a Christianized milieu—even converted Jews.¹⁰

Hettie Levy arrived in Pennsylvania with her brothers in the early 1740s and married Jacob Hart and had three children. Hettie’s experiences show the difficulties associated with her Jewish ethnicity. Hart was a member of a prominent Jewish family with close ties to New York’s Shearith Israel, which implies that Hettie remained within the Jewish fold, unlike many of her brothers. When William Black arrived in Philadelphia for a conference with local natives, he visited Nathan Levy’s home. In his journal, Black referred to Nathan as a “very Considerable Merch’t” and mentioned Hettie’s agreeable disposition. Despite Black’s generally positive portrayal of Hettie, he wrote, “She was of the middle Stature, and very well made her Complexion Black but very Comely,” concluding, “We took our leave and came away well satisfy’d with the Ladies’ Company.” Even amidst a complementary remark, Black referred to Hettie’s dark skin, a symptom of the latent anti-Jewish attitudes of his milieu. Such passive

¹⁰ Scholars have shown that early modern Christians transformed their religious identities through conversations with individual Jews and close readings of the Hebrew Bible. Once Jews emerged from their cultural insularity in Europe, many of them, especially émigrés, experienced similar religious transformations of their own, see Hoberman, *New Israel*; David B. Ruderman, *Connecting the Covenants: Judaism and the Search for Christian Identity in Eighteenth-Century England* (Philadelphia, 2007); *JOP*, 31-32, 389; Morais, *Jews*, 31-4; Michael Israel, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 9, Folder 26, AJA; Pencak, *Jews*, 176, 233-53; Pasley, *Tyranny*, 98, 112. In 1752, Michael Israel naturalized and swore on the Old Testament only, see Hollander, “Naturalization,” 117.

prejudice illustrates an important point to remember about the nature of anti-Semitism. Many gentiles subconsciously discriminated against Jews and Judaism. Overt violence and other demonstrations of religious hatred against Jews remained unnecessary for Christians to constrict Jewish inclusion, or to make them feel unwanted and different, both in culture and the body politic.¹¹

When Solomon Bush solicited patronage from George Washington on at least three occasions, he made no reference to his Jewishness. A scarcity of jobs probably led Washington to ignore Bush, not an anti-Jewish prejudice against him. Bush, though, may well have imagined that he must hide his Jewish identity to gain political patronage from the likes of Washington. Bush married Ann (Nancy) Marshall, the daughter of a prominent Quaker, and was buried in Friends Burial Ground. In his obituary, a newspaper correspondent noted Bush's Christian sympathies: "Died, on Tuesday last at his country seat near Germantown, Colonel SOLOMON BUSH, after a lingering illness, which he bore with uncommon christian fortitude." Like David Franks, though, Bush did not entirely disassociate himself from his Jewish brethren. He donated funds to the construction of the Mikveh Israel synagogue and maintained close relationships with individual Jews, all while living as a Quaker convert. It is difficult to conclude with certainty that Bush hid his Judaism from neighbors, many of whom saw his ethnic identity as an obstacle to his public service. In a culture dominated by Christian sensibilities, however, it is not difficult to imagine that Bush did not wish to draw attention to his religious and ethnic differences, though he may well have genuinely converted but remained affiliated with his Jewish brethren.¹²

¹¹ Quoted R. Alonzo Brock, "Journal of William Black, 1744," *PMHB* 1 (1877), 117-32, 415-16; Pencak, *Jews*, 175-81; Kenny, *Peaceable*, 71, 89-90. Descriptions of Jews as "very black" were common in the Anglo-American world, see Felsenstein, *Stereotypes*, 50, 273; Snyder, "Place," 23-24.

¹² Solomon Bush, Will, June 8, 1795, Register of Wills, County of Philadelphia, No. 188, Will Book X, 297; Bush, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, MS-107, Box 5, Folder 36, AJA; quoted *Philadelphia Minerva*, June 13, 1795. Bush donated six pounds, see Account Book of the Synagogue Building Fund, 1782-84, Mikveh Israel Archives, *USJ*, I, 56, 68, 608-09; *EAJ*, I, 251-52, II, 508-09; Rezneck, *Patriots*, 28.

The pre-revolutionary boundaries around Penn's "Liberty of the Mind" forced some Jews to reevaluate their commitments to *Halakha*. Confronted with a host society reluctant to allow them full inclusion in civil society, Miranda was prepared to pay the full price for those privileges, but Franks was not, among many others who maintained their Judaism in the face of rampant apostasy among their brethren. Jewish migrants' religious identities therefore remained fungible, often malleable in response to specific circumstances. It is important to remember that only a handful of Jews apostatized. But, for those who did, enlightened sociability and skepticism, and the negative consequences of their religion and ethnicity, altered their views of Christians, which meant that they found Christian husbands and wives. "Jews and Christians," remarked a contemporary German immigrant, "do not hesitate to intermarry." Jewish-Christian marriages are difficult to measure with certainty, but estimates suggest that about 15 percent of Jews married Christians in the colonial period, a rate that nearly doubled in the antebellum decades. An astounding 40 percent of colonial Jews remained unmarried, a testament to conservatives' commitment to Mosaic Law. In colonial New York, 45 percent of Jewish males and 41 percent of Jewish females rejected the holy vows of matrimony. Only 16 percent of all colonial Quakers, by contrast, did not marry. Many Jews looked askance at marriage, chiefly because of the small Jewish population in the Anglo-American world. Single men made up a vast majority of Jewish migrants, which meant Jewish females remained difficult to find and court for marriage. Jews seemed to marry later in life when compared to contemporary minority groups. Males married on average at 30 years of age, while females married at 23. Although Jews enjoyed cultural integration, the limitations of ethnic and religious Judaism in early Pennsylvania caused many to seriously consider intermarriage, which impacted Jewish social relationships. The intermarriages of Phila Franks to Oliver DeLancey and her brother David to

Margaret Evans, for example, led to interfamily conflict that some historians have concluded led to familial estrangement. On the other hand, one thing remains clear about the Franks-DeLancey-Evans affair: both families benefitted socially, financially, and politically.¹³

The fate of Phila and Oliver's children remains obscured by fragmented evidence, save Anne DeLancey, who married John Harris Cruger, a scion of New York politics. Margaret and David's decision to raise their five children as Christians worked out well for the couple's progeny. Although David probably never genuinely converted to Christianity, he remained reluctant to publicly voice his Judaism. David, however, went further than did his father to ensure his own social rank, as well as that of his children. The Talmud instructs adherents that the faiths of mothers determined the faiths of children. David married a Christian, which ensured that his children experienced the cultural benefits enjoyed by Protestant Christians but withheld from his Jewish brethren. When Margaret and David's daughter Polly Franks attended the Assembly Ball, Joseph Shippen memorialized her with a few lines of verse:

With just such elegance and ease
Fair charming Swift appears;
Thus Willing, whilst she awes, can please;
Thus Polly Franks endears.

When Polly died in 1774, she was buried "in Christ Church burying ground," but not much else is known about Polly. Born in either 1744 or 1745, Abigail, or Abby, the couple's eldest daughter, married the aforementioned Andrew Hamilton, who followed his father and

¹³ Quoted *CAJ*, III, 1188, I, 289, II, 989, 1054, 1150-51. From 1776 to 1840, 28.7 percent of Jews intermarried, compared to about 14 or 15 percent in the colonial period, see Sarna, *American Judaism*, 45, and Malcolm H. Stern, "Jewish Marriage and Inter-marriage in the Federal Period (1776-1840)," *AJA* 19 (1967), 142-43; Robert Cohen, "Jewish Families in Eighteenth Century New York: A Study in Historical Demography," Seminar Paper, Brandeis University, 1972, 31, *AJA*; Pencak, *Jews*, 47-48; Stern, *Franks*, 10-15, 32; Leo Hershkowitz, ed., *Wills of Early New York Jews (1704-1799)* (New York, 1967), 119-21. For Phila and David Franks, see *LFF*, xv, 129; *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd Series (1890), II, 92; Gelles, *Letters*, xxxiii-xlii, 139-142; Pitock, "Commerce," 117-83. For close alliance of families, see Oliver DeLancey to Moses Franks, January 4, 1775, Jacob Franks to Naphtali Franks, November 22, 1743, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 7 and 12, AJHS.

grandfather into law and politics. Hamilton served as Attorney General of Pennsylvania and was an important and powerful individual in local politics on the eve of revolution. The Hamiltons supported the Penns and their proprietary allies, thus wealth and social status did not elude the newlyweds. Abby's sister Rebecca Franks befriended Andrew Hamilton's brother, William or Billy, a friendship that antedated Abby and Andrew's marriage by several years. Baptized at Christ Church, Rebecca married General Sir Henry Johnson, who fought in the revolution for the British forces. At the war's conclusion, David Franks, whose supposed loyalism ruined him, accompanied Rebecca and Henry on their Atlantic passage to England.¹⁴

Records are silent regarding David and Margaret's daughter, Richa. Jacob, though, remained in Philadelphia awhile and worked as agent for the Levy-Franks family complex. Jacob and his brother Moses fled to Isleworth, England. John, or Jack, fled Philadelphia for New York, probably to pursue his desire to launch a career as a lawyer. He eventually landed in London and took up with his uncle, Moses Franks. Moses Franks, David's son not brother, studied law at the Middle Temple and married his first cousin, Phila, the daughter of his uncle, Aaron Franks. Jack, meanwhile, married Uncle Aaron's other daughter, Priscilla. The couple embraced the Anglican faith, despite Aaron's displeasure. Aaron embraced his role as family patriarch and insisted that the couple attend the Great Synagogue in London. In defiance of such masculine paternalism, Jack and Priscilla refused, and instead attended All Saints Anglican Parish in Isleworth. David did what he could to ensure that his sons understood and respected their Jewish heritage. Jacob passed a family prayer book from one generation to the next, when

¹⁴ *CAJ*, II, 601. Isaac Markens was the first biographer to claim that Franks converted to Christianity, see *The Hebrews in America: A Series of Historical and Biographical Sketches* (New York, 1888), 71. The only other modern biographer of David Franks, Mark Abbott Stern, rejected this conclusion outright, see *Franks*, xx. For Franks children, see Charles Henry Hart, "The Franks Family," *PMHB* 34 (1910), 253-55; quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 14, 1768 and August 24, 1774; *LFF*, xv-xxv, 129; Charles R. Hildeburn, "Records of Christ Church, Philadelphia, Baptisms, 1709-1760," *PMHB* 16 (1892), 112; Franks Family Notes, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA. Poem quoted in Pencak, *Jews*, 176.

he gifted it to his son Moses. Moses passed it on to his brother David and, finally, David gave it to his son “Jacob Franks Junr.” This family heirloom demonstrates David’s resolve to keep Judaism in the family’s consciousness. Such was the power of cultural Judaism, an identity not so easily shed for any Jewish migrant, even apostates. That Margaret and David’s children shed their Jewishness by adopting a Christian one—each child was baptized at Philadelphia’s Christ Church—underscores both the fluidity and complicated nature of identity-constructions for émigrés.¹⁵

But Phila and David felt compelled to hide their Judaism, whether or not they actually converted themselves, intermarried with Christians, and Christianized their children. And they were not alone. Having married Mary Reynolds, a French Huguenot, Isaac Miranda attempted to secure the future of his three Christianized children, Samuel, George, and Mary. The names of his wife and children show how some Jews merged their Jewish identities with Christian ones. Mary and George are decidedly Christian names, but Isaac and Samuel are Jewish. Not much is known about Samuel, a rugged frontier-type who married several women. A fur trader like his father, he moved farther into the interior, where he married a Shawnee woman who bore him a son. George inherited and expanded his father’s business interests and connections. George partnered with prominent fur traders Peter Tustee and Edward Shippen (James Logan’s long-time partner). Following his father’s death, George pushed his way deep into the Ohio country to trade peltry with Shawnee. George’s Christian upbringing and his father’s reputation, wealth, and patronage connections ensured him opportunities unavailable to professing Jews at that time. George Miranda’s son, Isaac’s grandson, was also named George and owned a shop in

¹⁵ Oppenheim Collection, Box 2, Folder 83, Jacob Franks/Franks Family Prayer Book Flyleaf, 1731-1757, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 7, AJHS; Cecil Roth, “Membership of the Great Synagogue, London to 1791,” *Transactions and Miscellanies of the Jewish Historical Society of England* (1962), 179; Franks Family Notes, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15, AJA.

Philadelphia during the revolution. George, a third generation Jew, had adopted a fully Christian persona but he remained close to Philadelphia's Jewish community.¹⁶

Not only did Isaac Miranda secure the future of his son, George, but he also offered a significant sum of money in his will to a Quaker, James Hamilton, to marry his daughter Mary. The son of the famous lawyer, Andrew Hamilton, James was a premier bachelor in Philadelphia, whose family was wealthy, aristocratic, and allied with the Penn, Logan, and Allen families. Such a name and patronage landed Hamilton in the governor's mansion, among many other benefits. Miranda felt confident enough to make such a bold offer to one of the most prominent Quakers in early Pennsylvania. Miranda recognized the benefits of a marriage alliance between the Miranda and Hamilton families. The young Hamilton, however, rejected Miranda's generous offer. Did Hamilton refuse marriage because of Mary Miranda's Jewish father? One historian has argued that he did, pointing to pervasive anti-Semitic attitudes among Christian neighbors as the motivating factor in Hamilton's decision. As a leader in public life, Hamilton was certainly aware of his reputation. Hamilton, however, never married and remained friends with both Isaac and Mary, to say nothing of his friendships with Jewish émigrés who arrived after 1740. Mary and James may well have kept secret a romantic relationship, which could have simply fizzled out. In 1768, James's great-nephew, Andrew Hamilton, married David Franks's daughter, Abigail Franks, which demonstrates a predominance of Philo-Semitism in the Hamilton family. By the 1760s, such an elite marriage between Jew and gentile became a common feature among the Anglo-American affluent. The Miranda-Hamilton affair, though, shows the difficulties of finding suitable marriage partners for migrants, even elite Jewish apostates. That Andrew Hamilton married Abigail Franks, conversely, shows the widening acceptance of Jews, at least

¹⁶ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 25, 1739, January 5 and December 21, 1758, February 1 and November 1, 1759, December 25, 1760, January 1, 1761, August 12, 1762, and August 23, 1770; *EAJ*, II, 49.

among elites. Whereas James Hamilton may have feared that a marriage to a Jew would damage his public image in the 1730s, Andrew Hamilton felt no such pressure forty years later. Both Miranda and Franks cultivated public images as apostate Jews, which mitigated their status as marginalized outsiders. Social prestige had positive effects upon their children's lives. They had found acceptance in polite society, despite their ethnic Judaism, and hoped to secure similar benefits for their children. But the cost for insider status and inclusion in civil society was often their religious Judaism, which ensured a constant tension between traditional Jewish identities on the one hand and their refashioned images that projected Christian identities to the public on the other. Similar to the ways early modern Jews were ensconced between state exploitation and popular prejudice, Jews were ensconced between Christian and Jewish worlds.

The behavior of Nathan Levy's brothers, Samson and Benjamin Levy, show the complicated nature of balancing commitments to Judaism in a Christianized world. Like Miranda, Samson and Benjamin converted to Christianity and became members of Saint Peter's Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. Samson's first wife was probably a Christian. Although Benjamin married his niece Rachel, the daughter of his half-brother Nathan, the couple raised their children as Christians. Samson married a second Christian woman, Martha Lampley Thompson, and fathered several children. Like his brother Benjamin, Samson circumcised his son, Moses, but baptized his three daughters. Moses, much later in life, converted to Christianity anyway, as did his brother, Samson Jr., and, like his father and Miranda, enjoyed careers in the law. Years later, President Thomas Jefferson briefly considered Moses Levy for the cabinet post of attorney general. In the 1760s, yet another Levy brother, Isaac returned to Philadelphia from London, and partnered with David Franks. Although he never married, Isaac fathered children with a gentile, Elizabeth Pue, and the couple raised their children in the Christian fold. Members

of the Levy-Franks family complex experienced a frontier environment in several complex ways. Some members converted, some hid their Judaism, and others remained committed to Mosaic Law and organized Judaism.¹⁷

Later generations enjoyed the benefits of Christianization, but also dealt with the problems associated with the reconciliation of Jewish customs on the one hand and traditions adopted in America on the other. Some first- and second-generation migrants reconciled such shifting notions of self, but others did not. Benjamin Moses Clava, a longtime partner and business associate of the Gratzes and Levy-Franks families, married outside of the Jewish faith and ignored organized Judaism for the remainder of his life. Others, meanwhile, took advantage of Penn's "Liberty of the Mind," and may well have bridged the intellectual gaps between Judaism and Christianity, or may have even crafted religious ideas all their own. "Liberal," enlightened Jews were more likely to find themselves betrothed to Christians. Social validation among peers in polite society, economic security, and access to political power and patronage played roles in this trend as well. But so, too, did liberal thought and cultural integration into a Christianized culture. Just as eighteenth-century deism eroded conservative Christian thinking, enlightened skepticism and close interactions with Christian Hebraists mitigated strict adherence to *Halakah*. Seen in this context, some liberal-thinking Jews emphasized secular, worldly

¹⁷ Pencak argues that Hamilton feared that popular anti-Semitism would hurt his reputation among constituents if he married a Jewish woman, even a converted one, see Pencak, *Jews*, 175-77; *CAJ*, III, 1228-29. Abigail Franks and Andrew Hamilton married on January 6, 1768, see Franks Family Notes, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 7, Folder 15; Miranda's Will, AJA; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 14, 1768. The Hamilton family was well acquainted with Thomas Penn and James Logan. In 1735, Andrew Hamilton defended John Peter Zenger in a landmark libel case, which set the precedent of truth as a viable defense against libel, see Wainwright, "An Indian Trade Failure," 343. Benjamin had five children. Benjamin's son, Nathan, was buried in St. Paul's Churchyard in Philadelphia and never married; Abigail married two prominent Christians in Baltimore; Hetty never married and lived with her parents in Baltimore; no information exists about Jacob. For Benjamin's family, see Levy Family Bible and Pearce-Levy Bible Records, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 11, Folder 1, and Moses Levy Family, Box 11, Folder 2, AJA. Morais, *Jews*, 41-2; *CAJ*, II, 560, 598, 717, 850, III, 1151, 1209, 1226-29; Necarsulmer, "Lancaster," 29-44. In 1737, Isaac was in New York, and in London by 1741, see Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, June 5, 1737, October 18, 1741, and October 30, 1748, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folders 1 and 2; Samson Levy Accounting of Estate, 1781-1789, Levy Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, AJHS.

concerns over their traditional religiosity. They sometimes rejected the rigid and outdated religious traditions that, some Jews believed, continued to marginalize them from mainstream cultures. The marketplace, enlightenment culture, newspaper politics, and crypto-Judaism (or often outright conversions to Christianity) worked as antidotes to such marginalization, which explains why so many émigrés raised their children as Christians.

As the eighteenth century came to a close, many Jews reinforced their commitments to organized Judaism, and increasingly voiced their religious convictions in public forums. Sometimes traditional Jewish identities and cultural practices won out. Early modern Jews' heritages varied a great deal. Once they arrived in America, they internalized new cultural practices and habits. As a result, Jews responded to their new homes in manifold and sometimes unique ways—their experiences were certainly not uniform. Jews remained ensconced between a secularized, public world dominated by Christians and freethinkers, and a private, religious world dominated by their Jewish brethren. How they negotiated their roles in each cultural realm determined their true religious convictions, which in many ways remain beyond the prying eyes of scholars.¹⁸

Although cultural sharing combined with itinerancy, marginalization, and dislocation transformed the cultural practices of Jews and despite the predominance of liberalized Jews, conservatives abounded. Jews who resided on the frontier or hinterland were drawn to Philadelphia not just for its commercialism and culture but also to be closer to their

¹⁸ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 14, 1774; Myer Josephson to Barnard Gratz, January 1, 1764, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, AJHS; *Pennsylvania Archives*, Third Series, XIV, 157, 212; *CAJ*, I, 279, 284, II, 943; Pitcock, "Commerce," 124. Karl Marx, the son of a Jewish convert, remained indifferent toward religion at best and an atheist at worst, but his critics attacked his work as "Jewish philosophy." Numerous examples of this sort are pervasive in the historical record, see Israel, *European Jewry*, chapters 1-4; Pencak, *Jews*, viii.

coreligionists. Levy Andrew Levy expressed the desires of many Jews who lived in the wilderness. Levy admitted that living on the frontier “for nearly 38 years” had taken its toll on he and his family, which inspired him to “remove to a place where a congregation of our Society [was] and that I might bring up my children as Jews.” Even Jews who distanced themselves from organized Judaism identified as ethnic (and sometimes cultural) Jews, and thus remained associated with their Jewish friends and family, regardless of the distances or ideas that separated them. None of Pennsylvania’s frontier settlements and trading posts, save Lancaster, achieved a *minyan* (the required ten adult males for services) in the colonial period. Michael Hart of Easton was a *shochet*, or a butcher who slaughtered meat in the *kosher* manner, and “Rabby Israel” served as a teacher and performed other religious functions there. Barnard Jacob (sometimes Jacobs), an itinerant rabbi and circumciser for Pennsylvania’s Jews, lived in Reading, Lancaster, and Heidelberg. Migrants from nearby Reading and Lancaster sometimes joined their brethren in Philadelphia for communal worship services.¹⁹

For most of the colonial period, observant Jews practiced their rites and rituals within their own homes. In Philadelphia, Nathan and his family remained devoted to Judaism, instilled in them by their father, Moses Levy. In 1742, Mathias Bush arrived in Philadelphia, the most important newcomer to early Philadelphia’s Jewish community. Bush fled Bohemia (today’s Czech Republic) as conditions worsened there and built a home at Chestnut Hill, outside of Philadelphia. Like Nathan Levy, Bush remained devoted to organized Judaism. The congregation probably first met in Levy’s home, but Levy led worship services at a house on

¹⁹ Quoted Levy Andrew Levy to Michael Gratz, 1784, Gratz Papers, Henry Joseph Collection, Barnard Jacobs, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 9, Folder 28, AJA; CAJ, II, 882-3. Only a handful of Sephardic Jews arrived in the region in the colonial period, see Pitock, “Commerce,” 79-81; Brener, *Jews of Lancaster*, 4-11. German and Jewish migrants spoke the same languages and dialects and had experienced the same cultural circumstances in Germany, see Mark Haberlein and Michaela Schmolz-Haberlein, “Competition and Cooperation: The Ambivalent Relationship Between Jews and Christians in Early Modern Germany and Pennsylvania,” *PMHB* 126 (2002), 409-36.

Sterling Alley as early as 1747. In New York, Nathan was an officer in the Shearith Israel congregation, before moving to Philadelphia. As late as 1750, Nathan remained an active participant and donor to Shearith Israel, alongside David Franks, chiefly because Philadelphia had no formal synagogue or congregation. Specifics regarding Nathan's family life remain obscured by incomplete and sometimes conflicting data. Nathan may well have married twice, probably because of the ill-timed death of his first wife. Some scholars have speculated that Nathan fathered a child out of wedlock, because the Levy family did not get along well with Nathan's newest wife, Michal. William Black mentioned in his journal that Nathan's wife had recently died, but he provided no other information. Because it is unlikely that Nathan fathered a child out of wedlock, considering his devotion to *Halakah*, it is probably safe to assume that Black's account is accurate.²⁰

An Ashkenazi Jew, Levy owned "8 Span[ish] Hebrew Books" that laid out the liturgical regimen of the Spanish rite, which suggests that the Sephardic tradition prevailed. Levy, though, probably combined the prayer services and other practices of both Ashkenazim and Sephardim. Migrants could not (and most did not want to) maintain separate cultural spheres of existence, or a Jewish identity apart from their Anglo-American identity, which would, they believed, further marginalize them from the dominant culture. European Jews embraced the outsider status thrust upon them by host societies, because living separate from the dominant culture insulated them

²⁰ Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS; Hollander, "Naturalization," 117; *JOP*, 53, 392; *CAJ*, II, 329; "Minute Books," 1-45; *EAJ*, II, 6; Stern, *Franks*, 15. Rosenbach argues that the first services occurred in 1747, although Congregation Mikveh Israel recognizes 1740, see *Jews*, 6; Fish, *Gratz*, 20-21. A family legend suggests that Reverend Dr. Wyatt baptized Nathan Levy just hours before his death in 1753, but no evidence corroborates the family lore, see Levy Family Bible and Pearce-Levy Bible Records, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 11, Folder 1, AJA. In 1740, Bila Levy died, which was either Nathan's wife or child, see Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, September 6, 1741, *LFF*, 90-91, and Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 2, AJHS. Nearly a decade after Nathan's demise, Benjamin Levy, Nathan's son-in-law, sued on the grounds that Michal was insane, a claim corroborated by David Franks's signature, and was granted administrator of Nathan's estate, see Levy Family and Benjamin Levy Letters of Administration to Nathan Levy's Estate, July 21, 1761, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 10, Folder 26, and Box 16, Folder 16, AJA. In the book of Samuel, Michal was the daughter of Saul and wife of David.

from persecution, socioeconomic and political conflicts, and the corruptions of a secular world. Whereas European Jews focused upon the maintenance of traditional tenets of Judaism in a separate cultural sphere of existence, Jews acculturated, and at times assimilated, into host societies, which had “a variety of new options for Jewish self-definition.” Pennsylvania’s backcountry and hinterland produced a frontier milieu that wrought cultural changes for Jews and non-Jews alike. Such cultural transformations produced a “creolized” frontier Judaism on the margins of an empire that, over time, became integrated into the broader culture, not separated like in Europe. Such cultural integration and social acceptance eventually laid the groundwork for an expansion of religious freedom for Jews. But it also changed the nature of Judaism in early Pennsylvania.²¹

“Creolized Jews” emerged as the most common category of cultural Judaism in early Pennsylvania, which in many ways combined the aforementioned categories of Judaism, including “Orthodox Jews,” “Converts to Christianity,” and “Crypto-Jews.” Fragmentary evidence shows that migrants attempted to reconcile their traditional cultural practices, ideas, and identities they brought with them from their transatlantic points of origin with the construction of new, often original identities and cultural habits to suit their adopted milieus in America.

²¹ Quoted Levy’s Library, 1753, *AJD*, 8-10; *JOP*, 53; *CAJ*, II, 1076; second quote David Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History* (Princeton, 2010), 17; Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance: Studies in Jewish-Gentile Relations in Medieval and Modern Times* (West Orange, 1961), 131-42. Scholars have focused upon Jewish migrants’ construction of two identities, one American, the other Jewish; they have shown the cultural integration and adoption of an American identity among migrants at the same time that migrants retained a separate Jewish identity and cultural practices. Marcus argues that Jews integrated into American culture and maintained a traditional Judaism at home; Pitock agrees. Sarna argues that Jews adapted to host cultures. Cohen argues that Jews responded to the ways in which their neighbors viewed them. Sorin argues that Jews transformed their traditions in response to their participation in the dominant culture, and that Jews acculturated but did not assimilate, see Pencak, *Jews; USJ*, I, 11; Naomi Cohen, *Jews in Christian America* (Oxford, 1992); Jonathan Sarna, *The American Jewish Experience* (New York, 1997); Gerald Sorin, *Tradition Transformed* (Baltimore, 1997); Holly Snyder, “Place.” Pitock wrote, “Jews arrived in North American ports with a consciousness of a turbulent past and the awareness that anti-Jewish sentiments could undermine their stability. Aware of their perpetual marginal status, they also clung to their heritage and separate identity, one that their forebears maintained for centuries in spite of great adversity,” see Pitock, “Connection,” 123-25.

Scholars have examined the cultural transformations wrought by dislocation and migration upon émigrés of various groups. When compared to other Jewish subcultures, Jews experienced a “creolization” of Judaism, because Jewish cultural traditions in Pennsylvania changed in response to such a diverse culture. As one historian of Pennsylvania culture has shown, “creolization” was “the creative process through which individuals and groups constructed new cultural habits and identities as they tried to make Old-World inheritances ‘fit’ in a New-World environment.” Amidst their travels, in other words, migrants encountered and selected from a wide variety of cultural habits as they defined themselves and their religiosity, often blending them with traditional cultural assumptions to construct a frontier “lived” religion that varied according to individuals’ preferences and regional location. They could not, however, transplant old-world cultural traditions and institutions entirely intact to a new milieu, which led to cultural mixing that produced various kinds of Jewishness. Jews’ cultural practices were therefore shaped and reshaped in response to the pull and push of cultural forces in Pennsylvania.²²

Jewish communal leaders, the *Parnassim*, produced a cultural niche for expressions of Judaism. In the process, they combined the cultural practices of Sephardim and Ashkenazim. Such commingling of subcultures produced an original subculture of Judaism in Pennsylvania. Unlike the “Court Jews” of medieval Iberia, or the “Port Jews” of early modern Europe, or even the “Village Jews” of Germanic lands, Pennsylvania’s Jews combined the cultural practices and characteristics exhibited by each subgroup. A new subculture emerged from such cultural mixing, which included the cultural éclat, refinement, and commitment to enlightenment

²² Quoted Smolenski, *Friends*, 2-5; Schwartz, *Multitude*, 1-11, 81-119. Scholars have also addressed migrants’ “creolization” in their constructions of German and African identities, see A.G. Roeber, *Palatines, Liberty, and Property: German Lutherans in Colonial British America* (Baltimore, 1993), 6; Ira Berlin, “From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America,” *WMQ* 53 (1996), 251-88. This chapter adds a Jewish dimension to the conversations about charter groups’ identity-constructions and cultural habits, both old and new.

idealism and natural rights indicative of Sephardic “Court Jews,” the economic expertise, sociability, and affluence indicative of Sephardic “Port Jews,” and a commitment to Mosaic Law and traditional Jewish values indicative of Ashkenazi “Village Jews.” In Pennsylvania, various forms of Reform Judaism emerged that included additional cultural ingredients, including Christianity and deism or other forms of freethinking.²³

Not until the early 1760s did Jews meet regularly as a congregation when Matthias Bush took over the leadership mantle following Levy’s death in 1753. Observant Jews thereafter met in rented quarters, because no other faith save Protestants could collectively own property in early Pennsylvania. The realities of frontier culture on the fringes of a globalized empire made it difficult for migrants to maintain a strict liturgical regimen of any kind, even in private quarters. Access to important cultural practices of Jewish life and law—burials, circumcisions, marriages, *kosher* foods, prayer services, holidays, ceremonies—thus depended upon both regional location and access to a handful of itinerant rabbis, who traveled widely and performed specific religious tasks for individuals and communities in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. As a result, migrants’ cultural habits changed according to individual circumstances, a cultural situation that led to the “creolization” of Judaism. Religious activities remained mostly personal endeavors, which produced new religious identities and practices among migrants on an individual basis, not necessarily a collective one. In Philadelphia, such circumstances remained the norm, even after the construction of a public synagogue. Penn’s “Liberty of the Mind” allowed some Jews to

²³ Scholars have compartmentalized their discussions of particular groups of Sephardic Jews, including “Court Jews” of Iberia, who served as tax collectors, army suppliers, and bankers, labeled by Heinrich Graetz in the 1850s, and “Port Jews,” or the merchant-traders of numerous port cities in Europe and the Mediterranean and Atlantic basins labeled by Salo Baron in the 1930s, see Dubin, “Port Jews;” Bodian, *Portuguese Nation*; David Cesarani, ed., *Port Jews: Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centres, 1550-1950* (Portland, 2002); David Sorkin, “The Port Jew: Notes Toward a Social Type,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50 (1999), 87-97. A majority of Pennsylvania’s migrants hailed from German lands of the Ashkenazim—Levy, Franks, Simon, Gratz, Henry, Bush, Phillips, and Salomon families, among them—but additional Sephardim arrived later, including Benjamin Nones, Isaac Moses, Manuel Josephson, Benjamin Seixas, and Gershom Mendes Seixas.

maintain their intellectual individuality in the face of communal pressures to conform to their interpretations of *Halakah*, which also explains the practical reasons why some migrants converted, or otherwise fled organized Judaism. Communal leaders relaxed their demands for absolute conformity to *Halakah*, or Jewish law, a pragmatic response to new cultural circumstances on the frontier. Even amid such massive cultural changes, Jews maintained some cultural inheritances from their European pasts.²⁴

Early on, the private meetings had no formal name, organization, rules, or officers, which meant that individuals depended upon their own experiences and cultural backgrounds to lead religious services. Observant Jews performed prayer services, probably in Hebrew and Yiddish, on an individual, rather than communal, basis. And lay folk, not official clergy, performed them according to their own understandings and interpretations of Jewish laws and customs. In 1742, Barnard Jacob performed the first circumcision in Philadelphia because the community paid members of the congregation to perform specific tasks or found itinerant ministers in nearby regions to do so. Jacob Moses, for instance, traveled south from New York City to Philadelphia, and circumcised Samson Levy's son, Nathan. As late as 1768, no qualified Jew could perform proper Jewish weddings in Lancaster or Philadelphia. As a result, Gershom Mendes Seixas, *hazan* of the Sephardic Shearith Israel, made the trip from New York to Philadelphia to perform

²⁴ Rosenbach, *Jews*, 6; Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS. Many members of these families became members of London's Ashkenazi Great Synagogue, see Roth, *Great Synagogue*. That Jews altered cultural practices to suit a transatlantic frontier environment is not unique to Jews, see Patricia Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America* (New York, 1986). For transatlantic impact on religion, see David D. Hall, "Religion and Society: Problems and Reconsiderations," in Jack Greene and J.R. Pole, eds., *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore, 1984), 318-22. Snyder considers British Jews' various senses of place, such as colonial towns' social geography, political assumptions, economic development, ethno-religious composition, and social status predicated upon one's family, wealth, religion, race, ethnicity, etc., and, finally, the collective experiences of subgroups. Combined, these elements form the collective sense of migrants' social identity, see Snyder, "Place," xxiii-xxiv. Kwall argues that "cultural Judaism absent any connection to Jewish law is an impossibility," since "Jewish law and Jewish culture are forged together in the composition of the Jewish tradition," see Roberta Rosenthal Kwall, *The Myth of the Cultural Jew: Culture and Law in Jewish Tradition* (Oxford, 2015), xiii-xv. This chapter, though, shows that Jews could and did retain some Jewish traditions while loosening their strict adherence to *Halakah*.

the marriage between Ashkenazim, Miriam Simon and Michael Gratz. A dearth of qualified Jewish ministers compelled Gershom M. Seixas to take risks during wartime to travel and serve his coreligionists in a variety of regions. Seixas had sought refuge in Connecticut before arriving in Philadelphia, and risked capture by the British when he returned to New York City to marry Samuel Lazarus.

Seixas was not alone as itinerant minister because the religious needs of Jewish communities in Pennsylvania increased with continuous arrivals of migrants. From 1757 to 1790, Barnard Jacob, the itinerant circumciser, performed thirty-three procedures according to *brith milah* (ritual circumcision of males) in many regions of Pennsylvania. Abraham Isaac Abrahams, the experienced New York *mohel* (ritual circumciser) traveled as far as Newport on several occasions to perform circumcisions, and taught Rhode Islander Moses Seixas the ritual of *brith milah*. Abrahams wrote a treatise to instruct lay folk on proper procedures and techniques, which served as a reference for amateurs and underscores the crucial need for *mohels* in British North America. Because a frontier environment made it difficult to find ministers to perform *brith milah* on the eighth day after birth, according to *Halakah* standards, many parents chose to postpone circumcision, sometimes for years. Considering these cultural circumstances, Jews cared less about interpretations of Jewish law, and even less about the ethnic identities and cultural practices of itinerant ministers. They cared instead about gaining access to trained religious functionaries to perform their ritual tasks.²⁵

²⁵ *JOP*, 32, 123-24, 389; Rosenbach, *Jews*, 6; Fish, *Gratz*, 20-21; Pencak, *Jews*, 65; Isaac Mendez Seixas to Joseph Simon, June 20, 1769, Lyons Collection, *PAJHS*, 27 (1920), 170-71; Barnard Gratz to Michael Gratz, June 14, 1769, Gratz Papers, Henry Joseph Collection, AJA. For Jacob Moses, see Levy Family Bible and Pearce-Levy Bible Records, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 11, Folder 1, AJA; Circumcision Register of Abraham Isaac Abrahams, Lyons Collection, *PAJHS* 27 (1920), 150-56; Abrahams' Treatise, June 1, 1772, in Frank Zimmerman, "A Letter and Memorandum on Ritual Circumcision, 1772," *AJHQ* 44 (1954), 58-63; Snyder, "Place," 215-16.

New York's congregation enjoyed proper ritual slaughters at the hands of Jonas Phillips. Shearith Israel hired him as a kosher butcher at £35 per annum, a position he held for four years. But New York was an exception. As late as 1763, Meyer Josephson of nearby Reading asked Michael Gratz in Philadelphia to meet he and other Jews at Lancaster for Yom Kippur because "We could use you as parnass," which shows that a *minyan* was difficult to achieve in the wilderness. Jews on the frontier sometimes could not abide by the laws of *kashrut*, or dietary laws, because no one could be found to properly administer proper rites and rituals. Extant records, however, show that many Jewish men had attained a working knowledge of *shechitah* (ritual slaughter) of animals. Josephson, for example, hunted deer in western Pennsylvania and sent to Philadelphia venison that he had butchered in the *kosher* manner, though he lacked the formal qualifications of a *shochet*. He admonished the Gratzes "not to tell the other Jews in Philadelphia that I killed a deer, otherwise they will be against me." Josephson worried that he might upset the community because he was untrained in Jewish Law. The Gratzes' strict dietary observances according to "Mosaic Law," moreover, drew friendly teasing from their associate and friend, William Murray. Abigail Levy Franks admonished her children "to Never eat Anything... where there is the Least doubt of the things not done after our Strict Judaicall method." Many migrants, though, simply had no choice due to their circumstances on the frontier.

In Lancaster, Joseph Simon sought out a *shochet* from Philadelphia because a Mr. Solomon, who had slaughtered for Simon as a favor, now "refused killing" any longer. Levy Andrew Levy asked his Jewish friends in Philadelphia about the prospects of hiring such an employee on a permanent basis. Simon offered a "Sallery of £20 pr year," which underscores the cultural need for properly trained ministers on the frontier. No permanent *shochet* was to be

found in Philadelphia, or anywhere in Pennsylvania for that matter. Simon lured one to Lancaster, finally, probably from New York. Philadelphia's Jewish congregation, conversely, had no official *shochet* until the 1780s. Simon emulated the cultural patterns of behavior exhibited by his Jewish brethren in Philadelphia and, almost alone, built Lancaster's Jewish community. When Simon met his demise, the community died with him. Haim Solomon Bunn and his brother Joseph Solomon had fled New York and settled in Lancaster. Simon married Bunn's daughter, Rosa Bunn, Samuel Myers Cohen's niece, and the couple had at least eight children raised within the Jewish fold. Rosa and Rebecca Myers-Cohen, Mathias Bush's wife, were cousins. Simon's son, Joseph, never married, but his many daughters did, and more than one married into important families. One of Simon's daughters married Levi Phillips; another married Solomon Myers Cohen (Rosa's cousin). Rachel Gratz, Barnard Gratz's daughter, married Solomon Etting of York, Pennsylvania. Simon's partner and chief assistant, Levy Andrew Levy, a native of England and Simon's nephew, married Susanna, one of Joseph Simon's many daughters. Common bloodlines and the sharing and pooling of resources allowed Jewish families to flourish in the Anglo-American world.²⁶

²⁶ *JOP*, 62-63; "Minute Books," 99-100; quoted Myer Josephson to Michael Gratz, September 7, 1763, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, AJHS; second quote Meyer Josephson to Gratzes, November 10, 1764; Murray to Gratzes, May 5, 1773, May 16, 1774, Pencak, *Jews*, 186-193; third quote Abigaill Franks to Naphtali Franks, July 9, 1733, Gelles, *Letters*, 7; fourth quote Joseph Simon to Barnard Gratz, July 7, 1768, *BMG*, 86-87; Levy Andrew Levy to Michael Gratz, February 23, 1768, Gratz Papers, Henry Joseph Collection, AJA; Fish, *Gratz*, 20-21. The book of Leviticus forbids meat and dairy products in the same meal and certain seafood and animals; animals must be slaughtered and prepared in a certain way; *CAJ*, II, 603, 883; Cohen's Will, August 11, 1741, Oppenheim Collection, Box 2, Folders 22 and 72, AJHS; Bunn, Bush, Simon, undated, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 5, Folders 35, 36, Box 14, Folder 41, AJA; Pitock, "Commerce," 1-46, 78; *EAJ*, II, 9; Hirsh, "Lancaster," 91-105; Necarsulmer, "Lancaster," 29-44; Stern, *Franks*, 6, 25. Trivellato shows similar marriage patterns in Livorno, see Trivellato, *Strangers*. There has been some confusion about Abraham Franks, because Malcolm Stern listed Abraham as Jacob's brother in his *Americans of Jewish Descent*. In 1782, David Franks wrote a letter to Tench Coxe and Andrew Hamilton, in which he states that Abraham Franks of Montreal was his brother, see David Franks to Tench Coxe and Andrew Hamilton, May 10, 1782, Herbert H. Franks to Malcolm Stern, May 26, 1987, Stern to Franks, November 21, 1987, Franks File, Small Collections, SC-3644, AJA.

In 1747, Richard Locke, an Anglican missionary, recorded that Lancaster was home to “ten families of Jews,” the required *minyan* for religious services. Lancaster joined Philadelphia in observing Jewish cultural practices in closed quarters, probably in Simon’s home, especially on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays. Simon even taught Hebrew to curious admirers. Jews in nearby towns and settlements, such as Northumberland, York, Reading, and Pittsburgh, joined their brethren in Lancaster for prayer services. Before 1760, Lancaster rivaled Philadelphia as the center of Judaism in colonial Pennsylvania. Simon, like Philadelphia’s leaders, probably blended the cultural practices of Ashkenazim and Sephardim to suit the mixed backgrounds of the congregants. They worshiped together, apparently without much dissension, as they had for generations in Amsterdam and London. Cross-cultural interactions and intermarriage among Sephardim and Ashkenazim was common in colonial Pennsylvania, as it was throughout the Anglo-American world, thus it is unsurprising they joined together in common worship. So common was such commingling of Jewish subcultures in British North America that it was not well understood elsewhere. In 1729, for example, the *hazan* of Curaçao agreed to contribute funds for a new synagogue in New York, if the “asquenazim” held no authority or votes, and if the services remained Sephardic in nature. But New York’s *Parnassim*, both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, had already agreed to Sephardic cultural practices and, despite some non-religious social conflict among congregants, Ashkenazim had enjoyed both votes and authority in the community for several decades. In any case, Simon’s will notes a “silver plate used for religious services,” and the small congregation used an ark to house at least one Scroll of the Law, or Torah, all of which Simon bequeathed at his death to his son-in-law, Levi Phillips. Following Phillips’s death, these items became the property of Philadelphia’s congregation. Because no

formal synagogue existed in Lancaster or Philadelphia in the colonial period, Joseph Simon and David Franks attended services in New York.

In a period when Jewish conversion to Christianity became normalized, the Gratz and Henry brothers retained their Jewishness and helped to forge a formalized congregation in Philadelphia. In his will, Jacob Henry gave £10 “for support and repair of Jews’ burying-ground, Philadelphia,” and Michael Gratz gave half that amount in his will. But the Gratz brothers, especially Barnard, provided leadership, which spearheaded the construction of numerous Jewish institutions, including a synagogue, schools, and other charities and benevolent societies. They also ensured that their Jewish brethren gained access to proper knowledge and tools for circumcision and *kosher* foods. The Gratz and Henry families came from a deeply religious heritage rooted in the cultural norms of German Ashkenazim. “Put your trust in God,” Jonathan reminded Barnard, “[and] remember our departed parents and keep your soul pure.” Sometimes strict commitments to *Halakah* strained social relationships with gentiles. Michael, for example, refused to conduct business on the Sabbath—Saturdays, not Sundays—and other Jewish holidays, to the chagrin of his Christian business associates. In July 1776, when topics of conversations focused upon politics and war, Michael hoped that Barnard, who was in Pittsburgh, would make it home to Philadelphia for Rash Hashanah. Barnard responded with a request for Michael to send his prayer books to Pittsburgh. Such commitments to traditional Jewish cultural values guided the brothers’ leadership of the Jewish community.²⁷

²⁷ Quoted Richard Locke to the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, April 11, 1747, *PMHB* 24 (1901), 475; Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS; *CAJ*, II, 883-4; Necarsulmer, “Lancaster,” 29-44; Stern, *Franks*, 41; second quote Hazan of Congregation in Curacao to Parnass of Congregation in New York, 1729, Lyons Collection, *PAJHS* 27 (1917), 3-4; third quote Hirsh, “Lancaster,” 101. “Minute Books,” 53. Much later, Naphtali Phillips claimed that New York’s Shearith Israel became factious following the arrival of Ashkenazim in the 1750s and 1760s. Phillips’s attitude shows the enduring legacy of Sephardic stereotypes of Ashkenazim, enflamed by the arrival of waves of Jewish migrants from central and Eastern Europe in the 1840s, see Pencak, *Jews*, 52-3, 36-37; quoted Will of Jacob Henry, April 14, 1760, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 22, AJHS; Solomon Henry to His Father and Mother, January 14, 1763, and Second Will of Michael Gratz, June 15, 1765, *BMG*, 60, 74-

By 1761, the community grew so large that the small house on Sterling Alley became insufficient. Barnard Gratz, who became *parnas* (or president) of the small informal community, had begun plans to build a formal public synagogue. Jacob Henry was excited about the prospect of a public sanctuary, but he remained concerned about the form of service it would offer congregants. This was an important consideration, because Ashkenazim dominated the congregation, yet had adopted several Sephardic cultural practices. The Gratz, Levy, Franks, Bush, Simon, Salomon, Phillips, and Henry clans hailed from Germany and thus identified as ethnic Ashkenazim. The Nones, Josephson, and Seixas clans, conversely, hailed from Iberian lands and thus identified as ethnic Sephardim. In London, the Gratz and Henry families had gained prominence in the Ashkenazi Tudesco congregation. In New York, conversely, the Ashkenazim minority embraced the liberal Sephardic cultural *éclat* of Shearith Israel. The cultural practices of Philadelphia's congregation, then, remained dynamic and unique for its diversity and acceptance of Jews from various backgrounds.

Although many of the differences between Ashkenazim and Sephardim remained negligible, interpretations of *Halakah* varied somewhat between them. Adherents of each subculture observed differently the Jewish holiday of *Pesach*, or Passover, the commemoration of the Jewish Exodus from Egypt. Sephardim, in accordance with Orthodox Judaism, ate rice, corn, peanuts, and beans in observation of this holiday, while Ashkenazim did not. On *Chanukah*, Sephardim enjoyed potato pancakes, while Ashkenazim ate jelly doughnuts. Prayer services differed, as Sephardim employed unique melodies derived from their collective Iberian

75; Fish, *Gratz*, i, 7-8; second quote Jonathan Bloch to Barnard Gratz, March 24, 1756, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, AJHS; Jonathan Gratz to Michael Gratz, August/September 28, 1752, McAllister Collection, HSP; William Murray to Barnard and Michael Gratz, May 15, 1773, Michael Gratz to Barnard Gratz, July 12, 1765, Michael Gratz to Barnard Gratz, July 24, 1776, *BMG*, 130-31, 75, 158; Barnard Gratz to Michael Gratz, August 17, 1776, Gratz Papers, Henry Joseph Collection, AJA.

past, which they brought with them to Philadelphia. The pronunciation of Hebrew words differed between them, and each tradition developed its own language as well. Yiddish, a Hebrew and German dialect unique to Ashkenazim, remained an important dimension to their identity. Yiddish was the conduit through which family loyalty, support, and ideas flowed back and forth between Philadelphia's Jews and their families in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. It was the first language of the Gratz brothers, Henry brothers, and later of Philadelphia's Jewish leaders, such as Posen-born Haym Salomon and Jonas Phillips. In a similar way, Sephardim blended Spanish and Hebrew to construct their own Ladino dialect, an important dimension to their identity as well. Most Ashkenazim, though, embraced Sephardic pronunciations of Hebrew words and adhered to Sephardic cultural norms during Passover, but continued to speak and write Yiddish.²⁸

In this cultural context, Jacob Henry inquired to his cousin Barnard about which Jewish subculture's practices the new synagogue would privilege, whether it would be "Hambro, Pragg, or Poland style." The Hamburg synagogue was one of Europe's most famous religious sanctuaries and one of the centers of Jewish Enlightenment, or *Haskalah*. It conducted its services in the liberal and more socially respectable Sephardic tradition. Prague and Poland, conversely, became known for the region's conservative traditions of Ashkenazim. The evidence suggests that Philadelphia's *Parnassim* assuaged the concerns of its diverse congregants with cultural flexibility. The Ashkenazi Nathan Levy, for example, owned Judaic books of the Iberian Sephardic variety, and led meetings according to those tenets. Mathias Bush, who assumed informal leadership following Levy's death, adopted some rites and rituals

²⁸ Fish, *Gratz*, 9; Steinberg, *Basic Judaism*, 3-30, 116-158; Maxwell Whiteman, "The Fiddlers Rejected: Jewish Immigrant Expression in Philadelphia," in Murray Friedman, ed., *Jewish Life in Philadelphia, 1830-1940* (Philadelphia, 1983), 80-81.

of Ashkenazim, yet retained some of the traditions performed by Levy. Likewise, the Gratz brothers, though certainly liberal and enlightened, embraced the traditions of their Prussian homeland, so that Philadelphia's congregation intertwined practices from various traditions. "I think it will be best after the old mode of Pennsylvania," Jacob admitted to Barnard, "The Same Seemingly Suites every Body." According to Jacob Henry, the American methods of Jewish worship—"the old mode of Pennsylvania"—meant the amalgamation of various cultural practices borrowed from the cultural habits of more than one Jewish subculture. And the fact that apostates and other freethinking Jews continued to frequent nearby Jewish communities ensured that even some Christian ideas and even forms of deism penetrated the congregation and its members. Abigail Levy Franks, for example, utilized Christian teachings to instruct her children. "Live by that golden rule," she admonished her son Naphtali, "doe As You would be don by."²⁹

Jacob recognized that Philadelphia's Jewish community could not maintain strict adherence to any specific interpretation of *Halakah*, chiefly because the experiences of émigrés combined with Pennsylvania's frontier milieu altered Jewish minds and expectations as much as it altered their cultural habits. Two predominant subcultures, moreover, threatened to split an already small congregation. Jacob, perhaps unwittingly, described the formations of "creolized" religious identities rooted in combinations of ideas and practices borrowed from Jewish traditions, Christianity, and freethinking. Protestant Christians, Quakers in particular, dominated Pennsylvania's cultural landscape, which limited the ways in which Jews could express their religion. Such boundaries placed around religious freedom had unexpected consequences,

²⁹ Quotes Jacob Henry to Barnard Gratz, January 7, 1761, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, and Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS. Marcus interprets Henry's remark, "the old mode of Pennsylvania," as an allusion to Quaker rituals or the abandonment of Judaism entirely, see *EAJ*, II, 55-56; quoted Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, July 6, 1740, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, AJHS.

because it forced congregants to look to both their Christian neighbors *and* coreligionists for religious support and guidance, regardless of differences among them. Many migrants thus relaxed their devotion to strict interpretations of *Halakah*, in order to cultivate solidarity as a counterpoint to prejudice and marginalization. “The old mode of Pennsylvania” produced an American subculture of Judaism, not entirely Sephardic or Ashkenazic. Jacob also recognized several practical reasons for why the congregation ought to implement a tradition that “suits everybody.” He reasoned, correctly, that dissension among congregants did nothing to further their acceptance and inclusion among Christians. If communal leaders did not cultivate solidarity, they risked the dissolution of the congregation.

Philadelphia’s Jewish leaders built no synagogue in the 1760s, or even in the next decade. But the small private congregation continued to meet for prayer services. In 1768, Jewish leaders conducted two separate prayer services, both with *minyans*, during the High Holy Days, each in a private home, possibly to satisfy its diverse congregants. One congregation met in the home of Mathias Bush, the other met in the home of Barnard Gratz. It is possible that dissension among congregants over cultural practices, which had concerned Jacob Henry, destroyed the possibility of a single, unified synagogue at that time. Although fragmentary evidence impedes a definitive answer, Protestants who controlled the assembly probably refused Jews the right to build a public sanctuary. Considering their treatment of religious dissenters and nonconformists, radical Whigs did not want a Jewish house of worship in the city. The synagogue was but the main building of a complex of ritual houses of worship, which, if constructed, would surely insult Christian sensibilities in the community. With no accessible space large enough to accommodate the growing numbers of congregants, Jewish leaders probably split the

congregation into two groups out of practical concerns, though dissension may well have been a factor as well. Whatever the reasons, no Jewish sanctuary appeared in Philadelphia at that time.

Although congregants did not own a “Scroll of the Law,” or Torah (the five books of Moses), until 1761, Philadelphia’s small congregation renewed plans to construct a permanent sanctuary. In 1771, the Gratz brothers rented a larger room on the second floor of Joseph Cauffman’s house on Cherry Alley and a year later, Myer Myers, a capable New York silversmith hired by the Gratz brothers, fashioned a permanent American-made Torah holder for the congregation. They invited Gershom Mendes Seixas once again to Philadelphia, where he officiated at the consecration of a private congregation that now hired a permanent beadle, had its own scroll and prayer books, and accepted a silver pointer gifted by Shearith Israel. Private worship services became more regular and the community hired assistants under the presidency of Barnard Gratz, who also owned liturgical works by a Sephardic martyr of the Inquisition, Abraham Athias. That an Ashkenazi Jew owned such a treatise provides further evidence of the cultural prestige of the Sephardic tradition, as much as it does the pervasive cultural mixing among leaders.³⁰

A German newspaper announced that an organized synagogue had opened in a private apartment in Philadelphia, a bold public pronouncement for any religious minority group, especially non-Christians. That the leaders of the congregation felt confident to publicly announce its existence suggests that Jews and Judaism in Philadelphia had gained significant ground toward cultural integration. The makeshift synagogue sat in town, surrounded by the

³⁰ Wolf and Whiteman argue that Jacob wrote this in a facetious manner, see *JOP*, 41. Pencak argues that the congregation was split into two camps, see *Jews*, 196-98. Mathias Bush to Barnard Gratz, November 7, 1769, Etting Collection, HSP; Morais, *Jews*, 11; *CAJ*, II, 880-97; Myer Myers to Michael Gratz, January 26, 1772, *BMG*, 121; Barnard Gratz to Michael Samson, October 15, 1771, Etting Papers, HSP; *Pennsylvania Ledger*, July 8, 1775; *EAJ*, II, 57-58; *CAJ*, I, 323-25, 446-47, II, 881, III, 1554.

business district. If any internal disputes over cultural practices endured, congregants set them aside and united to inaugurate the private house of worship. The *Parnassim* hired formal officers to oversee prayer services. As early as 1774, Israel D. Lieben served the congregation as *shochet*, but his methods of slaughter led to a controversy and he was dismissed. Two years later, Michael Gratz, president of the congregation, hired Ezekiel Levy as *shochet*, to serve as *hazan* or reader of the congregation, and to serve as teacher of Hebrew, or *melammed*, to six impoverished children. The ensuing one-year contract paid Levy £30 per annum, in addition to room and board.³¹

Ashkenazim leaders, revealingly, wrote the draft of the congregation's first constitution in Yiddish, interspersed anglicized words throughout the document, and modeled it on the Sephardic constitution of New York's Shearith Israel. The constitution required that congregants purchase seats to raise money for communal use, and established a "Board of Five," or "communal leaders" who selected presidents of the congregation. The Board of Five must choose "a God-fearing man who is desirous of according justice to everyone...[and] Every householder is obligated to...submit to any orders of the president in the synagogue," the constitution read. That only males could serve as president, and that the *parnas* wielded wide-ranging authority over his brethren, mirrored the gender patterns in Jewish family life, particularly masculine paternalism akin to Christian patriarchy. When the 1776 state constitution affirmed the property rights for all religious bodies, officers of the congregation pledged money to build a synagogue. Barnard and Michael Gratz led the way with a pledge of £10 each for

³¹ *Pennsylvania Staatsbote*, July 30, 1771; Articles of Agreement between Michael Gratz and Abraham and Ezekiel Levy, June 18, 1776, Henry Joseph Collection, AJA, transcription in *AJD*, 104-05.

three years, and other Jewish officers made similar pledges. The outbreak of warfare and British occupation of Philadelphia, however, put these plans on hold, at least for a time.³²

The limitations of traditional Jewish modes of authority became evident in New York and Philadelphia. Naphtali Phillips remembered, “the [New York] trustees...were absolute masters of the life and liberty and fortunes...of everybody who was a member of the community.” In Pennsylvania, though, elders could not control congregants’ thoughts and behavior in such a liberal atmosphere. Talk of individualism and nonconformity found receptive ears in Jewish circles. “There never was a time,” Phillips wrote, “whether it was the spirit of the new country or not, when there was that implicit obedience from the congregation to these edicts that there had been in Amsterdam.” A distinct rift developed between younger members of the congregation and elders, as well as class antagonisms among congregants, which only deepened when the imperial crisis commenced. In an era of tremendous social transformation and cultural change, some Jews challenged traditional modes of social and cultural authority within the Jewish fold. Philadelphia’s elders watched and learned from New York’s incessant conflicts, and thus relaxed their demands for strict communal conformity.³³

In other cultural spaces, however, Philadelphia’s congregation behaved in traditional ways, such as the establishment of a congregational fund that assisted local coreligionists and transients. Impoverished strangers passing through town not only received assistance but also proper burial in consecrated soil if they happened to die in residence. The private congregation thus conducted alms in Philadelphia. Jews associated their successes as merchant-traders and

³² Constitution in Yiddish in the Henry Joseph Collection, AJA, see translation and quotes in *AJD*, 94-96; Contract Between Congregation and John Danahue and Edward McKegan, April 22, 1782, *JOP*, 118-9; Calvert, *Constitutionalism*, 253-61; Frost, *Perfect*, 64-75.

³³ Quoted Naphtali Phillips, “Unwritten History,” *AJAJ* 6 (1954), 86-87, 95. New York’s Shearith Israel fined troublemakers in the congregation and even expelled those who frequently disturbed congregants, see Pencak, *Jews*, 53.

enlightened elites, regardless of their private religious convictions or marriages to Christians, with commitments to social justice. Benevolence and philanthropy served as positive reinforcements of Jews as useful, productive members of their communities, which normalized Jews and Judaism in Pennsylvania. Isaac Franks was known for his philanthropy, and “annually gave to the Poor...Five Thousand Pounds” of his “reputed worth [of] Three hundred thousand pounds.” “Nor was his Benevolence limited to his own People,” according to the *London Evening Post*, “for Numbers of Christians have frequently felt his Bounty.” When Abigaill Levy Franks died, newspapers exclaimed, “To the Poor her Bounty was diffusive,” just one among many examples of Jewish women’s philanthropy celebrated in public forums.³⁴

Conservative views, though, dominated the realm of communal discipline, though their results were mixed at best. Communal leaders led a movement rooted in a recommitment to uphold *Halakah*, which supplanted the unrestricted individualism that many migrants had enjoyed for decades. Isaac Abrahams of Baltimore, for example, caught Ezekiel Levy of Philadelphia shaving his beard on the Sabbath. Abrahams informed the president of the congregation, Jonas Phillips—a devout Jew who once paid a £10 fine for his refusal to testify in court on a Saturday—but Phillips dropped charges due to a lack of evidence. That Levy was in Baltimore, not Philadelphia, demonstrates conservatives’ commitment to maintain traditional cultural habits among all congregants, regardless of their location. Leaders found this goal difficult and eventually impossible. But they tried hard. Manuel Josephson, a devout Sephardic Jew who arrived during the war, petitioned Philadelphia’s *Parnassim* for the construction of a

³⁴ Constitution, *AJD*, 94-96; Pencak, *Jews*, 56-59; quotes *London Evening Post*, October 30, 1736, *New York Mercury*, May 24, 1756, Oppenheim Collection, Box 2, Folders 92 and 94, AJHS. Jews moved into mainstream culture but maintained conventional Jewish customs that emphasized family values in individuals’ lives, see Herman Lantz and Mary O’Hara, “The Jewish Family in Early America,” *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 7 (1977), 247-259.

ritual bathhouse according to *Halakah*. To ensure divine favor, Josephson cited the book of Exodus 20:18, which demands a “batheing place...for the purification of married women at certain periods.” Jewish law forbade children conceived during a woman’s menstrual cycle, Josephson reminded them, thus the salvation of their progeny demanded ritual cleansing. Josephson pointed out that Jews in London and Amsterdam refused to intermarry with colonial Jews, “to our great shame and mortification,” he was quick to point out. Josephson believed that this was the result of migrants who abandoned their strict adherence to Mosaic Law. His appeals fetched the attention of communal leaders. Elders thereafter constructed a ritual bathhouse and placed it under Josephson’s supervision.³⁵

Despite the attempts by Josephson and others, Jewish leaders relaxed their stringent commitment to force all congregants to observe *Halakah* as they defined it, a departure from the cultural practices of other Jewish communities in Anglo-America and Europe. Sabbath-breaking and infrequent synagogue attendance remained a source of contention but just a few problems among many. The community attempted at first to enforce strict marriage laws, for example, when they forbade the marriage between a Christian woman, Elizabeth Whitlock, and a Jewish man, Jacob I. Cohen. They even instructed Gershom Mendes Seixas not to marry them and threatened congregants with punishment for participation in the marriage. Whitlock and Cohen married anyway and moved to Richmond. As a testament to the gradual amalgamation of Jew and Christian, twenty-eight years later, Cohen was elected president of Mikveh Israel and returned to Philadelphia with his gentile wife.

After about 1790, intermarriage only became more common, usually between Jewish men and Christian women. Yet, intermarriage did not halt Jewish men who retained various

³⁵ Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, 1782-1791, September 15, 1782, *JOP*, 125; quotes Petition of Manuel Josephson, May 21, 1784, *AJD*, 134-36.

dimensions of their Jewishness. Dr. David Nassy noted this phenomenon when he remarked that Jewish men were “lawfully married to Christian women who go to their own churches,” but “the men...[go] to their synagogues.” Jews and Christians lived in harmony and “when together, frequent the best society.” Sometimes intermarriage allowed Jews to experience the best of both Jewish *and* Christian worlds, even if it caused dissension in the congregation. Moses Nathans, likewise, fathered out of wedlock three children with a Christian woman. Nathans had one of his boys circumcised by Mikveh Israel’s *hazan* over the strenuous objections of Manuel Josephson, and even had his mistress converted and married according to *Halakah*. The congregation buried Benjamin Moses Clava in consecrated soil, even though he had married a gentile woman and was not a member of the congregation. Clava contributed funds to construct the synagogue, which probably led elders to compromise. They allowed Clava’s burial, in other words, without ritual washing and clothing. But congregants ignored the edicts of communal leaders, and not only buried Clava but also washed and clothed him. For those on the frontier, like Barnard Jacob, the absence of elders and community discipline allowed him to marry the divorced wife of his friend, Isaac Levy. An ancient cultural practice required a Jewish widow to marry her late husband’s brother. Sheftall Sheftall of Savannah, however, promised his brother’s widow, Eleanor (Mathias Bush’s daughter who had married Moses Sheftall), a formal “leviration,” or a release from that obligation, which he granted three months after his brother’s death. Eleanor was freed to marry whom she pleased. These outcomes underscore the limitations of Jewish leaders’ ability to enforce communal discipline in a Christianized culture rooted in eighteenth

century liberalism. Those limitations produced various versions of Jewish cultural habits in a frontier wilderness.³⁶

In response to eighteenth-century cultural transformations communal leaders relaxed their commitments to *Halakah*. An examination of the changing gender roles of Jewish women shows the cultural impact of a frontier environment at the grassroots level. In 1743, when Nathan Levy married Michal, Abigaill Levy Franks, Nathan's sister, wrote of the marriage, "it is a great Disadvantage for a man to keep house without a good Mistress, Soe that a Wife to him is a Necessary Evill." Although upset at Nathan's second marriage, Abigaill alluded to Jewish cultural domesticity rooted in masculine paternalism and practiced by Sephardim and Ashkenazim. Jewish notions of masculine paternalism have deep roots in classical antiquity and ancient Judaic consciousness. Hellenistic and Roman polytheism espoused tales that reinforced the relationship between masculinity and a father's authority over his family. Cronos (Roman Saturn) castrated his father, Uranus (Roman Caelus), and because he feared the same fate awaited him, he devoured his offspring—a scene depicted in Goya's famous painting. Zeus (Roman Jupiter) alone escaped unscathed and eventually displaced Cronos as chief deity. As the sky god, Zeus assumed the paternal function as the dominant deity, and his masculinity was such that he jealously guarded his paternal authority. Ancient Judaism formulated a monotheistic faith along similar patriarchal lines a millennium before the Greeks and Romans. The biblical figures of Jehovah and Abraham represented ancient Judaic patriarchy. The male gender of the Supreme Being—Christians adopted this notion and supplanted Yahweh with Jesus—established His proper masculine virility and power. Jews and, later, Christians took these classical and

³⁶ Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, Volume I, 1781-1795, May 29, August 12 and 25, 1782, and March 16 and 20, 1785, Benjamin Nones to Shagnar a Shamaim, August 7, 1793, *AJD*, 115, 120-1, 123, 138-41, 187-89; *JOP*, 126-9, quotes on 224; Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 9, Folder 28, AJA.

Judaic ideas and applied them to social relationships within family structures. The eldest male of any Jewish clan, the patriarch, assumed the patriarchal authoritarianism exhibited by the likes of Zeus and Abraham. In Pennsylvania, however, these cultural norms changed. Although Jewish elites often provided dowries to arrange their daughter's marriages, this ancient practice all but disappeared by the dawn of the nineteenth century, which mirrored Christian practices.³⁷

Female Jews, for their part, conducted domestic life and child-rearing, a pattern that mirrored the roles of contemporary Christian women. Female Jews, unlike their Christian counterparts, played an important religious role in the household. In Europe, the internal, private dynamics of Jewish family life was often more matriarchal than patriarchal, a custom that remained essentially in place on American shores. In Pennsylvania, Jewish women not only conditioned the spiritual welfare of members within the household but also nurtured emotional ties that mitigated the anxieties of family members who traveled abroad. The power structure that prevailed in early Pennsylvania's Jewish families placed Jewish women in influential positions. In Silesia, for example, Gittel and Leah Gratz, sisters of the Gratz brothers, were arbiters of *Halakah* within the household. They performed fasts for the family's protection, led proper observations of Sabbath and Passover, and conducted other Jewish festivals and holidays. Such roles remained normative for Jewish women in Pennsylvania. Whereas men determined the contours of religious cultural practices, women determined settings and preparations within the household and instilled piety in children. Jewish women ensured proper observance of *Halakah* in the home, such as inspecting butchered meats, soaking and salting meats before cooking, and ritual cleansing before meals. They prepared Sabbath meals before dusk on

³⁷ Quoted Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, June 7, 1743, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 2, AJHS; Jaher, *Scapegoat*, 37-38. Pitock suggests that Michal may have been of lower social status or perhaps Sephardic, see Pitock, "Commerce," 139, and marriages between Ashkenazim and Sephardim, see Sarna, *American Judaism*, 5-19.

Fridays, kindled the lights for Sabbath and other Jewish festivals and holidays, and maintained ritual purity during menstrual cycles. They traditionally had little roles to play in the public worship and administration of synagogue affairs; women did not pray at the three requisite times of day, did not study the Torah in any systematic way, and rarely appeared in synagogue save special occasions such as *Purim*. Religious rites and rituals in the home therefore remained under the purview and supervision of women, especially when no synagogue was available—such was the case in Philadelphia before 1782.

Jewish men's gendered sphere, meanwhile, remained the governance of synagogue life and the affairs of the secular world, not unlike their Christian contemporaries. Jewish women, though, sometimes experienced domestic gender roles differently than did their Christian neighbors. But the fluid nature of Jewish gender roles, which eroded traditional gender boundaries, and the commitment of both women and men to a shared communal ethos resembled the Christian "deputy husbands" of colonial New England that Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has examined. For both Jewish and Christian women, their relationships to their husbands remained more "complementary and independent than separated and exclusive." Such shared and overlapping duties reinforced and balanced gender and faith in the formation of a multitude of "creolized" identities. Such cultural transformations also wrought dissension within Jewish homes as within the synagogue.³⁸

³⁸ Lantz and O'Hara, "Jewish Family," 247-259; Jonathan Bloch to Barnard Gratz, March 24, 1756, Gratz Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, AJHS; Fish, *Gratz*, 7-8; Jonathan Gratz to Michael Gratz, August/September 28, 1752, McAllister Collection, HSP; Snyder, "Place," 224-26; Howard Adelman, "Rabbis and Reality: Public Activities of Jewish Women in Italy During the Renaissance and Catholic Restoration," *Jewish History* 5 (1991), 30-32; Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge, 1995), 29; Karla Ann Goldman, "Beyond the Gallery: The Place of Women in the Development of American Judaism," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1993), 11-18; Holly Snyder, "Queens of the Household: The Jewish Women of British America, 1700-1800," in Jonathan D. Sarna and Pamela S. Nadell, eds., *Women and American Judaism: Historical Perspectives* (Hanover, 2001), 15-45, quote on 16. For "deputy husbands" see, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York, 1980). Ulrich argues that the erosion of gender boundaries in rural, frontier environments began long before the American Revolution, also see

For Jewish merchant-trader families, whose men traveled to the frontier and abroad often, women adopted male gender roles to run retail shops and transact business affairs in their husband's absences, an outcome with no precedence in the Jewish past. Jewish widows often engaged in business or continued to run established ones, thereby blurring the boundaries of proper gender behavior as well as private and public spheres. In 1728, for example, Abigaill Levy Franks's stepmother, Grace, remained for twelve years a shopkeeper in New York in the wake of Moses Levy's death, even after Grace had married into the prominent Hays family. In 1782, when the *Parnassim* dedicated a formal public synagogue in Philadelphia, women's gender roles changed because religious ceremonies moved from private quarters to the public square. A shift in the practices of Judaism and a liberal observance of Mosaic Law meant that Jewish women took an active role in public synagogue affairs, which differentiated them from their Christian sisters and their female European counterparts. And an emergent literary sphere and reform-driven antebellum culture that produced many charitable organizations and voluntary associations offered both Christian and Jewish women opportunities to fashion their own public images and, in the process, opened additional spaces for women in public life. The antebellum careers of Rebecca Gratz, Lydia Maria Child, and Grimké sisters offer examples of this trend.³⁹

idem, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York, 1991), 75-101; Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Cornell, 1980); idem, *Founding Mothers & Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York, 1997). Nancy Cott argues that gender boundaries remained firm, at least among urban elites committed to traditional notions of gender as "separate spheres," see *The Bonds of Womanhood: 'Woman's Sphere' in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven, 1977), 5-10.

³⁹ Abigaill to Naphtali, December 12, 1735, Franks Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, AJHS. Such examples are replicated in New York, Newport, Savannah, and Caribbean, see Snyder, "Place," 224-32; idem, "Queens," 17-20. Natalie Zemon Davis argues that European Ashkenazi-Jewish women sometimes enlarged private space of individual households to accommodate conventional public space, such as Sabbath observance, see *Women on the Margins*, 42-43. Goldman shows that home-based religious life, the religious sphere of Jewish women, shifted to the synagogue in response to social changes, but that women's religious sphere remained separated from male's religious sphere, see Goldman, "Gallery." For antebellum women's role in reforms of civil society, see Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling*; Ashton, *Gratz*.

Jewish family conflict that resulted from intermarriage offers yet one more glimpse into the impact of cultural mixing in a frontier environment. Benjamin Nones, who publicly defended Judaism as compatible with republicanism, maintained a conservative disposition throughout his life. Yet, try though he did, he could not control the behavior of his offspring, a pattern experienced by many of his brethren. Despite his father's devout commitment to *Halakah*, David Nones expressed deep anxiety about his father's reaction to his impending marriage to a Christian woman he had met in Spain. Jews, especially second-generation migrants, found it difficult to maintain their Jewishness in a Christianized milieu. David informed his father, "I have been united to a Charming Woman." But "your feelings will be wounded," David admitted, because she is Christian. Yet, please do "not let passion get the better of affection," David begged, and asked his father for "a few lines containing your forgiveness & blessing." David received a letter from his father, but Benjamin withheld his "forgiveness" and "blessing." David's tone remained anxious in future letters, in which he continued to solicit his father's approval, and even implored Benjamin to forgive him, "if you still acknowledge your son." David sought Benjamin's permission to marry a non-Jew, and not just any gentile, but one educated, multilingual, and the daughter of a Prussian diplomat. But Benjamin withheld his approval on religious grounds.

At a time when Jews endured prejudice and marginalization that led many of them to abandon their faith and marry Christians, it is somewhat remarkable that Benjamin maintained such a strict adherence to Orthodox Judaism. Benjamin did not shelter himself in an island community reminiscent of European ghettos as old-world Jews were wont to do. Instead, he took advantage of the widened cultural spaces in Philadelphia, which allowed him to balance his commitments to both his faith and to his adopted community. At the same time that Benjamin

served as president of Philadelphia's Jewish community, he also held leadership positions in Sons of St. Tammany, French Society of Friends of Liberty and Equality, Democratic Society of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, Freemasonry, and True Republican Society of Philadelphia. On the other hand, the pull of American culture was attractive to David Nones, whose experiences as a second-generation émigré led him to intermarry with a Christian. David, though, promised his father that she would convert to Judaism. Whether or not David and his gentile wife kept that promise matters less than the anxiety David felt about his father's reaction to his insolence; more important still, Benjamin could do nothing about it. Masculine paternalism was still a cultural force to be reckoned with in Jewish circles, even in the antebellum decades. But its cultural importance waned among many Americanized Jews, whose liberal dispositions mirrored their Christian contemporaries. In the end, David may well have adopted the contemporary pattern among his male brethren and attended Jewish synagogue while his wife attended Christian church.

Philadelphia's elders had learned important lessons from the dissension that had wracked New York's community since the 1720s and, though they tried hard to enforce conformity, they could not maintain a unified Judaism rooted in one, strict interpretation of *Halakah*. New York's elders demanded absolute conformity to their patriarchal authority and exhibited a class bias against those less affluent in the community. When revolution came along with the British shortly thereafter, those divisions within the quarrelsome community deepened even more, as loyalists forced patriots to flee to Philadelphia. Many refugees remained in Philadelphia after the war precisely because of the cultural flexibility of communal leaders and congregants. But that

flexibility upset the more conservative members of the congregation, usually Ashkenazim, who agitated for a separate *minyán*, which became a reality at the dawn of the nineteenth century.⁴⁰

Pennsylvania's cultural forces produced many versions of Judaism in Pennsylvania that looked far different than in Europe or elsewhere in Anglo-America. When Moses Seixas of Newport asked Manuel Josephson about the gap between *din* (law) and *minhag* (custom), or ideals and practice, among American Jews, Josephson unleashed a scathing indictment of the chaotic observances of ritual customs in eighteenth-century Jewish congregations. Unlike in Europe, Josephson claimed, where local customs are written down and observed in a scrupulous manner, "our North American congregations...have no regular system," because American Jews moved frequently from one region to another, and "from their first establishment they had no fixed and permanent rules." Eighteenth-century migratory patterns, dislocation, and marginalization had altered Jews and Judaism. Itinerancy placed migrants "in a state of fluctuation," because "every new comer [who] introduced something new, either from his own conceit and fancy, or...from the custom of the congregation where he was bred, or the one he last came from" had produced numerous interpretations of *Halakah*. Josephson even criticized Gershom M. Seixas, "who...collected some materials...and patched up a system of ceremonies of his own" in Philadelphia and New York. Jewish cultural practices, then, depended on the various "*hazanim*" across Anglo-America, whose individual interpretations of *Halakah* differed, and "no sooner another one succeeds, some new customs and formalities will be introduced." Jewish religious traditions and Jews' individual identities were neither uniform nor static but manifold and variable. Internal disputes over doctrine within Mikveh Israel finally led to an

⁴⁰ Quotes David B. Nones to Benjamin Nones, May 27, June 11, and August 24, 1810, Nones Papers, Box 1, Folder 2, AJHS; Muraskin, "Nones," 382. Pencak wrote of New York's congregation, "Feuding within the congregation had split families, caused children to leave the faith, retarded population growth by discouraging marriage, and led to both litigation and physical violence," see *Jews*, 54-62.

official split when, in 1801, Philadelphia's Ashkenazim incorporated as the Hebrew German Society Rodeph Shalom. By 1812, it worshiped in the German tradition and conducted services in Yiddish. Yet, when large groups of Jewish migrants arrived in droves in the antebellum decades, Philadelphia's congregations practiced a cultural Judaism unrecognizable to them.⁴¹

Dependent upon a myriad of factors, Migrants' defined themselves and their faith in various ways. In their various definitions of "self," émigrés considered their regional location, employment opportunities and economic competition, social and family ties in the colonies and in Europe, ethnic, racial, political, and religious affiliations, friendships and patronage networks, among many other factors. Cultural interactions with Christians and other cultural mixing ensured that Jewish agency was never static. At times, Jews shaped the outcome; at other times, their neighbors did so. Often still, a combination of internal and external factors shaped Jewish outcomes. Through selective incorporation and rejection of new ideas and habits, Jews fomented hybrid cultural forms and practices that fitted well into Pennsylvania's complex cultural landscape. Jews made Pennsylvania home and, after several generations working toward practical cultural integration and legal equality, they and their various forms of Judaism had no intentions of going anywhere.

⁴¹ Quotes Manuel Josephson to Moses Seixas, February 4, 1790, Lyons Collection, *PAJHS* 27 (1920), 185-90; Solomon B. Freehof, "An Eighteenth-Century American Responsum," *AJA* 5 (1953), 121-25; Jeannette W. Rosenbaum, "Hebrew German Society Rodeph Shalom in the City and Country of Philadelphia," *PAJHS* 61 (1952), 84-86.

CONCLUSION

ANGLO-JEWISH INTEGRATION & THE SOURCES OF FREEDOM

Anglo-Jewish integration described in the preceding pages was accompanied by pervasive and persistent anti-Jewish stereotypes utilized by Protestants to undermine Jews' increasingly enviable positions in civil society; yet, Jewish activism and behavior surmounted prejudices that sought to marginalize them. Jews therefore redrew the boundaries around freedom. Scholars of early American religion have too narrowly defined religious freedom, focusing on its legal dimensions at the expense of the cultural. This study has shown that a wider definition of freedom—corporeal, social, economic, political, *and* legal—underscores how abstract ideals like religious liberty functioned at the grassroots level of early Anglo-American culture. An examination of how Jews *experienced* freedom also underscores the substantive roles that Jews played in the cultural transformations that reformed acceptable behavior for minority religious groups in the public sphere. Such transformations produced increased opportunities for various religious persuasions and opinions to proliferate in civic culture. An “uncivil religion” in public discourses thus laid the groundwork for a robust religious pluralism in antebellum culture.

Jews established their professional identities as merchants; found social validation and enlightened fellowship; enjoyed friendships and favors from economic and political patrons; became proprietary partisans, revolutionary Whigs, and Republicans in local and national politics; achieved emancipation and government employment in state and federal politics; and constructed various versions of cultural Judaism, albeit in many ways reformed versions of Judaism. And they did this while combatting a persistent ebb and flow of anti-Semitic outbursts at the hands of the Protestant majority, which they often overcame with newspaper defenses that preserved their reputations and honor and furthered their political careers. After 1800, Jews in

Pennsylvania achieved full cultural integration and found productive ways to balance their many dimensions of Jewishness and communal responsibilities with various commitments to civic culture. This outcome is remarkable because they contended with evangelical impulses of proselytizing Christians, which gained momentum in the antebellum decades through sermons and reform societies directed at the conversions of Jews, such as the American Society for Colonizing and Evangelizing the Jews and Female Society for Promoting Christianity Among Jews.

Although some Jews embraced conversion, these cultural resources were necessary for professing Jews' reconciliation of manifold Jewish identities with a variety of Anglo-American ones, often in response to the push and pull of domestic and transatlantic cultural habits and intellectual traditions. The unfortunate truth of latent prejudice led many to flee the Jewish fold for Christian ranks, or at least to hide behind a public Christian façade. But some politically-minded Jews, now with confidence, did not hesitate to voice their Jewish and political persuasions in newspaper politics, symbolic of their reconciliation of forms of Judaism with Anglo-American culture. In 1782, public Judaism in the form of a synagogue stood valiantly in the same city square alongside other Christian denominations as a testament to Jews' efforts to remain pillars in civil society through integration, even as Jews fought an international war with the British and domestic battles with their cultural and political foes. Although it was a long, slow unfolding of public religious freedom, Jews laid the groundwork for such a process, not Protestants alone.¹

¹ Rejecting a strict binary of identities, American and Jewish or Whig and Tory for example, Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper offer a framework for situating various identities along a spectrum, which provide nuanced and ever-changing constructions of many identities, see "Beyond 'identity,'" *Theory and Society* 29 (2000), 1-47. For Christian conversion efforts in antebellum culture, see Thaddeus Mason Harris, *Pray for the Jews!* (Boston, 1816); Joseph Samuel C.F. Frey, *The Converted Jew* (Boston, 1815); *American Society for Colonizing and Evangelizing the Jews* (New York, 1820); *Female Society of Boston and Its Vicinity for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews*

Jews' efforts to establish their religious freedom and their legitimacy in society took physical form in attempts to create two public institutions fundamental to their faith, a cemetery and a synagogue. That a discussion of *public* religious expressions of Judaism occurs at the end of this study is not without symbolism of its own because Jews constructed Mikveh Israel with little public fanfare. In a revolutionary environment of Whig radicalism and paranoia, congregants did not want to anger German Lutheran Henry Mühlenberg and his allies. When, in 1738, Nathan Levy's child (perhaps his first wife) died of a mysterious disease, a cemetery became a real possibility. Jewish cultural traditions rooted in *Halakha* demanded proper rituals, including burial in sanctified soil. Levy applied to the chief proprietor, Thomas Penn, for the right to purchase a plot of land to bury his child. Levy, tellingly, bypassed the Quaker-controlled assembly and applied directly to a prominent, enlightened Jewish patron. Penn could now imagine his Jewish friends as equals and believed they were deserving of public spaces to express their Judaism. Penn agreed to sell the land to Levy, "wherein the child of Nathan Levy was buried," provided it remained on the outskirts of town, between Eighth and Ninth Streets, several blocks away from the hustle and bustle of the city's central marketplace at Market Street. Although Levy intended to use the plot as a communal burying ground, Penn granted Levy's request with the explicit understanding that Levy would bury only members of his immediate family. The long tradition of European Jews' development of burial societies—the functions of *hebra kadisha* included prayer for the deceased, proper burial preparations, funeral, and mourning after the ceremony—remained essentially obsolete in Pennsylvania. Led by Levy, Philadelphia's small, private congregation assumed the responsibilities once reserved to an independent society, which underscored their need for a communal cemetery. Just two years

(Boston, 1823); *American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews* (New York, 1829), copies in AAS. For Jewish responses, see Sarna, "Jewish Response," 35-51.

later, Penn granted Levy a second plot of land, just “thirty feet square” at Spruce Street between Eighth and Ninth Streets, which he intended once again for the Levy family’s personal use. Jews’ cultivation of networks of patronage and positive public images had paid off. Unlike Protestant graveyards, the cemetery was placed outside of the city for the personal use of “Mr. Nathan Levy and Family” only, which underscores an inconvenient truth for Jews in the colonial period. Even among the enlightened Penn family—whose members had adopted enlightenment philosophies enough to have moved away from organized Quakerism and toward enlightened skepticism—Jews remained outsiders. They could practice their rites and rituals individually in private, but certainly not collectively in public, at least not yet. That religious freedom was malleable and changeable, not hardened and absolute, however, gave Jews hope because they could gradually redraw those boundaries. And that is precisely what they did.²

Newspapers provided Nathan Levy the opportunity to defend Judaism from prejudice when vandals desecrated Philadelphia’s small Jewish cemetery, which was common in the colonial period and one among many cultural holdovers from Europe. On two occasions, Jacob Franks of New York City advertised a £5-reward for information regarding damages to the Jewish cemetery’s walls and fences on the outskirts of town. In Philadelphia, bullet holes riddled the wooden fence and brick wall that surrounded the burying-ground, which destroyed a tombstone in the process. Such anti-Jewish behavior provided Jewish leaders with an opportunity to test the cultural power of the printed word. Levy erected a larger brick wall to protect the hallowed grounds, before publishing his response. Levy’s plea was probably the first

² Quotes in Thomas Penn to Benjamin Eastburn, September 25, 1740, Pennsylvania Manuscripts, 1684-1772, VII, HSP; Jewish Cemetery, Ninth and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 16, Folder 1, AJA. By the antebellum decades, Philadelphia’s Jewish population was so large that communal leaders revived the tradition of outsourcing funerals to independent burial societies, see *JOP*, 24-25, 266-67; second quote Morais, *Jews*, 200; third quote Rosenbach, *Jews*, 8.

time that a Pennsylvania Jew explicitly referenced Judaism, much less defended it, in periodicals directed at a popular audience. Levy promised a modest “twenty shillings reward” for information that led to convictions of the “unthinking” perpetrators. Levy asked that his neighbors respect he and his Jewish brethren and, revealingly, signed his name, which suggests that Levy must have felt confident that his reputation in the community carried some weight. Anti-Semitic behavior, while rare when compared to Europe, shows that at least some inhabitants of the city did not want expressions of Judaism in Philadelphia’s public life, even outside of the city proper. Jews, then as today, contend with such latent prejudice.³

Historians have speculated about who committed the crime and for what reasons. A lack of extant evidence allows for a greater degree of speculation regarding the vandals’ motivations. Levy’s motivations, conversely, rest on firmer footing because the patronage networks cultivated by his family offered him the opportunity to construct the cemetery in the first place, and newspapers provided him a public space to contest anti-Semitism. In this case, Christians responded with bigotry, but the evidence suggests that, after Levy made his public appeal for basic dignity and decency, desecration of Jewish graves halted in Pennsylvania, which may well mean that Levy’s appeal did not go unnoticed and even perhaps unheeded. Jews had successfully altered the attitudes of some of their neighbors toward Jews and Judaism. The evidence, however, points to a paradox for many Jews in early Pennsylvania. At the same time that they participated in the secular marketplace, enlightenment culture, and popular politics, bigotry and prejudice remained a central part of their lives, often the consequence of their increased public exposure. Levy, for example, made additional petitions to the Penn family to increase the size of the Jewish burial grounds for a growing community of about a dozen

³ Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism*, xix-12; *New York Gazette*, July 21, 1746, September 10, 1751; Pencak, *Jews*, 188-90; Levy quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 29, September 19, 1751.

families. The Penns denied Levy's requests, probably because they feared the responses of other Protestants and sectarian dissenters. Quakers, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and other Christians might resent such public displays of the Jewish faith. Christian sensibilities took precedence, because of their numerical and moral majorities. Although the Penn family remained friendly toward Jews and patronized their businesses and, in exchange, Jews supported the proprietary faction, the Penns and their allies also wished to keep the Jewish community as much out of the public eye as possible. It was, after all, politically expedient to do so, because the Penns wished to maintain their tenuous political coalition. The Penn family's views toward Jews and public Judaism, of course, contradicted and frustrated Jews' visions and efforts toward equality. But the Penn family was nothing if not practical. They recognized that the favors they bestowed upon Jews held the potential to incite extralegal violence among the prejudicial masses. The Penns' conclusion, in fact, was not unfounded. In New York City, for example, a Christian mob attacked a Jewish funeral procession. Although the disgruntled crowd destroyed Jewish property, no one was injured save the honor of the dead. Aside from a few exceptions, such overt anti-Semitic violence was uncommon in British North America and the early republic. In New York, the popular press even defended Jews and reprimanded the mob for its conduct. The correspondent "saw nothing but decency on their [Jews] part," in the face of a "Rabble" and "Scandal to...Christianity." Ten years later, London experienced the violence perpetrated by vigilante mobs in response to the "Jew Bill." Parliament thereafter abandoned their commitment to empire-wide Jewish emancipation. Despite their tremendous gains toward cultural

integration, the specter of violence and prejudice remained palpable for Jews throughout the Anglo-American world.⁴

Philadelphia's reaction to anti-Jewish sentiment offered yet more hope to Jews. When word about the popular violence in response to the "Jew Bill" reached America, pundits defended their Jewish friends in a series of newspaper articles. Drawing from a familiar argument, newspaper correspondents, almost certainly an elite Jewish patron such as Benjamin Franklin, stressed the usefulness of Jewish wealth and business acumen to Britain's political economy. Such an argument mirrored those made by Members of Parliament in debates regarding naturalization in 1740. The "Jew Bill" ought to have stood, another Philadelphian agreed, chiefly because it would "encourage rich Jews, who live in foreign countries, to remove, with their substance, and settle here, instead of France or Holland." For Philadelphians, then, political economics that fostered frontier expansion mattered most in a world in transition from imperial mercantilism to liberal capitalism, a world that held the potential to surmount differences of religion, nationality, and class. In Lancaster, Joseph Simon's partner, William Henry, referred to his friend as "a Wealthy Jew of High Character," and Lancaster's Anglican rector called Simon "worthy [and] honest." Even staunch Christians defended their Jewish friends in public forums. When Pennsylvania's state constitution excluded Jews from civic culture, "A Protestant" encouraged his coreligionists to emulate "The Jews...example...who, at the time of their Passover, refrain from the tempting lucre of gain during the course of almost a week." Such public defenses of Jews and Judaism remained as uncommon as anti-Jewish violence. Any public defense or positive depiction of Jews and Judaism by Christian pundits,

⁴ Morais, *Jews*, 200-05; Pencak, *Jews*, 175-259; Samuel Oppenheim, "Disgraceful Acts of a Mob at a Jewish Funeral in New York, 1743," *PAJHS* 31 (1928), 240-41; quotes *New York Weekly Journal*, May 16, 1743; *EAJ*, II, 517-18.

though, suggests significant gains for a people whose history was defined by their oppression and marginalization for millennia at the hands of Christians and other gentiles. As a reminder that anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism stood together, Lancaster's Presbyterian minister David McClure claimed Jews "hesitate not to defraud." Jews, nevertheless, were on the front lines in the battles that determined their proper roles in civil society; they played active roles in a slow transformation of Jews as outsiders to Jews as insiders, despite persistent prejudice.⁵

That Philadelphians publicly defended Jews suggests that the reversal of the Shylock trope, which now presented Jewish businesspeople in a positive light, had gained some traction in Pennsylvania. Less bigotry in America when compared to London, though, did not mean political equality for Philadelphia's Jews, nor did it proffer public spaces for a Jewish synagogue. Their ethnic Judaism and bigotry against them reminded them daily of this unfortunate truth. Colonial governments, including Pennsylvania's assembly, continued to pass their own laws that excluded non-Protestants from political culture. Politicized Protestant clergy and laity thrust anti-Semitic barbs at Jews. That the mob violence against public displays of Judaism was broadcasted in newspapers across the colonies underscored that Jews could not entirely escape the old-world prejudices many of their neighbors continued to harbor against them. Waves of European immigrants in the last half of the eighteenth century brought with them fresh anti-Jewish attitudes as well. Levy could own and operate an expansive and highly successful merchant business, even alongside the businesses of Quaker merchants. He could associate with gentiles in polite society. Levy could even own and operate a small private Jewish cemetery for him and his family. A larger, communal Jewish cemetery within the city proper remained impossible at that time, because it assaulted Christian sensibilities in the community. In 1752,

⁵ Quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 1, 1753; Pencak, *Jews*, 50; Lancaster quotes Brener, *Jews of Lancaster*, 8-11; third quote *Pennsylvania Packet*, December 23, 1784.

John Penn, finally, granted Levy a third expansion, which increased the size of the small cemetery to “thirty feet wide and sixty feet in depth.” Penn, however, demanded that Levy pay an annual tax of “five schillings sterling,” an insulting, if nominal, price for an expansion of public religious freedom. Penn also permitted Levy to construct “an alley of ten feet wide from Spruce Street.” That Penn granted a small expansion, despite the “tax,” shows that the cultural methods employed by elite Jews could redraw the boundaries that constricted their public expressions of Judaism. When Nathan Levy died on December 23, 1753, his brethren buried him in the center plot of the small cemetery he had helped construct. Benjamin Franklin’s *Pennsylvania Gazette*, fittingly, lamented Levy’s death for “the fair character he maintained in all his transactions” a public disavowal of Shylock’s mythology.⁶

By the middle of the 1760s, a windfall of political fortunes allowed Jews to expand the small cemetery. The opening salvos of the revolutionary crisis alleviated some of the political factiousness that defined Philadelphia’s politics much of the colonial period, which provided another opportunity for Jews to widen the parameters around their public expressions of Judaism. In 1765, Mathias Bush applied to the Penn proprietors for more land with which to increase the size of the Jewish cemetery on Spruce Street. Although the Penns expanded Philadelphia’s Jewish cemetery twice, in 1740 and 1752, it was still not large enough to accommodate the

⁶ Jaher, *Scapegoat*, 1-113; Leon H. Elmaleh and J. Bunford Samuel, *The Jewish Cemetery, Ninth and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1906), 1-9; Stern, *Franks*, 21-22; Penn quoted Morais, *Jews*, 200; Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS; quoted *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 27, 1753. In Lancaster, meanwhile, Joseph Simon and Isaac Nunus Ricus became grantees, “In trust for the Society of Jews settled in and about Lancaster, to have and use the same as a burying ground,” which established the first Jewish cemetery in Lancaster. Unlike Philadelphia’s sanctified soil, Lancaster’s cemetery was established for communal usage at the outset, sanctioned once again by the Penn family. Lancaster was not a political hotbed like Philadelphia, thus the Penns had no qualms extending to Simon the right to express Judaism in Lancaster’s public life. Although Lancaster had a Jewish cemetery, no evidence suggests that a public synagogue was erected before 1867. In 1781, Lancaster boasted fifteen paying congregants. Lancaster harbored refugees during the revolution, but the turmoil of warfare forced the small community to disband. In 1804, Simon died, and his community died with him. Simon’s family moved to Philadelphia, and a Jewish community did not emerge again in Lancaster until the 1850s, see, Hirsh, “Lancaster,” 95; Necarsulmer, “Lancaster,” 29-44; *CAJ*, II, 884.

growing congregation. John Penn granted Bush's request, and gave Bush permission to erect larger walls and even a gate, which increased the size of the cemetery to "thirty feet by thirty-five feet and an half, and thirty feet by one hundred and twenty-five feet and an half." Penn, finally, acknowledged that a communal cemetery on Spruce Street was "also for the use of the Hebrew Congregation of this city...[as] a burial place for the interment of Hebrews." That elite Jews had befriended the Penn family through participation in the marketplace of goods and ideas, social clubs and other activities of polite society, and supported the proprietary faction essentially en masse played central roles in Penn's decision. The expansion of Philadelphia's Jewish cemetery underscores the benefits of merchant and proprietary identities, patronage, polite fellowship, and newspaper and popular politics for Jews and points the way toward greater public religious freedom for non-Christians.⁷

Expansions to the size of the Jewish cemetery emboldened Jews in Philadelphia to construct the second fundamental intuition to their faith, a synagogue. It helped, too, that the Jewish population in Pennsylvania had naturally grown. Displaced refugees from New York, Savannah, Charleston, and Newport arrived in Philadelphia, some with a keen sense of *Halakah*, others with more liberal, enlightened dispositions. Philadelphia's Jewish population swelled from about 300 individuals in 1775 to more than 1,000 in 1783. After the war, the population stabilized between 500 and 1,000. New York's Gershom Mendes Seixas, Savannah's Mordecai Sheftall, and Charleston's Isaac Da Costa arrived in war-torn Philadelphia with the ritual property of their congregations, significant wealth, intellectual know-how, and ambition.

⁷ Marietta, *Reformation*, 150-279. Vandals harmed the cemetery, which led to the construction of walls, but the British also executed deserters in front of the cemetery, which also damaged tombstones and walls, see Jewish Cemetery, Ninth and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 16, Folder 1, AJA; Philadelphia Land Grants, 1684-1772, Pennsylvania MSS., VII, 39, HSP; Map of the Jewish burial ground on Spruce Street, 1765, Congregation Mikveh Israel Records, Box 1, Folder 8, AJHS; Oppenheim Collection, Box 1, Folder 84, AJHS; quoted in Morais, *Jews*, 201-02; *EAJ*, II, 6-7; *JOP*, 24-5, 33-4, 53.

Perhaps the greatest proponent of a strict observance of Mosaic Law, Manuel Josephson arrived from New York during the war and remained in Philadelphia thereafter. A German migrant who had lived for decades in New York, Josephson was the “most learned Jew” in America. He was trained in Hebrew and held the largest Hebraic library at that time. Josephson sat on New York’s *beth din* (rabbinical court of justice). Such erudite and wealthy Anglo-American Jews joined forces with Philadelphia’s established Jewish elites, and together they drew up detailed plans for the construction of Mikveh Israel—The Hope of Israel—Philadelphia’s first public Jewish house of worship.⁸

When Philadelphia’s Whig leaders granted charters of incorporation to the Jewish congregation, Barnard Gratz commenced negotiations to purchase a lot on Sterling Alley, within sight of Cherry Alley, on which to build the sanctuary. Isaac Moses drew up a formalized constitution and rules, and congregants elected him president. The five original “adjuntas,” or Board of Five, remained in place. Communal leaders established a charity fund to support the less affluent in the community and a building fund to raise the requisite monies for a public sanctuary. Elizabeth Whitlock enjoyed the benefits of the charity fund, when she could not pay rent following her husband’s death. Whitlock had married a Jew, Moses Mordecai, and changed her name to Esther Mordecai, presumably without rabbinical approval, which makes it all the more extraordinary that communal leaders approved such charity to an apostate, widow or no.

⁸ *JOP*, 55-120, 398. The evidence remains ambiguous, but it is possible that Philadelphia’s Jewish leaders borrowed the name, Mikveh Israel from the congregation on the island of Curaçao, the oldest organized community in this hemisphere. However, neither the congregation’s constitution of 1770 nor Ezekiel Levy’s employment contract of 1776 mentioned the name. It probably derived from Savannah’s abandoned sanctuary of that name because Mordecai Sheftall had fled Savannah for Philadelphia during the revolutionary crisis. Early in the 1780s, Sheftall became involved in the planning process for Philadelphia’s sanctuary, and it makes sense he would have wanted to honor Savannah’s then-defunct congregation, see *AJD*, 94-96, 104-5; Rosenbach, *Jews*, 16-17. Much of the records of Mikveh Israel prior to the revolution have not survived, hence the ambiguity, see *CAJ*, II, 880-82; quoted in Snyder, “Place,” 220, note 30; Will of Manuel Josephson, no. 256 (1796), Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, *CAJ*, II, 1076, III, 1554.

But they disapproved of her impending (second) marriage to Jacob I. Cohen. Benevolence of this kind, though, became a distinct feature of Jewish culture in Philadelphia. Hannah Levy, for instance, received similar assistance, as did an impoverished French boy and two transient Polish Jews, to name only a few examples.⁹

Needing authorization to construct a synagogue from Jewish leaders in London and Amsterdam, Jews drafted letters in Hebrew that asked for permission to commence the construction of Mikveh Israel. With proper blessings from their brethren, fund-raising commenced in earnest and carpenters and masons received contracts to begin construction. Sixty-one individuals pledged funds that totaled £897. As a testament to continued anti-Jewish attitudes among their Christian neighbors, however, Jewish leaders received notice that members of the German Reformed Church, led by Henry Mühlenberg, whose building conjoined the building site of the synagogue on Sterling Alley, objected to the project. (The same German congregation lobbied for a Christian oath for public servants in Pennsylvania’s Constitution of 1776, which barred Jews from wielding political power until the Constitution of 1790.) Without animosity, elders drafted letters and delivered them to the German congregation. Those friendly letters voiced Jews’ commitment “to live in friendship with our Neighbors,” and even offered to sell the land to the Germans at cost. They received no response from Mühlenberg, of course, but the meaning of the episode was not lost on congregants. Despite the significant gains Jews had made over the course of several decades, they still remained unwanted “others” and “outsiders” (or worse, godless heathens and infidels) in the eyes of some Christians in their communities.¹⁰

⁹ Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, Volume I, 1781-1795, March 25, May 29, August 12, 1782, and October 14, 1790, *AJD*, 115, 120-1, 171-72; Dedication of New Synagogue, 1782, Mikveh Israel Records, Box 1, Folder 10B, AJHS.

¹⁰ Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, 1782-1791, April 14 and 25, 1782, Contract Between Congregation and John Donahue and Edward McKegan, April 22, 1782, quote Isaac Moses, Barnard Gratz, Jonas Phillips, Benjamin Seixas, and Simon Nathan to the Reformed German Congregation, May 1, 1782, *JOP*, 115-18; Account Book of the Synagogue Building Fund, 1782-1784, Lyons Collection, *PAJHS* 27 (1920), 461-2.

The *Parnassim*, undaunted but certainly insulted, raised additional monies, and purchased another lot north of Cherry Street, around the block from the Germans. There, the first public synagogue in Philadelphia was built—the tiny red brick building was “thirty feet from East to West and Thirty Six feet from South to North”—a half block from Zion Lutheran Church and across the square from the Methodist Church. Jewish leaders solicited funds from prominent gentile friends and patrons, as well as from Jewish communities throughout the Anglo-American world. A typical letter read, “during this calamitous War,” we have “undertook to build a place of Worship...having hitherto substituted a room for that purpose, from which we were compelled to move by the owner.” Joseph Cauffman gave no reason for having forced his tenants to move, but if the behavior of the Germans provides any indication, Cauffman probably did not want to agitate the ire of his Christian neighbors. Six years later, conversely, when the congregation faced a debt of £800, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas McKean, David Rittenhouse, among other Jewish patrons, donated money to the synagogue.¹¹

In March 1782, Barnard Gratz, Hayman Levy, Jonas Phillips, Benjamin Seixas, and Simon Nathan signed a memorandum—collectively known as the “adjunta,” or board of directors—formally set forth “a Congregation to be known and distinguished by the name of Mikve Israel in the City of Philadelphia.” Thirty-six men signed their names to the first list of congregants, showing that some ancient cultural practices such as gender roles died hard. Looking ahead with optimism, Jonas Phillips even made plans for the construction of a schoolhouse, ritual baths, and residence for the *hazan* on the backside of the lot behind the synagogue. As dedication day approached, congregants equipped their synagogue with ritual

¹¹ Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, Volume I, 1781-1795, June 30, 1782; Jewish Appeals to Gentiles of Philadelphia, April 30, 1788, *AJD*, 115, 121, 142-43; quotes Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, 1782-1791, April 25, May 28, June 9, 23, 25, 27, and 30, August 18, 1782, *JOP*, 117-20; Dedication of New Synagogue, 1782, Congregation Mikveh Israel Records, Box 1, Folder 11, AJHS; Morais, *Jews*, 19-20.

objects. Solomon Myers Cohen gave a cloth to drape across the reader's desk. Abraham Mendes Seixas gave a silver cup and Philip Lyon gave a glass luster. The ark that contained the Torah hung on the eastern wall and, according to Sephardic tradition, a reader's table faced it. Female congregants raised funds to purchase curtains that draped across the ark, additional silk cloth for the reader's desk, and covers for scrolls. Male congregants sat along the sides of the building, with the *hazan* in the middle. Female congregants, meanwhile, remained separated, relegated to a balcony, which ran along each wall save the eastern. To reinforce gender-based authority, elders constructed two alleyways, one east for females and one west for males, which ensured separate paths for men and women entering and exiting the building. Oil lamps, meanwhile, burned in perpetuity in honor and memory of the dead.¹²

Elected as the congregation's president two days before the consecration ceremony, Jonas Phillips asked Gershom Mendes Seixas, who had assisted the "adjunta" in construction planning for the synagogue, to attend the September dedication of Philadelphia's first public sanctuary as *hazan*. At three in the afternoon on Saturday, September 13, 1782, Phillips led a procession of his coreligionists from the private rented apartment to the public synagogue, a fitting metaphor for Jews' journey from marginalized "others" toward accepted even esteemed members of the body politic. Haym Salomon, who contributed the most money to the construction fund, opened the front doors and the line of congregants circled the reader's desk the first of six times, as communal leaders unveiled the scrolls. After an additional revolution around the reader's table, leaders placed the scrolls in the ark, as prayers and blessings commenced in honor of "the President, and Hon'ble Delegates of the United States of America in Congress Assembled, His

¹² Quoted Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, 1782-1791, March 17, August 4, 29, and October 9, 1782, and March 30, 1783, Jonas Phillips to Congregation, May 30, 1782, Subscription List, November 3, 1782, Contract Between Congregation and John Danahue and Edward McKegan, April 22, 1782, *JOP*, 115-20; Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, Volume I, 1781-1795, March 24, 1782, *AJD*, 116-19.

Excellency George Washington, Captain General and Commander in Chief of the Federal Army of these States,” and the Pennsylvania Assembly. Although they enjoyed public religious freedom, it would take another eight years of political activism to obtain civil rights.¹³

Although the Mikveh Israel congregation, finally, achieved their goal of constructing a public sanctuary, the specter of prejudice remained lodged in congregants’ minds. Phillips prepared to “begin the Prayers for Sabbath as usual,” but he warned “the Congregation to be particularly carefull not to raise their Voices higher than the Hazan’s, who will endeavor” to keep “his Voice” low enough “so as only to fill the Building.” Even after several decades of Jewish residence in Pennsylvania, Phillips remained painfully aware that public expressions of Judaism might insult the sensibilities of their Christian neighbors. For evidence they needed to look no further than Mühlenberg who thwarted their efforts at every turn, or perhaps even to their most recent gentile landlord, Joseph Cauffman, who had evicted them from the small apartment.

Despite such a major victory for religious freedom and despite reformed versions of Judaism in Pennsylvania, anti-Jewish attitudes among the Protestant majority still shaped Jewish behavior in public life, as it would continue to do for two centuries and more thereafter. Jews often withheld their trust from neighbors, but in Pennsylvania they marched forward toward cultural integration and expressed their collective identification as Whig nationalists, Federalists during ratification debates, and Republicans in local and national politics. As the Continental Army celebrated victory, congregants composed a prayer to General Washington, in Hebrew and English, and “profess’d themselves...subjects to the Sovereignty of the United States of America.” Mikveh Israel’s congregation became so attached to Seixas, who at several pivotal

¹³ Jonas Phillips to Gershom Seixas, September 13, 1782; quoted Gershom Mendes Seixas, Order of Consecration, 1782, Mikveh Israel Records, Box 1, Folder 10B, AJHS.

moments spoke on their behalf and who led Jewish activists into the political fray, that a controversy arose when Shearith Israel's congregants demanded that, once Philadelphia was liberated from the British, Seixas must return to New York. The postwar economy placed fiscal constraints on Philadelphia's congregation and the construction of the synagogue had depleted the treasury. Seixas therefore worried his salary was in jeopardy, thus he returned home. The acting *hazan* in New York, Jacob Raphael Cohen, accepted Mikveh Israel's offer to replace Seixas, a position he held until his death in 1811. Jews also invited national and state political leaders to the synagogue's dedication. Such invitations served to express their collective identification as Americans but also as gentle reminders that they held no other plans but to establish Judaism in Pennsylvania, with its manifold institutions and traditions, as permanent public fixtures in American culture.¹⁴

The failure of the Jewish settlement at Ararat underscores Jews' identification as American republicans and the lengths they were willing to go to carve out permanent public spaces for expressions of Judaism. In 1820, Jonas Phillips's grandson, Mordecai Manuel Noah—who emulated the contemporary phenomenon of pervasive utopian religious communities—attempted to purchase Grand Island in the Niagara River outside of Buffalo, New York. Noah dubbed it Ararat, the supposed final resting place of Noah's Ark. Noah, a Republican partisan who had earned the patronage of Presidents James Madison and James Monroe, envisioned the establishment of a permanent Jewish homeland in America. He encouraged Jews from around the world to leave behind their plight and settle there. The scheme

¹⁴ Quoted Jonas Phillips to Congregation, 1782, quoted Gershom Mendes Seixas, Order of Consecration, 1782, Dedication of New Synagogue, 1782, Mikveh Israel Records, Box 1, Folder 10B, AJHS; Pencak, *Jews*, 65; Gershom Seixas to Mikveh Israel, November 10, 1783, February 15, 1784, Seixas to Hayman Levy, March 15, 1784, and Hayman Levy to Shearith Israel, March 22, 1784, *AJD*, 130-34. By the end of 1783, most New Yorkers had returned home; Seixas did so in February 1784, see Minute Book of Mikveh Israel, 1782-1791, September 12, 1782, *JOP*, 123-4.

failed, mostly because Noah misunderstood the commitments of his brethren to integrate, described in previous chapters. Noah's imagined Ararat was symbolic of the cultural insularity of traditional Judaism that shielded them from prejudice and corruption and separated Jews from their neighbors in the attempt to maintain unadulterated Jewish customs rooted in their covenant with Yahweh. Such forces laid the groundwork for Christians to oppress and "other" Jews nearly everywhere they went. That Jews did not flock to Ararat shows the depths of their cultural integration in America, as well as the reformed nature of their Americanized version of their faith. Noah thereafter focused on a Palestinian refuge instead. Jewish nationalism—proto-Zionism—flourished throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century and beyond. Such Zionist ideology culminated in the creation of Israel in 1948. In America, Reform Judaism took root, and Pennsylvania's Jews sat in the vanguard of that movement.¹⁵

That Jewish religious organizations now enjoyed legal equality meant that Jews rejected Noah's Ararat. Instead they refocused their attention on the construction of a second public sanctuary to accommodate a growing population of Jews in Philadelphia with differing religious practices and beliefs, which shows the consequences of "creolization" in early Pennsylvania. When the assembly granted charters of incorporation to the Rodeph Shalom congregation, the majority Ashkenazim fled Mikveh Israel and implemented their interpretations of *Halakah*. To ensure no misunderstandings of their intentions, they vowed to expel anyone who attended the rival congregation. Mikveh Israel, meanwhile, sought to build a newer, more prestigious

¹⁵ Noah to Aloa Stewart, 1825, and Noah to A.C. Flagg, 1833, Articles in Reference to Ararat, 1866-1993, Mordecai Manuel Noah Papers, Box 1, Folders 4 and 12, AJHS; Noah to Editor of Connecticut Courant, January 24, 1826, Oppenheim Collection, Box 11, Folder 3, AJHS. The literature on antebellum utopian communities is copious but for an authoritative introduction see Chris Jennings, *Paradise Now: The Story of American Utopianism* (New York, 2016). For Noah, see Eran Shalev, "Revive, Renew, and Reestablish": Mordecai Noah's Ararat and the Limits of Biblical Imagination in the Early American Republic," *AJAJ* 62 (2010), 1-20; Richard H. Popkin, "Mordecai Noah, The Abbé Grégoire, and the Paris Sanhedrin," *Modern Judaism* 2 (1982), 131-48; Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew*; Shalev, *American Zion*, especially chapter 4; Israel, *European Jewry*, 174-210.

synagogue and, according to Rebecca Gratz, they succeeded. She referred to the synagogue as “one of the most beautiful specimens of ancient architecture in the city.” Yet another testament to cultural change, that in many ways Rebecca herself symbolized, no longer did women sit in the gallery, segregated from men on the main floor; rather, both men and women sat together with their children in family pews, a cultural contribution of the reform movement. That it resembled their neighbors’ Christian behavior was no coincidence, either. Rebecca’s brother, Benjamin, twice married a Christian and raised his children outside of the Jewish fold. But the Reverend Isaac Wise buried him in a consecrated Jewish cemetery according to Mosaic Law. Reform Judaism had arrived in America in full force.

Prominent Christians, such as Bishop William White of the Protestant Episcopal Church, attended the new synagogue’s dedication, as did other local gentile magistrates. Local newspapers celebrated it with enthusiasm; one remarked, “however we may differ upon certain points...we are all children of a common and eternal FATHER.” When public debates erupted over the prudence of a public-school system, Jews supported one with moral instruction and humanitarian ethics that cultivated civic virtue but rejected the required reading of Christian Scriptures. The state supreme court upheld Christian Bible reading in public schools, which prompted Rabbi Isaac Leeser to publicly exclaim, “There are...no earthly supports for the opinion that Christianity is the law of the land.” Rebecca Gratz once more led the way, spearheading the construction of a Jewish Sunday School that offered Jewish educations to children who attended public schools—the precursor to formalized Jewish academies that emerged thereafter. In antebellum Pennsylvania and beyond, Protestant “moral establishments” continued to regulate behavior in the public square with legislation rooted in Protestant standards of morality. As a result, Jewish activism that mitigated discrimination along religious lines only

became more pronounced among later generations of Jews (especially after 1840), even as they continued to contend with the ebb and flow of anti-Jewish attitudes among their Christian neighbors. The essential cultural tools they used resembled those employed by eighteenth-century Jews. Their achievements and contributions are thus a noble legacy worth remembering by Jews and gentiles alike.¹⁶

Through the buying and selling of goods that furthered frontier expansion, patronage, friendship, enlightened fellowship, and political activism in newspaper politics, Jews achieved cultural and political integration and legal equality. Literature and staged theatre once more offers a useful measurement of this gradual transformation in the popular imagination as in life. Although Shylock never disappeared from the cultural scene, romantic revisionists refashioned the character by removing the red wig, remnants of its medieval origins, bestowing Shylock instead with a sense of dignity and humanity, not the symbol of disgust and hatred Shylock had once been. Even Marlowe's Barabas was humanized in the hands of romantics. Washington Irving, who socialized in the same circles as the Gratz family and even lodged at the Gratz home, wrote a detailed and flattering description of his warmest friend Rebecca Gratz, Philadelphia's most famous Jewish philanthropist. Sir Walter Scott may have used his friend's description of Gratz as model for *Ivanhoe*'s Rebecca—intelligent, beautiful, altruistic. Likewise, the German playwright Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's positive portrayal of Jews in *The Jews* (1754) and *Nathan the Wise* (1779) became staple reading among enlightened readers, even in Pennsylvania. Lessing demonstrated how Christians had utilized Jews as scapegoats for a host of

¹⁶ Quoted in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, January 25, 1825; Frost, *Perfect*, 145-46; Rebecca Gratz to Benjamin Gratz, February 27, 1825, *LRG*, 72-76, quote on 73; Leeser quoted in *Occident* 5 (January 1848), 225; Sehat, *Myth*; Pencak, *Jews*, 202; Morais, *Jews*, 44.

socioeconomic and political problems, and undermined Christianity's bigotry toward Judaism through Nathan's skepticism of religious dogma and his exaltation of religious toleration and ethical conduct rooted in a universal humanism. Similar to Scott's Rebecca, Charles Brockden Brown's *Arthur Mervyn* (1799), set during Philadelphia's yellow fever epidemic of 1793, portrayed a Jewish heroine in a positive light—altruistic, gorgeous, graceful. Brown's positive portrayal of a female Jew underscores the tremendous gains of Anglo-American Jews. Lessing and Brown's positive depictions of Jews and Judaism and romantics' Old Testament grandeur occurred alongside the economic activities, enlightened fellowship, and political activism of Pennsylvania's Jews, which offered powerful counterpoints to Shakespeare's Shylock.¹⁷

In 1934, pro-fascist Americans refashioned history to suit their bigoted agenda, such as when an admirer of Hitler William Dudley Pelley presented Benjamin Franklin as a staunch anti-Semite in the so-called "Franklin Prophecy," a forged Franklin speech in which he warned his colleagues that Jews posed an existential threat to the republic. In the wake of Donald Trump's election anti-Semitic incidents rose an astounding 57 percent in 2017 alone. By the antebellum decades, Jews contended with real threats of discrimination, as they do today. But eighteenth-century Jews had fully integrated into Pennsylvania's society and culture. A measure of their success can be drawn through an examination of the evolution of the term "Jew." Once a hated, pejorative barb utilized by their opponents to incite popular anti-Semitic behavior against them, the "Jew" in popular discourses now held more positive connotations. Jews embraced the "Jew" as their own and refashioned it into a symbol that reflected their integration and equality. They wore it, like their Anglo-American bona fides, as a badge of honor and dignity that demanded

¹⁷ Gross, *Shylock*, 9-23, 105-44; Pencak, *Jews*, 2; Philipson, *Rebecca Gratz*, vii; Irving was betrothed to Rebecca's best friend, Maria Fenno Hoffman's sister Matilda, who died suddenly of a mysterious illness. Irving was inspired by Rebecca's passionate care-taking of her dearest friend, which prompted him to write his description of Rebecca, see Nathan-Kraus Collection, Box 12, Folder 33, AJA and Burstein, *Knickerbocker*, 68-69; Jaher, *Scapegoat*, 6, 54.

respect, not scorn. And Jews did this increasingly in public forums, especially newspapers but also other dimensions of popular culture, namely staged drama. As Heather Nathans has shown, Jewish stereotypes abounded on and off the stage in antebellum culture. But Jews' staged performances, like their "conspicuous" public participation, turned upside down their neighbors' anti-Jewish sentiments, which Nathans convincingly shows served "their own ends." Like Jewish actors who participated in every dimension of antebellum staged theatre, Pennsylvania's Jews participated in every dimension of antebellum civil society. In Philadelphia's local elections of 1770, a pundit compared a working man's chances at election to that of a "Jew," an allusion to popular anti-Semitism that suggested no Jew could win any elected office. In 1838, conversely, Jacob Gratz, Rebecca's brother, was elected into Pennsylvania's House of Representatives. A few years later he was elected to Pennsylvania's Senate. He ran and won both times as a professing "Jew" and officer in Mikveh Israel.¹⁸

In the early republic, Jews sought to reconcile Jewish nationalism with American nationalism and Orthodox Judaism with a burgeoning self-interested individualism indicative of liberal capitalism. Jews, then, had to reconcile their conservative faith with liberal democracy, Judaism with republican citizenship. Alexis de Tocqueville believed that free societies like the American republican experiment would corrupt citizenship into nothing more than a powerful state whose leaders guarded their authority and isolated individuals—from a cynical perspective, he described today's American republicanism. Tocqueville theorized that equality would destroy the social relationships that tied individuals to important cultural institutions such as family,

¹⁸ "Anti-Semitism Surges 57 Percent in 2017, Report Finds," *New York Times*, February 27, 2018; Nathans, *Hideous Characters*, 1-18, quote on 1; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 20, 1770; Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz, February 10, 1840, *LRG*, 271-74.

church, and community organizations. Once Tocqueville witnessed a free society in action, though, he noticed that voluntary associations—by this time, formalized political party machines, contentious print culture, benevolent churches and synagogues, reform societies, among other collective action by individuals in the public sphere—actually drew individuals into civil society. Collectively, then, individuals wielded tremendous power. Political and cultural leaders, of course, did not always welcome religious minorities with open arms into civil society. To wit, the laws regulating citizenship forbade the right to women and Chinese, to name only two examples. But Jews demanded full inclusion in every dimension of civil society, including elected positions in the federal government. No ethnic Jews were *elected* to U.S. Congress until the 1840s; and no professing Jews were *elected* to U.S. Congress until the 1850s. Prejudices endured in the antebellum popular imagination and many Christians simply refused to cast votes to elect professing Jews in national politics. Such anti-Jewish attitudes hardened with continuous nineteenth-century Jewish immigration. Jews' electoral successes at the state level, nevertheless, gave hope to other marginalized groups in American culture.¹⁹

Jews contributed to a transformation of the public sphere that, in turn, transformed proper behavior in public life and, in many ways, produced an “uncivil religion.” The vitriolic and vituperative language of religious politics in newspapers allowed more voices of marginalized groups to contest almost anything, political and religious. The revolutionary generation envisioned a republic of one interest, the people's will, and argued that voluntary associations

¹⁹ Noah Zvi Farkas, “American Democracy and Jewish Life: Reviving Spiritual Civics,” *Conservative Judaism* 65 (2014), 3-15; Rogers M. Smith, “The ‘American Creed’ and American Identity: The Limits of Liberal Citizenship in the United States,” *Western Political Quarterly* 41 (1988), 225-51. David Levy Yulee won election as a delegate from the territory of Florida in 1841 and was elected senator in 1845. Although of Jewish extraction, Levy changed his name to Yulee and distanced himself from Judaism. Lewis Charles Levin of Pennsylvania was elected to Congress in 1845, but he too hid his Judaism. In 1851, Emanuel Bernard Hart was the first professing Jew elected to Congress from New York, see Kurt F. Stone, *The Jews of Capitol Hill: A Compendium of Jewish Congressional Members* (Lanham, MD, 2011), 3-14.

ought to express the people's collective interests and values. Those that did not should not exist. This unfortunate fact explains the overzealous behavior of Federalists and their politicized Protestant clergy allies in the post-revolution political culture. But an opposition party, the Republicans (and thus Jewish partisans) recognized that many individuals, whose interests differed, existed in a healthy republican system. Dissent, they agreed, was a necessary component of public discourse, and partisans and pundits ought to compete in the marketplace of ideas for the credibility necessary to mold public opinion. Republicans and their Jewish allies succeeded in expanding public boundaries to include both dissent and religious minority groups. The public sphere, the space where cultural values intersected civic ones, allowed leaders to fuse these values together. For Jews, such transformations allowed them to reconcile versions of their faith with republican politics and citizenship. That this was a viable possibility wrought dissension within their own communities. Judaism is a system of morals and humanitarian ethics based on divine fiat, not necessarily a system with a collective civic purpose. But some reform-minded Jews embraced cultural changes that allowed them to flourish in almost every dimension of civic culture. In the historical past, a citizenry under a kingdom of God does not mesh well with a free democratic society. Baruch Spinoza, a Sephardic Jew who apostatized, recognized this contradiction in his analysis of politics in the Old Testament. He argued that ancient Israelites had surrendered their natural rights to God through Moses at Sinai. A democratic civil society like the one described by Tocqueville and the authoritarian structures of Judaism described by Spinoza seemed unable to stand in unison. But democracy in its infant stages was amazingly malleable, which allowed them to stand together and even flourish, though it fundamentally altered both Judaism and public institutions in the process. Reform Judaism flourished in nineteenth-century Germany and America. Some Jews therefore found ways to

combine philosophical notions of democratic liberalism into their traditionally conservative faith. As republican citizens, Jews expressed their many versions of Judaism in public, enjoyed legal equality, social acceptance, and full cultural integration, remarkable accomplishments for a group marginalized and persecuted for millennia.

Jews' achievements recast contemporary popular debates regarding the origins of the early republic as a "Christian Nation." Modern historians have declared this notion a result of early Americans' myth-making that tied together the achievements of the revolutionary generation who, they suggested, had built the new nation's credo and functions upon the tenets of Christianity. Later, Americans adopted and perpetuated this mythology, which ensured its enduring legacy to this day. Yet, this study shows that even Jews at the time of such myth-making had rejected the notion outright and lived thereafter as embodiments of their interpretations of freedom, which powerfully belied that mythology. The Jewish rise from outsiders to insiders and their efforts that expanded religious freedom and political equality for white non-Christians deserves to be told alongside the traditional Protestant Christian version of this story. The continuous arrival of Jewish migrants after 1840 contributed to the ebb and flow of anti-Semitism that defined post-Civil War America. But Jews also enjoyed full citizenship and equality for the first time since classical antiquity. Eighteenth-century Jewish migrants had arrived in a strange land. By the antebellum decades the only thing strange for many Jews was Noah's attempts to live a life apart from American culture.²⁰

²⁰ Farkas, "American Democracy," 3-15; Sarna and Shapell, *Lincoln and the Jews*.

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