Special Article

THE TRAINING OF AMERICAN RABBIS*

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PREFACE

THIS IS PRIMARILY a study of the three American institutions having the largest rabbinical training programs. It is not a study of any institution in its entirety, but rather of that part of each school which prepares students for ordination. In evaluating the findings and observations, the reader should bear in mind that this is an analytical study and therefore, by definition, critical; that a microscopic view of any social institution inevitably magnifies its weaknesses; that parts, when observed in isolation from the whole, may appear distorted.

The major rabbinical institutions, Yeshiva University (YU), the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS), and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) have trained the majority of American congregational rabbis. They are the fountainhead of American Jewish scholarship and religious leadership.

The seminaries must be rated positively, also, in any comparative sense. They are superior in many respects to Catholic and Protestant semina-

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ries.[1] This should not cloud the fact that the Christians have shown far greater concern than the Jews with self-evaluation and criticism; Catholic and Protestant seminaries, one Jewish faculty member noted, are today characterized by renewal and change. The hallmarks of Jewish seminaries, on the other hand, are tradition and continuity.

To use another basis for comparison, rabbinical seminaries to some extent have failed to prepare rabbis adequately for the pulpit; but Ph.D. programs in American universities do not even attempt to prepare candidates for college teaching, though most of their graduates will enter this profession. The relationship between a rabbinical curriculum and the rabbinate is certainly less remote than, let us say, the training of teachers in large cities and the conditions which they find in large-city classrooms. In all educational institutions, sociological, psychological, and ideological pressures create a gap between curriculum and the role for which the student is being prepared.

There are defects attendant upon the kind of bureaucracy needed to run institutions as complex as our colleges, universities, and seminaries. There are also cultural lags between what a professor has learned and what a student wants to learn. The demand for scholarship is necessary for, but not always compatible with, good teaching and counseling. A religious seminary, in particular, must balance its desire for an outstanding teaching and research faculty and its requirement that the faculty members accept the values of the institution. The contingent problems must be recognized, but they can never be entirely overcome. Readers should therefore not judge the rabbinical seminaries too harshly; many of their dilemmas are insoluble.

Finally, any bias in this report is on the side of criticism rather than of praise. The public-relations department of each seminary can be relied upon to extol its glories.

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[1] Some recent studies of Protestant and Catholic seminaries include: H. Richard Niebuhr, Daniel Day Williams, and James Gustafson, *The Advancement of Theological Education* (New York, 1957); Keith R. Bridston and Dwight W. Culver, eds., *The Making of Ministers* (Minneapolis, 1964); Keith R. Bridston and Dwight W. Culver, *Pre-Seminary Education* (Minneapolis, 1965); Walter D. Wagoner, *The Seminary: Protestant and Catholic* (New York, 1966); Charles R. Feilding, "Education for Ministry" (*Theological Education*, Autumn 1966; entire issue). The last book, in particular, will be read with profit by those interested in the training of clergymen, Christian or Jewish.

The rabbi is the most important figure in American Jewish life today. Recent years have witnessed the growing importance of Jewish scholars, educators, and professional administrators of large Jewish organizations. Jewish philanthropists have always been leaders in the Jewish community, and political leaders, too, have sometimes been recognized as spokesmen for the Jewish community, or some of its parts. But while individual scholars, educators, administrators, philanthropists, or even politicians may assume leadership positions and preeminence in Jewish life, none is as important as the rabbi. None has as direct and immediate contact with American Jews as the rabbi. None is exposed to as many facets of the Jew as the rabbi. And all leaders, to a greater or lesser extent, depend upon the rabbi to mobilize the Jewish community in support of the goals or programs they seek to achieve.

Perhaps most significantly, the rabbi is the only figure in Jewish life who can command leadership, deference, even awe, by virtue of an ascribed title. Sociologists distinguish between ascribed and achieved status. Ascribed status inheres by virtue of the position held or the role performed, achieved status by virtue of demonstrated abilities. In Jewish community leadership, the rabbi alone has a title or position having ascribed status. It is of no small interest, therefore, to understand why and how one becomes a rabbi.

MAJOR RABBINICAL SEMINARIES

The first successful rabbinical school in America, Hebrew Union College, was founded in 1875 by Isaac Mayer Wise, the leader of American Reform Judaism.[2] According to Samuel S. Cohon, the term "Union" expressed the founder's hope "to have one theological school for all Jews of the country" [3]—at least for all but the "ultra-orthodox," to use Cohon's formulation. HUC created the American Jewish image of the

[2] On the history of HUC see Samuel S. Cohon, "The History of Hebrew Union College," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, September 1950, pp. 17–55; David Philipson, "History of the Hebrew Union College 1875–1925," *Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume* (Cincinnati, 1925), pp. 1–70; James G. Heller, *Isaac Mayer Wise: His Life, Work and Thought* (New York, 1965); Moshe Davis, "Jewish Religious Life and Institutions in America," in Louis Finkelstein, ed., *The Jews: Their History, Culture and Religion* (third ed.; Philadelphia, 1960), pp. 488–587. Stanley F. Chyet, *Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion: 1947–1967* (Cincinnati, 1967), presents a brief survey of its recent history.

[3] *Loc. cit.*, p. 24.

rabbi as an urbane, cultured religious leader. Later seminaries have sought or have been forced to emulate this model.

The hope for a single rabbinical school was short-lived. In 1886 the Jewish Theological Seminary of America was organized to train rabbis for the more traditional segment of the community.[4] In 1950 HUC merged with the Jewish Institute of Religion, founded in 1922 in New York City by Stephen S. Wise as a nondenominational seminary to prepare rabbis for Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox congregations.[5] JIR had a strong Zionist and Hebraic orientation that was lacking in HUC until after World War II. The merger was resisted by certain groups within the Reform movement who felt that JIR influence would pull HUC to the right religiously, and by some JIR alumni and faculty who opposed a dilution of JIR's nondenominationalism.

While subtle differences still distinguish the Cincinnati and New York Reform centers, and more overt differences in curriculum emphasis and religious outlook separate HUC-JIR from JTS,* both resemble a certain type of rabbinical school that had already developed in Central Europe and was later to extend to Eastern Europe as well. This was the rabbinical seminary, as distinct from the yeshivah.[6]

At the yeshivot the exclusive subject of study was Talmud (occasionally interspersed with ethical tracts), and the method of study was the examination of sacred texts and accompanying commentaries which, in varying degree, were also sacred. This meant that the text (*peshaṭ*) and,

[4] On the history of JTS see Moshe Davis, *The Emergence of Conservative Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1963); *id.*, "Jewish Religious Life and Institutions in America," *loc. cit.*; Herbert Parzen, *Architects of Conservative Judaism* (New York, 1964); Marshall Sklare, *Conservative Judaism* (Glencoe, Ill., 1955).

[5] On JIR see Stephen S. Wise, *Challenging Years* (New York, 1949), pp. 129–42.

* For convenience, a glossary of abbreviations is appended to this article on p. 112.

[6] Unfortunately we have no adequate history of rabbinical institutions or yeshivot in Europe. Some of the available material includes Jacob Mann, "Modern Rabbinical Seminaries and Other Institutions of Jewish Learning," in *Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook* (Cincinnati, 1925), pp. 295–310; Zevi Scharfstein, *History of Jewish Education in Modern Times* (3 vols., Hebrew; New York, 1945–49), particularly vols. 1 and 3; Samuel K. Mirsky, ed., *Jewish Institutions of Higher Learning in Europe: Their Development and Destruction* (Hebrew; New York, 1956), and two survey articles by Abraham Menes, "The Yeshivot in Eastern Europe," in *The Jewish People; Past and Present* (New York, 1948), Vol. 2, pp. 108–118, and "Patterns of Jewish Scholarship in Eastern Europe," in *The Jews: Their History, Culture, and Religion, op. cit.*, pp. 376–426. Some material is also available in Dov Katz, *The Musar Movement: Its History, Personalities, and Methods* (5 vols., Hebrew; Tel Aviv, 1953).

for the most part, the commentary were regarded as authoritative. Memorization of the text, while not necessarily demanded, was regarded with some deference. Though the methods of study in the various yeshivot differed, they all had a basic orientation toward the text. They were also concerned with the personal religious and ethical conduct of the students and sought to prepare *talmide ḥakhamim,* masters of the Talmud (literally, disciples of the wise). Yeshivah students desiring positions as communal rabbis obtained *semikhah,* or ordination, upon mastering certain portions of the *Shulḥan 'Arukh* (the last definitive code of Jewish law, compiled in the sixteenth century) and the accompanying commentaries, which were prerequisite for dealing with the practical questions of religious law that might arise. In modern times *semikhah* was a certificate given by a recognized rabbi to a student, attesting to the latter's expertness in Jewish law. One's *semikhah,* therefore, was only as good as the rabbi who conferred it. Some young men sought *semikhah* from a number of rabbis. Others, though eminent as *talmide ḥakhamim,* might never bother to obtain the *semikhah.* The European yeshivah was a place where one studied to become a master of Talmud. At best, ordination was secondary.

The rabbinical seminary, as opposed to the yeshivah, arose from a felt need for institutions that would train rabbis in skills other than, or in addition to, the mastery of Talmud. The best known of the European seminaries were the Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau, founded in 1854 under the leadership of Zacharias Frankel, father of the "historical school" which was the ideological precursor of American Conservative Judaism, and the Hochschule (at various times Lehranstalt) für die Wissenschaft des Judentums, whose leading faculty member when it opened in Berlin in 1872 was Abraham Geiger, one of the pillars of Reform Judaism.

These and other rabbinical seminaries were established to train rabbis in what was called the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (literally, science of Judaism). They sought to give the rabbinical student familiarity with Jewish culture in a broad sense—Bible, Talmud, Midrash, history, rabbinical literature. They also undertook to train him in the scientific method of study, the dispassionate examination and understanding of Jewish texts in a manner no different from the examination of other ancient texts. In 1873 Israel (Azriel) Hildesheimer founded in Berlin the Rabbinerseminar für das orthodoxe Judentum, a seminary for the training of Orthodox rabbis. It differed from the other, non-Orthodox semina-

ries in religious standards, ideology, and some parts of the curriculum, but not in its recognition that the education a rabbi required was more than just Talmud, and that the method of study, at least for subjects other than Talmud, should be patterned after that employed by universities. Thus, in Europe Orthodox, Reform, and more or less Conservative rabbinical seminaries coexisted with traditional yeshivot, and were distinguishable from them in curriculum, method, and purpose.

The more crucial distinction was that, at least in the non-Orthodox seminaries, the Wissenschaft des Judentums was more than a method. It was a program deriving from 19th-century romanticism and historicism, which turned to the Jewish past.[7] The motives of its founders are still disputed. It would appear that many sought to demonstrate the nobility of their own heritage in an effort to further the cause of Jewish emancipation and to gain admission to Christian society. Indeed, some of the early founders and supporters of the Wissenschaft movement apostatized. For many the science of Judaism was also a program for the reform of Judaism. If, the argument ran, one can objectively understand the nature, origin, and development of Jewish history and Jewish law, one is in a position to reform or modernize Judaism by retaining what is basic or essential and abandoning what simply accrued through superstition or accident of time or place. Thus, the Wissenschaft movement provided students in the rabbinical seminaries with a method and ideology, making study purposeful beyond the mere accumulation of facts. It is true that Moritz Steinschneider, the bibliographer and orientalist whose life work was to demonstrate the important contributions of the Jews to the sciences and general culture of the Middle Ages, was reported to have seen his task as nothing more than giving the Jewish past "an honorable burial"; [8] but Geiger wrote:

> We need men able to demonstrate how Judaism developed gradually to its present state; that . . . much of it . originates in a historical period and can therefore also be rejected when times change. We need men who know how to oppose the views of ignorant reformers and the malicious mockery of non-Jews.[9]

Frankel, more religiously conservative than Geiger, saw in Wissenschaft "a means to establish harmony between the theory and practice

[7] Gershon Scholem, *Mi-tokh hirhurim 'al ḥokhmat Yisrael* ("Reflections on the Wissenschaft des Judentums"; Luaḥ Ha-areẓ, Tel Aviv, 1944), pp. 94–112.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[9] In *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, 1823, pp. 11–12, quoted in Adolph Kober, "The Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau and 'Wissenschaft des Judentums,'" *Historia Judaica*, Oct. 1954, p. 87.

of Judaism through scholarly reasonableness." [10] However naive, misguided, and thoroughly 19th-century the optimism about the science of Judaism may have been, however faulty the assumption of some that a more or less desacralized religious tradition would remain an object of sufficient interest to merit reform, the new approach made of the European rabbinical seminaries places where Jewish scholarship and the possibilities of Jewish life were self-evidently interrelated.

JTS and HUC-JIR, while in many respects patterned after the European rabbinical seminary, have rejected its program. They are committed to the scientific study of Judaism, but their science is not directed to any systematic effort of reform. Indeed such an effort is impossible in the absence of any systematic theology or social theory at both institutions. The result may be a purer science but the price is the students' feeling of separation between teaching and research, on the one hand, and the needs of the Jewish community, on the other.

The Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), now a division of Yeshiva University, was founded in 1897.[11] Although its certificate of incorporation stated as its objectives "to promote the study of the Talmud and to assist in educating and preparing students of the Hebrew faith for the Hebrew Orthodox Ministry," [12] RIETS was modeled after the traditional European yeshivah, not the rabbinical seminary. During the early years student-administration tension arose from the students' desire for a general cultural education to supplement Talmud. This, they felt, would give them more adequate preparation for the rabbinate. The administration resisted, and reprisals against the students led to a student strike in 1908 as well as to conversations between student leaders and JTS regarding the possibility of transferring to that institution.[13] What the students sought was a supplement to Talmud, particu-

[10] Albert Lewkowitz, "The Significance of 'Wissenschaft des Judentums' for the Development of Judaism," *ibid.*, p. 83.

[11] On the history of Yeshiva University see Jacob I. Hartstein, "Yeshiva University; Growth of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary," *American Jewish Year Book,* Vol. 48 (1946–47), pp. 73–84, and Gilbert Klaperman, "Yeshiva University: Seventy-Five Years in Retrospect," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly,* Vol. LIV (1964), pp. 5–50; 198–201. In 1916 RIETS merged with a school for young boys, Yeshivat Etz Chaim, founded in 1886. Consequently YU, an outgrowth of RIETS, had its origins in 1886; as a school for advanced talmudic study it began only in 1897.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

[13] Gilbert Klaperman, *The Beginning of Yeshiva University: The First Jewish University in America* (Yeshiva University, unpublished doctoral dissertation, 1955).

larly courses in secular subjects, not a change in the manner of teaching Talmud, which was what JTS had to offer. With a change in administration and the growth of Yeshiva College, with its secular curriculum, as well as the later founding of the Bernard Revel Graduate School (BRGS) for general Jewish subjects, additional courses became available. However, RIETS itself remained virtually untouched.

Talmudic study in RIETS represents the heart of the rabbinical program, which, in content and method, is a replica of that of the European yeshivah. Thus, each year a tractate of the Talmud with traditional commentaries is studied, but without an introduction to the tractate; without an effort to understand the historical or social circumstances in which the various layers of material were produced and later edited; even without a serious effort to explore whether the received text is accurate, and how to deal with any errors or variants that may have entered into it.

There are, of course, programmatic implications in YU's method of study. It assumes that the Talmud and its traditional commentaries are authoritative, that the material in its essence is transcendent in origin, and that the commentaries in and to the Talmud evolved as a logical exegesis of the text, and are independent of time or place. The first task of the student is to understand the text and commentaries and, more creatively, to resolve any contradiction in the text or in the interpretations of the traditional commentators. While this method of study presents problems of its own, it is automatically invested with meaning and relevance as long as the Talmud retains its traditional religious significance for the student.

American rabbinical seminaries, in the more generic sense of the term, include all institutions preparing men for ordination. The discussion here will focus specifically on the student, the faculty, the administration, and the formal and informal programs reflecting their desires, capacities, and values. The influence of the general environment on each seminary's program is only indirect, for it is filtered through these three groups. Of external groups having a special interest in a particular seminary—the large financial contributors, the boards of trustees, the rabbinic alumni, and the congregational movements—only the rabbinic alumni exercise some direct influence. Thus far, however, their pressure for the expansion of courses in practical rabbinics has been fairly successfully resisted by the seminaries.

In almost all instances the data on rabbinical students, presented here

are based on a questionnaire [14] distributed to all first- and last-year rabbinical students at YU, JTS, and HUC-JIR, and supplemented by personal interviews with selected students at each institution. Over 70 per cent of the students in question at each institution returned the questionnaire in time for inclusion in the analysis. Unless otherwise stated, our statistics on students are based on these returns.

RABBINICAL STUDENTS

Excluding special students and those on leave in the spring semester of 1967, there were 98 rabbinical students at YU, 143 at JTS, 45 at HUC-JIR, New York, and 128 at HUC-JIR, Cincinnati. Counting only full-time resident students, in 1967 there were at YU 40 first- and 25 last-year students; at JTS 36 first- and 22 last-year students; at HUC-JIR, New York, 13 first- and 7 last-year students, and at HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, 36 first- and 24 last-year students. First-year students are those who entered the rabbinical program in September 1966, and last-year students those who expected to be ordained by the summer of 1967. At JTS and HUC-JIR not all first-year students are actually in the freshman year of study.

Age, Place of Birth, and Marital Status

All rabbinical seminaries require a college degree for entrance, and most students enter rabbinical school immediately after college graduation. Among the first-year students at each institution, 70 per cent or more were between the ages of 21 and 23. The length of the program is not uniform between seminaries, and within JTS and HUC-JIR there are variations depending upon the students' previous Jewish education. Consequently, the age of last-year students varies. Most of those at YU were between 24 and 26 years old, and most at JTS and HUC-JIR between

[14] The questionnaire was designed with the assistance of Robert Hirt, director of new communities, Community Service Division, YU; Neil Gillman, registrar of the School of Judaica, JTS, and Eugene Borowitz, professor of education and Jewish religious thought, HUC-JIR, New York; and in consultation with Robert Katz, professor of human relations, HUC-JIR, Cincinnati. In New York the questionnaire was distributed to the students by the author, Rabbis Gillman and Borowitz, and in Cincinnati by Rabbi Kenneth Roseman, assistant dean. The questionnaires were filled out anonymously, and returned by each student individually to the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK.

Editor's Note: Copies of the questionnaire may be obtained by writing to the *American Jewish Year Book.*

27 and 29. Whereas most of the first-year students were single, 50 per cent of the last-year students at YU and the large majority of such students at the other institutions were married. Ninety-one per cent, or more, of the rabbinical students at each institution were born in the United States.

Family Background

Differences in the students' family backgrounds were marked. The fathers of only 35 per cent of the students at YU were born in the United States, 22 per cent more having come here by the age of 13. Comparable figures for JTS were 55 and 19 per cent; for HUC-JIR, New York, 69 and 15 per cent; and for HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, 83 and 7 per cent. The differential proportion of foreign-born parents was related to differences in paternal occupation and family income (Tables 1 and 2).[15]

TABLE 1. FATHERS' PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION
(*Per cent*)

	YU	*JTS*	*HUC-JIR (New York)*	*HUC-JIR (Cincinnati)*
Owner or manager	20	33	46	57
Doctor or lawyer	2	9	0	10
Rabbi	11	12	8	2
Other Jewish professional	11	5	0	0
Other professional or technical worker	18	16	23	10
Sales worker	18	12	23	12
Other white-collar worker	11	5	0	5
Craftsman or operative	9	9	0	5
	n*=45	n=43	n=13	n=42

* Number in the sample.

TABLE 2. COMBINED INCOME OF PARENTS IN 1966
(*Per cent*)

	YU	*JTS*	*HUC-JIR (New York)*	*HUC-JIR (Cincinnati)*
Father deceased or retired	13	18	23	8
Under $7,000	20	5	8	2
7,000-8,999	24	5	8	10
9,000-10,999	11	10	8	18
11,000-12,999	7	10	15	12
13,000-14,999	7	17	0	10
15,000 or more	18	35	38	40
	n*=45	n=40	n=13	n=40

* Number in the sample.

[15] On differences in income among Jewish laymen, see Charles S. Liebman, "Changing Social Characteristics of Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Jews," *Sociological Analysis*, Winter 1966, pp. 210–22.

YU students came from homes appreciably lower in income and occupational status. Differences between other seminaries are less marked; though, taking occupational status and income together, HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, was on a higher level than its New York branch. Also of interest is that a distinctively large percentage of Cincinnati students came from homes where the father's principal occupation was business rather than a technical field or the Jewish or general professions. This suggests the possibility that Cincinnati students came from richer but less intellectual homes.

Differences also appeared between first- and last-year students at each institution. Beginning students, particularly at YU and JTS, came from homes whose combined family income was above that of last-year students. Table 3 facilitates comparison by indicating the percentage of students coming from homes where the combined family income was under $7,000 and from homes where it was above $15,000.

TABLE 3. PARENTS' INCOME BY SEMINARY YEAR
(*Per cent*)

	YU		*JTS*		*HUC-JIR (New York)*		*HUC-JIR (Cincinnati)*	
	First year	*Last year*	*First year*	*Last year*	*First year*	*Last year*	*First year*	*Last year*
Under $7,000	18	24	4	12	12	0	18	6
15,000 or more	21	12	52	12	44	25	32	50

Students were asked about their fathers' synagogue affiliation the year before they entered rabbinical school. Eighty-five per cent of YU fathers belonged to Orthodox and 11 per cent to Conservative synagogues. Most fathers of JTS students were affiliated with Conservative (69 per cent), some with Orthodox (19 per cent), and none with Reform synagogues; 10 per cent were unaffiliated. Most fathers of HUC-JIR students were affiliated with Reform (54 per cent in New York and 69 per cent in Cincinnati), some with Conservative (15 per cent in New York and 17 per cent in Cincinnati), and almost none with Orthodox synagogues; some (23 per cent in New York and 10 per cent in Cincinnati) were not affiliated with any synagogue.

At YU, fathers of first-year students were less likely to be affiliated with Conservative synagogues (3 per cent) than fathers of last-year students (24 per cent). At JTS, fathers of first-year students were less likely to be affiliated with Orthodox synagogues (17 per cent) than fathers of last-year students (22 per cent). At HUC-JIR (New York

and Cincinnati combined) fathers of first-year students were less likely to be affiliated with Conservative synagogues (12 per cent) than those of last-year students (22 per cent). Everywhere, fathers of first-year students were more likely to be affiliated with synagogues of their sons' seminary denomination than fathers of last-year students.

The questionnaire also asked students to check a statement best describing the religious environment of their homes, without regard to synagogue affiliation (Table 4). Almost all YU students came from Orthodox

TABLE 4. RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT OF STUDENTS' HOMES
(*Per cent*)

	YU	*JTS*	*HUC-JIR (New York)*	*HUC-JIR (Cincinnati)*
Orthodox and observant	63	10	8	2
Orthodox, but not ritually meticulous	22	5	8	5
Right-wing Conservative	7	31	0	2
Conservative	4	36	8	10
Reconstructionist	0	0	0	0
Right-wing Reform	0	0	15	12
Reform	0	0	31	46
Religiously indifferent, but strongly Jewish	2	12	15	17
Generally indifferent to Judaism	2	7	15	4
	n*=46	n=42	n=13	n=41

* Number in the sample.

homes; two-thirds of JTS students came from Conservative homes and, of the rest, more from religiously indifferent than from Orthodox homes; slightly more than half of HUC-JIR students came from Reform, almost a quarter from religiously indifferent, and 20 per cent from either Orthodox or Conservative homes. The pattern for both JTS and HUC-JIR is to attract more students from homes which are to their left than to their right on the religious spectrum. We therefore find that at least 70 per cent of JTS and HUC-JIR students described themselves as more observant in ritual practice than their fathers, whereas only 4 per cent of the YU students so described themselves.

A comparison of first- and last-year students revealed the following: At YU a higher proportion of first-year students came from Orthodox, and fewer from Conservative homes, At JTS a higher proportion of first-year students came from Conservative, but fewer from right-wing Conservative homes. At HUC-JIR, a higher proportion of first-year students came from Reform, and fewer from Conservative or religiously indifferent

homes. These findings bear out the basic tendency of seminaries to recruit increasingly from homes reflecting their particular religious outlook. This reflects a nearly fully accomplished Americanization or acculturation of all the mainstream varieties of American Judaism.

Educational

How much students are able to accomplish at the seminary depends in good part on their educational backgrounds, both Jewish and secular.

FORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION

Almost all YU students (87 per cent) had had nine years or more of Jewish education before entering college, and almost all received it in all-day schools. Ninety-five per cent did their undergraduate work at YU, which means an additional four years of Jewish study. Thus, every student in the rabbinical program entered with an extensive background in Jewish studies which, however, was largely in Talmud.

The virtually exclusive concentration on Talmud in the RIETS program, at both the college and rabbinical levels, and in the high-school studies of most students who ultimately enter the rabbinical program, precludes intensive study of Bible, Jewish history, Hebrew literature, and the rabbinical literature. Although rabbinical students have spent a major portion of their lives in Jewish studies, their knowledge of these subjects is far below the level YU critics of the yeshivah curriculum consider adequate. On the other hand, it may be argued that since Talmud is the Oral Law, and the Oral Law is the substance of Judaism, students who know Talmud know Judaism, and that what they do not know is only what different people, groups, and generations have had to say *about* Judaism. So goes the reasoning of those who defend the Jewish curriculum of most YU rabbinical students before their rabbinical program.

At JTS 74 per cent of the students had at least nine years of Jewish studies before college entrance, but only 41 per cent received most of their education in all-day schools; 47 per cent in supplementary afternoon schools, and 9 per cent in Sunday schools. Thirty per cent of the students at JTS had no formal program of Jewish studies while at college. In other words, a substantial number of students entered JTS with a good deal less than the best Jewish educational background.

The situation is far more serious at HUC-JIR, New York and Cincinnati. Of all students at the two centers, 54 per cent and 49 per cent, respectively, had at least nine years of Jewish education before college;

but of these, 62 per cent and 72 per cent, respectively, received most of this education in Sunday schools; and 77 per cent and 72 per cent, respectively, received no formal Jewish education while at college. Moreover, only 39 per cent of all HUC-JIR students, compared with 57 per cent at JTS and 74 per cent at YU, had attended camps offering formal Jewish programs. At HUC-JIR, then, most students enter without any serious Jewish education, and this has tremendous consequences for the seminary program. The students find their pronounced weakness in Hebrew a continuing burden throughout their years at the seminary, although Hebrew is one relevant skill that HUC-JIR students could hope to master before reaching intellectual maturity.

A comparison of the Jewish educational backgrounds of first- and last-year students at YU showed no differences. At JTS, however, first-year students had less Jewish education: among first-year students, fewer had 9 years or more of Jewish education before college (57 per cent, compared with 74 per cent of last-year students); more had attended Sunday school (12 per cent compared with 5 per cent), and fewer attended all-day schools (16 per cent, compared with 42 per cent); slightly fewer (67 per cent, compared with 74 per cent) were enrolled in a formal Jewish-studies program while at college. At HUC-JIR the same situation prevailed, generally. On the whole, first-year students had less Jewish education than last-year students before and particularly during college; while at college, only 6 per cent of the first-year students, compared with 54 per cent of the last-year students, had been enrolled in some formal program of Jewish study.

INFORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION

HUC-JIR students received some informal Jewish experience as members of Jewish youth groups, to which 85 per cent of the students at the New York school and 91 per cent at Cincinnati belonged before entering college. Chief among these was the National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), the Reform youth group to which 67 and 72 per cent of the affiliated students in New York and Cincinnati had belonged. Most of them (69 and 74 per cent, respectively) were also members of Jewish campus groups, primarily Hillel. There was no difference in group affiliations between first- and last-year students.

At JTS 70 per cent of the students were members of Jewish groups before entering college, primarily of the two Conservative youth groups, United Synagogue Youth and Leadership Training Fellowships. Most of

them (80 per cent) also belonged to Jewish campus groups. Among first-year students, affiliation with youth or college groups was more likely than among last-year students. Many YU students (51 per cent) were not members of Jewish youth groups before or during college. Bnei Akiva and Yavneh attracted most of the affiliated students.

Most rabbinical students (as many as 98 per cent at YU, and no fewer than 64 per cent at HUC-JIR, New York) had attended synagogue services regularly, at least during their last two years at college.

SECULAR EDUCATION

The secular education of the entering rabbinical students also varies with the seminary. Students were asked to list their undergraduate school or to evaluate their school's reputation. Only those responses mentioning a school that was listed in James Cass and Max Birnbaum's *Comparative Guide to American Colleges* were used in the analysis. Each school was ranked from one to four based on the listing. One signifies the highest ranking and four the lowest. Averages were then obtained for colleges from which JTS and HUC-JIR students were graduated. The JTS average was 1.9, HUC-JIR, New York 2.7, and HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, 3.0. As for their undergraduate academic averages, 48 per cent of JTS students reported B+ or better, 22 per cent B, and 30 per cent B— or below. For HUC-JIR, New York, the comparable percentages were 53, 32, and 15; for Cincinnati students, 33, 18, and 49.

It appears then that JTS students had a superior Jewish educational background as well as somewhat better academic qualifications, at least compared with Cincinnati students. HUC-JIR is raising its admission standards, and the situation may change within a few years, particularly if the number of all rabbinical seminary candidates continues to increase.

Almost all YU rabbinical students did their undergraduate work at Yeshiva College, and it is therefore misleading to compare them with others. We can, however, compare them with their fellow undergraduates. The Yeshiva College student body is highly heterogeneous in terms of intellectual capacity, for it is not the college generally, but specifically the Jewish program of studies which all students attend the entire morning and part of the afternoon, that attracts them. The admissions policy is relatively open. Whereas the best students at Yeshiva College are probably the equal of the best at any American college, its poorest students would probably have been denied admission to most good colleges.

A comparison of rabbinical-student and other Yeshiva College-student

undergraduate averages indicates that the rabbinical program attracts a disproportionately high number of the best students, but an even greater disproportion of poor students. Of course, some students did poorly in college because they devoted their major effort to Jewish studies. A much higher percentage of the poorer than of the best students in the rabbinical program were likely to enter the congregational rabbinate. The same was true also at JTS.

Motives for Entering Rabbinical School

The rabbinical school may mean different things to different people. It may be viewed as a vocational or professional institution, which, unlike almost all other professional schools, also licenses its graduates. It may be regarded as preparation for an academic career, rather than for the pulpit. The career-motivated student, particularly the future congregational rabbi, will expect professionally-oriented training. His criterion for evaluating his seminary is likely to be how well it prepares him for the rabbinate. He may even be totally indifferent to the educational process, and simply look upon his attendance as time he has to spend before obtaining ordination. We do not suggest that this is the attitude of any students, at least when they enter. But if a career-oriented student comes to feel frustrated by what he considers as inadequate career preparation, he may find consolation in the thought that he is "putting in time" necessary for achieving his goal.

Alternately, the student may view the rabbinical seminary in expressive or cultural terms—as an institution where he can spend a few years in an intensely Jewish environment for the purpose of broadening his knowledge of Judaism and living a richly religious life. This type of student has very different expectations of his seminary and very different criteria for measuring its success. Thus, understanding the student's motives is important for understanding his expectations and, consequently, his evaluation of the seminary experience.

Most HUC-JIR students are professionally motivated. When asked the primary reason for enrolling in the rabbinical program, 80 per cent checked "desire for rabbinical ordination to enter the rabbinate." Consistent with this finding was that 90 per cent of the students expressed their firm or probable expectation of becoming congregational rabbis; the remaining 10 per cent were doubtful.

Many JTS and YU students stated that they had entered rabbinical school for other reasons. Only 39 per cent of the students at JTS and

22 per cent at YU said they had enrolled in order to receive ordination, while 34 and 62 per cent, respectively, said they had a "desire for a good Jewish education."

Certainly a good Jewish education is not incompatible with a rabbinical career. However, the fact that students at different seminaries chose such significantly different responses permits us to distinguish between career motivation and what may be called Jewish cultural motivation. Cultural motivation can also be distinguished from a second type of career motivation.

Eighteen and 11 per cent of JTS and YU students, respectively, listed a "desire for a scholarly education as a basis for an academic career" as the primary motivation for enrollment in rabbinical school. No student at HUC-JIR expressed this desire. Differences by year emerged only at JTS, where first-year students were more likely to have Jewish cultural motivation, and last-year students to be looking toward ordination. Whether this, in fact, was indicative of a change in the type of student entering JTS, or whether the JTS student develops an inclination for the rabbinical career while at the seminary and subordinates his former motivation, must remain an open question. The absence of more detailed data permits only conjecture.

Impressions gained by recruiters and admission officers, as well as conversations with the rabbinical students, contributed to a clearer understanding of the reasons for differences in responses. The career-oriented students at HUC-JIR want to become rabbis—Jewish professionals who "help people." Alternative careers for many Reform rabbinical students or young men planning to attend a Reform seminary are social work or teaching. But the rabbinate is particularly attractive because of its higher rewards, its potential for community leadership, and its opportunity for helping people within a Jewish context. Students were asked about aspects of the rabbinate that appeal to them most. To 70 per cent of the first-year HUC-JIR students it was the opportunity to preserve Judaism, to serve as leaders in the Jewish community, and to help people find faith. Only 16 per cent chose the opportunity to teach Torah, or to study and think. These views undergo some change during the seminary years.

At the other end of the spectrum it was to be expected that the primarily academically-minded YU students would show a preference for pursuits deriving from the study of the Talmud and sacred texts. Forty-five per cent of the first-year students checked the opportunity to teach

Torah or the opportunity to study and think as the most attractive aspects of the pulpit rabbinate.

The entering JTS student is more ambivalent than either the YU or HUC-JIR student. He too is desirous of a good Jewish education (33 per cent of the first-year students checked teaching Torah or the opportunity to study and think as the most attractive aspects of the congregational rabbinate), but he is also more career-oriented than the YU student. Moreover, the JTS student, more than the HUC-JIR and far more than the YU student, expects to find in the seminary solutions to problems troubling him with regard to faith, the meaning and nature of Judaism, the message of Judaism in the modern world, and the role of the rabbi. In a sense, the JTS student has the most serious cultural expectations and makes more ambitious intellectual and religious demands of his institution than other rabbinical students. And because JTS cannot always satisfy these demands, its students are the most dissatisfied of all rabbinical students.

A consideration of the manner in which the seminaries meet the expectations of their entering students and the changes that students undergo during their period of residence requires examination of formal and informal education and socialization in the various rabbinical institutions. Here the faculty and its relation to the students play an important role.

FACULTY

In general, rabbinical students have high regard for the teaching ability and scholarship of their faculty. At YU 30 per cent of the students believed the scholarship of most of their instructors to be outstanding, and 51 per cent good. Comparable figures for JTS were 66 and 30 per cent; for HUC-JIR, 51 and 44 per cent.

At both YU and JTS most of the permanent faculty members have never served as congregational rabbis. At HUC-JIR a much higher proportion, if not most, of the instructors had been ordained at HUC-JIR and served in the pulpit, though usually for a brief period. In no seminary, however, do more than a few instructors regard themselves as rabbis. In fact, with one or two exceptions, no instructor with both an earned doctorate and ordination uses the title rabbi. This is not necessarily a reflection of the relative status of academia and pulpit at the seminaries; at HUC-JIR the status of the congregational rabbi is equal to that of the faculty. Rather, the faculty members themselves, whether or not they

have served in the pulpit or are members of a rabbinical body, look upon themselves primarily as members of the fraternity of Jewish scholars, not of American rabbis. (The talmudical faculty of RIETS is, of course, a special case. However, their world is that of the masters of the Talmud and the *rashe yeshivot,* not of the congregational rabbi).[16]

Until fairly recently, the mobility of Judaica scholars has been very limited. Nevertheless, nearly all who did leave their teaching post in a seminary entered other academic institutions, not the rabbinate. The prestige of faculty members comes from reading papers at scholarly meetings or publication in scholarly journals, not from addressing lay or rabbinical groups or contributing to rabbinical journals. Consequently, the faculty tends to favor courses and programs of studies modeled on university liberal-arts or humanities programs rather than professional-school curricula. A faculty member will typically devote his energies to the potential scholars rather than to the future rabbis among his students. And the very fact that they are teaching in what might be viewed as a quasi-vocational institution leads faculty members to draw a careful distinction between their own teaching and scholarship, on the one hand, and what is oriented toward practical rabbinics, on the other.

It is important to understand this because much of the dissatisfaction and tension in the seminaries stems from the program's scholarly orientation. We will suggest reasons for this orientation, some of which apply to particular institutions, especially JTS. However, it should be remembered that more important than any unique institutional and environmental factors pushing for a scholarly program are the faculty members' identity and self-image.

CURRICULUM

Orthodox Yeshivot

STUDY OF TALMUD

Students at Orthodox yeshivot study Talmud to the almost total exclusion of all other subjects. It is a vast corpus of law, theology, philosophy, story, and history, comprising sixty tractates. Our printed editions in-

[16] For a discussion of the consequences of this aloofness of the talmudical academy leaders from the world of the Orthodox rabbi see Immanuel Jakobovits, "Survey of Recent Halakhic Periodical Literature," *Tradition,* Winter 1965-Spring 1966, pp. 95–101.

clude basic commentaries on the text. The traditional yeshivah method of Talmud study, in Orthodox institutions everywhere, invests study with deep religious significance. Ideally, study of Talmud becomes an immersion into halakhah, which lies at the heart of Judaism. It is a method very different from that used in the study of any other subject matter. At its best, it is an act of devotion as well as study, and may generate both emotional and intellectual religious commitment. It separates the world of the Talmud and the Oral Law from other aspects of life.

However, the YU student lives and studies in other worlds as well, and for the more secularized and less religiously devoted, the dichotomy evokes a sense of the irrelevance of Talmud and *halakhah*. For the more devoted students it creates a feeling that *halakhah* coexists with, but does not engage, the world. Thus there is failure to recognize the close interrelationship between *halakhah* and life, or the fact that *halakhah* cannot exist in a vacuum separated from the other social and psychological reality of man. While the rabbinical student, with eyes focused on a future career in the practicing rabbinate, already begins to struggle with this dualism, the life of the teacher of Talmud at a rabbinical institution, particularly of advanced courses, provides some escape from this dualism. It generates, at least superficially, a sense of the possibility of living in the halakhic rather than in the secular world. The price exacted is an inability to communicate meaningfully not only with the vast majority of Jews who reject the assumptions about the importance of *halakhah,* but also with those among the Orthodox who refuse to accept the reality of a halakhic world separated from any other reality.

Although to students of YU especially, the Talmud is a living document, some of them see little connection between it and other aspects of their lives. Of course, the same may be said about other textual studies at other rabbinical seminaries. The fact that a text is studied "scientifically" does not necessarily make it meaningful or relevant, particularly to students with non-scholarly career motivations. In one respect, Talmud at RIETS is more meaningful and relevant than most other academic subjects at other rabbinical institutions, since it is certainly pertinent to some aspects of the student's religious life. But from another point of view, this only exacerbates the problem. Bible, or Midrash, or Hebrew literature may be instructive, but nobody really expects it to be a way of life. Nor do these subjects make such demands. But if Talmud is in fact the Oral Law, then for the Orthodox student it is the essence of Judaism; and if it does not have meaning or significance for the totality of one's

life, then a gap is perceived. In this respect, the problem of Talmud for the YU student is paradigmatic for the problem of Judaism in America. If one believes that Judaism is what it claims to be, one must believe as a matter of faith that it has something to say to the total situation of man. Still, one is not quite sure what it does have to say. Furthermore, even if one knows what Judaism has to say, there still remains the problem of how many are prepared to listen.

SECTARIAN YESHIVOT

Our study was directed only to YU, as the largest institution for the training of rabbis. There are many other advanced yeshivot where students may prepare for ordination but, except for the Hebrew Theological College (HTC) at Skokie, Ill., whose program is similar to that of YU, they are under sectarian Orthodox auspices.[17] The best known among these are Mesifta Tifereth Jerusalem, Yeshivah Torah Vodaath, Yeshivah Ner Israel, Rabbinical Seminary of America, Rabbi Chaim Berlin Yeshivah, Rabbinical College of Telshe, Beth Medrash Govoha of America, and the Rabbi Jacob Joseph School and Mesifta. Most of these institutions offer almost exclusively courses in Talmud, with Codes added one or two years before ordination.

Ten or fifteen years ago, a sizeable number of students from each of these institutions entered the congregational rabbinate. Today all these schools combined yield a bare handful who do so. Some may not have a single student in any one year who will enter the congregational rabbinate; some yeshivot actually discourage students from becoming congregational rabbis. In part, this situation results from the scarcity of vacancies in synagogues having *meḥizot* (partitions separating men and women during prayer, required by Jewish law), and in part from a feeling that a congregational rabbi must necessarily compromise his religious principles when catering to the demands of his congregation. In consequence, graduates of these yeshivot are attracted to Jewish education, where the need for their services is more demonstrable and their private lives more their own. But most students do not even choose Jewish education, and those who do often combine teaching with the congregational rabbinate. The fact is that most students in these yeshivot attend college at night. Those who receive a college degree find alternative careers in

[17] For a more detailed listing and some discussion of these and similar types of institutions see Charles S. Liebman, "Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life," *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 66 (1965), pp. 21–97.

the secular world less demanding and financially more rewarding. They also appreciate the freedom to practice their religion intensely, without interference by the Jewish community.

Among the yeshivot offering studies besides Talmud and Codes as part of the *semikhah* program, a few provide a course in homiletics; but none has the elaborate programs or entrance requirements found at YU or HTC.

HEBREW THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Since its founding in 1922 HTC has ordained some 350 rabbis, of whom about 90 are now serving in pulpits and 10 as either Hillel rabbis or civilian chaplains. In HTC, too, the proportion of ordained rabbis who enter the pulpit has declined in the last decade. At present no more than one or two graduates do so each year. In 1967 there were 18 students in the *semikhah* program, which had just been changed from a two- to a three-year course of study. Unlike all other Orthodox seminaries, with the exception of YU, HTC requires an undergraduate college degree from those who seek ordination. (The institution itself is a liberal-arts junior college which hopes eventually to expand into a four-year college). It also requires a Bachelor of Hebrew Letters (B.H.L.) degree from its candidates for ordination, given after satisfactory completion of required courses in Bible, history, Hebrew language and literature, philosophy, and education, as well as electives in such subjects as Zionism, Jewish music, Jewish art, and the Apocrypha.

To those who believe that a rabbi must be firmly rooted in all aspects of Jewish culture and civilization, besides having a comprehensive knowledge of Talmud, the program at HTC appears very desirable. It is of interest that the nontalmudic Jewish studies are called *ḥokhmat Yisrael,* literally "wisdom of Israel" but in fact the Hebrew equivalent of Wissenschaft des Judentums, a term of opprobrium in most of the yeshivah world.

The president of HTC, Dr. Simon Kramer, stresses in principle the importance of *ḥokhmat Yisrael* as part of the rabbinical curriculum. Yet the program has its problems. The students do not take their extratalmudical studies seriously, and devote little time to them. Class attendance is irregular and not enforced. The reason for this laxity is that the courses are considered to be not relevant to the mastery of Talmud, which is the core of the curriculum. Talmud instructors, in particular, view it as too time-consuming and unimportant. Where they acknowledge the impor-

tance of an area, such as Jewish history, they feel that it must be taught from a Jewish point of view rather than a "scientific" or neutral one. There is little communication and some degree of tension between the Talmud and *ḥokhmat Yisrael* faculty, and, for a variety of reasons, the system necessarily favors the Talmud faculty. Students at HTC, as at traditional yeshivot, are not there to prepare for a career, but to study Talmud. If they wanted to engage in other Jewish studies at an advanced level, they would not come to HTC. This applies to HTC even more than to YU. An instructor in Talmud who has taught at both institutions believes that the students at HTC are a more select group than those at YU. Some students attend YU because of parental pressure or because all their friends do. The Chicago area has a less religiously intense environment than New York, and therefore does not produce this kind of social pressure. Hence, students at HTC are apt to be highly motivated.

The study of Talmud is not only purposive in that the student seeks to master a text, to know it, or to be able to manipulate a sacred system; it is an expressive or emotional act, in fact the highest level of religious activity. Hence the instructor of Talmud also becomes a religious leader, and his influence is automatically more pervasive than that of instructors in other fields. Indeed, yeshivah students call their Talmud teacher "rebbe," the appellation for hasidic leaders who traditionally exercise charismatic as well as religio-legal authority. Dr. Eliezer Berkovits, who teaches at HTC, is one of the outstanding Orthodox men in Jewish philosophy, if not the outstanding one. He has pronounced and articulate opinions on contemporary issues; yet his influence over students at HTC is less than that of Talmud instructors. In 1966 Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik, younger brother of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, left YU to become *rosh yeshivah,* or head, of the HTC talmudic faculty. Since his arrival he has had great influence, and his presence has, if anything, widened the gulf between the two Jewish programs. This is so not only because Rav Aharon (as he is known in the yeshivah world) is a great *talmid ḥakham,* with a particularly warm and attractive personality; his indifference, if not antagonism, to the *ḥokhmat Yisrael* program is all the more significant because he also holds college and law degrees from American institutions.

Rav Aharon has instituted major changes in Talmud studies, among them the systematization of the rabbinical program and its extension from two to three years. The program is now purposively organized around Codes and the relevant sections of the Talmud, for it is the pri-

mary responsibility of the Orthodox rabbi to resolve or respond to questions of Jewish law. A rabbi must know the Codes and the law, as reflected in the *Shulḥan ʿArukh* and other codes and commentaries, as well as the particular sections of the Talmud from which the Codes are derived if he is to judge what decisions in the Codes apply to the case before him. Rav Aharon has also added to the courses on Codes and Talmud those portions of the law which he thought particularly relevant to the contemporary Jewish community and the needs of the congregational rabbi. Thus, new courses dealing with Sabbath observance, marriage and divorce, and funerals and mourning, were added to encourage some students who were reluctant to enter the congregational rabbinate because they felt that they could not adequately cope with some of the more complex questions of religious law that congregants might pose. (Rav Aharon thinks that another deterrent for students was the shortage of *meḥizah* synagogues, and here there is little he can do. He has resisted pressure from the rabbinic alumni and the administration that he urge students to accept positions in synagogues with mixed pews in the hope of instituting *meḥizot* later on.)

The failure of the yeshivot to consider the specific needs of the Orthodox congregational rabbi was confirmed in conversations with YU students. A primary function of an Orthodox rabbi is to decide questions of Jewish law—to respond to private questions of congregants as to whether certain acts or procedures are permissible or prohibited under Jewish law. Students were troubled by their sense of inadequacy here. Of course, the easy way out for a conscientious but ignorant rabbi is to prohibit anything about which he is in doubt. But many students reject this alternative as unethical. The inability of Orthodox rabbinical graduates to resolve all questions of Jewish law is understandable, of course. The most complex questions were traditionally posed by less experienced and scholarly rabbis to greater authorities. But the feeling of a general inability to answer questions of religious law among the most talented and sincere young rabbinical students is a result of unsystematic and irrelevant rabbinical study programs at American seminaries. The changes instituted by Rav Aharon may therefore encourage more of his students to enter the congregational rabbinate.

Yeshiva University

GRADUATES

YU is the largest Orthodox institution for the training of rabbis, although there are institutions, such as the Beth Medrash Govoha of Lakewood, where more students are engaged in the full-time study of Talmud. YU has ordained approximately 1,050 rabbis. Of the 905 rabbinic alumni whose occupation is known, 380 are full-time congregational rabbis in good standing and 13 are military chaplains (38 per cent in all). Fifty-six other rabbinic alumni are not in good standing because they have accepted pulpits or engaged in activity not sanctioned by YU—primarily those who have joined the (Conservative) Rabbinical Assembly or accepted posts in Conservative synagogues without the approval of YU. Some 200 ordained rabbis (26 per cent) are in professions unrelated to Jewish life.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

YU has a three-year program leading to ordination. Students must be enrolled in both RIETS, which is the more important part of the program, and BRGS, the graduate school for Jewish and Semitic studies. Admission requirements include a college degree (almost all students are Yeshiva College graduates) and completion of talmudic studies in the undergraduate division of RIETS, or its equivalent.

TALMUD STUDY AT RIETS

RIETS begins at the Yeshiva University High School level and extends through the rabbinical program. Since the requirement for admission to RIETS at the college level is six years of intensive study of Talmud, the norm for the student entering the rabbinical program is ten years of Talmud three to five hours a day. Many, though not all, students have this background. A few transfer to RIETS from other Jewish programs at various stages of their high-school or college careers. Reasonably alert students find that, with some effort, they can make up their deficiencies at almost any stage—a commentary on the level of proficiency of the regular students. Indeed, given the number of years spent on Talmud, knowledgeable observers are surprised at how little many students know by the time they complete their undergraduate studies.

The average student entering the rabbinical program will have covered substantial portions of about ten of the sixty tractates of the Talmud.

More ambitious students may have gone beyond that on their own, but this is not an admission requirement. The absence of quantity is not the most serious problem: after all, a Jew has a lifetime in which he is expected to devote a part of each day to study. What the all-day Jewish school should have taught the student is the ability to study Talmud by himself, an ability he is not likely to acquire later. Independent study requires mastery of a method involving general principles and categories of thought, and it is here that talmudic training is weakest (p. 21 f.). We are not applying the criterion of "scientific method" in judging talmudic study at YU. It is by YU's own criterion that the resultant knowledge of Talmud has been unsatisfactory. Some rabbis ordained by YU, fellow students maintain, find it hard to master a page of Talmud without guidance. This failure must be ascribed to a general lack of emphasis on principles and concepts by many instructors—although the chief proponent of conceptualization, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, is himself professor of Talmud at YU.

There are other weaknesses, aside from lack of conceptualization and method in YU's Talmud program, that carry over into the rabbinical program. A requirement for admission is completion of the work in the undergraduate division of RIETS. But lax standards in this division permit inadequately prepared students to enter the rabbinical program. Indeed, given the shortage of rabbis and the increased demand for them, there is a pressure against raising admission standards.

RIETS itself has no systematic program. In 1955 it made an effort in this direction by extending the ordination program from two to three years and requiring the study of major parts of three sections of the *Shulḥan 'Arukh* and relevant talmudic passages. Second- and third-year classes were to be conducted in a two-year cycle by Rabbi Soloveitchik. By 1962 the program was virtually abandoned and at present the study of Codes is emphasized only in the final year of the rabbinical program. Students learn just one part of *Yoreh De'ah,* which is the portion of the *Shulḥan 'Arukh* traditionally taught in all yeshivot in preparation for ordination. About half the time is devoted to the laws of *sheḥiṭah* (slaughtering), although the growth of large slaughtering and kosher packing houses makes it unlikely that most rabbis will ever be called upon to decide such questions. Besides, recently ordained rabbis are probably not competent to do so anyway. The Sabbath laws, marriage and divorce laws, and laws of family life and family purity are largely neglected. In the absence of an integrated talmudic program, it sometimes happens

that students learn even the few sections of the Codes that are taught without ever having studied the related portions of the Talmud.

No one at YU has major responsibility for directing the rabbinical program, or even the rabbinical program within RIETS, much less for coordinating the RIETS and BRGS curricula. The program is not structured to prepare Orthodox rabbis; in fact, it is not structured at all. Decisions about who teaches or what is to be taught are often made on the basis of the instructor's seniority or the predilections of a few. The tendency of some of the instructors to focus attention on the few gifted students and to neglect the others creates more difficulties.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE TALMUD PROGRAM

Despite the lack of system and concern in the Talmud program, the students are not appreciably unhappy with it. They entered the program in order to study Talmud and, for better or for worse, that is what they are doing. Students are expected to, and indeed do, supplement class lectures with personal study, alone or in groups. Forty per cent of the students reported that they spend two to three hours daily in preparation and review for their class in Talmud, and 32 per cent over three hours. Fifty-seven per cent of the students characterized these classes as exciting or enjoyable; 34 per cent said they were only fair, and 17 per cent found them dull. Finally, 82 per cent of the students thought that in general the right amount of emphasis was being given to Talmud; 16 per cent felt there was too much emphasis. Despite all shortcomings, most students today know Talmud better than a decade ago. This can be ascribed to their more intense commitment to Talmud, their greater willingness to devote extra time to their studies, and better high-school and college preparation.

THE YU KOLEL

Indicative of the improvement was the institution in 1962 of the *Kolel* special program for students desiring a more intensive study of Talmud than the rabbinical program offered. Twenty-five students were enrolled in 1967, representing about a quarter of each class. All students in the program receive fellowships and devote a minimum of four additional hours each day to the study of Talmud. The offer of financial incentives to some of the best students enhanced the status of talmudic proficiency among all rabbinical students and doubtless raised the level of talmudic study. YU feels that the *Kolel* produces at least a few potential *talmede*

ḥakhamim each year. Students in the *Kolel* report that they are somewhat less likely than those not in the program to hold positions as congregational rabbis; among its last-year students, only 33 per cent answered "yes" or "probably" to the question whether they ever expected to do so. Most expected to teach. By contrast, 75 per cent of the non-*Kolel* last-year students expected to hold positions as congregational rabbis.

BERNARD REVEL GRADUATE SCHOOL (BRGS)

Talmud constitutes the major part of YU's rabbinical program, requiring students to spend from nine in the morning until three in the afternoon, Sunday through Thursday, attending lectures or preparing for them. However, courses other than Talmud, Codes, and homiletics have been made mandatory since 1945. For ordination students must also earn an M.A. (Master of Arts) or M.H.L. (Master of Hebrew Letters) from BRGS, or an M.S. with a major in religious education from the YU Ferkauf Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences. As an alternative, students may enroll in a special program in selected areas of practical *halakhah,* begun in 1966, which is however confined to a small handful. Since 81 per cent of the YU respondents were in the BRGS program, we will confine our attention to that division.

An M.A. degree is granted to any qualified student enrolled at BRGS (formally a nondenominational institution), who has completed 14 semester courses and fulfilled the thesis requirement. The degree of M.H.L., designed for the rabbinical student who wishes to enter the rabbinate, is granted only simultaneously with ordination, after the student has completed 12 semester courses as well as six credits in supplementary rabbinic training, a department which is officially under the aegis of RIETS but virtually an entity unto itself. Many students who intend to enter the rabbinate prefer an M.A. degree because its thesis requirement lends it greater academic respectability and gives them a chance to continue working toward a Ph.D. at a later date. Some students also elect to enroll in supplementary rabbinic training courses.

The supplementary rabbinic training offers courses in practical rabbinics (with field work), homiletics, Hebrew, pastoral psychology, and practical *halakhah.* The last course, the most popular, deals with Jewish law in such areas as family life, marriage and divorce, birth control, intermarriage, and burial and mourning. The most frequent complaint of students is that this one-semester course, meeting for two hours weekly, is not extensive enough to prepare them for properly fulfilling the most im-

portant responsibility of the Orthodox rabbi. The regular Talmud program contains virtually no practical *halakhah.*

BRGS offers a wide variety of courses in Bible, Jewish history, literature, philosophy, sociology, Semitics, and Middle Eastern, and rabbinic and talmudic studies. Courses in Talmud are taught in a scientific, rather than traditional, manner: texts are examined historically and critically; differences between schools of thought are systematically developed; possible changes in the text, later emendations, and errors are discussed. However, exposure to the scientific method of study apparently has relatively little impact on most students, who generally are more at home with the traditional method of study, congenial to their religious point of view. Actually, time devoted to studies at BRGS is minimal, usually two courses per semester, each meeting for two hours weekly throughout the three-year *semikhah* program.

On the whole, the students do not take the BRGS program seriously. Fifty-five per cent of the students reported its academic standards to be below what would be expected of a scholarly graduate program; none thought they were higher. Supporting this appraisal is the fact that four hours a week spent in classes are barely supplemented outside the classroom. Fifty per cent of the students reported spending less than a half hour in preparation and review for every hour of classroom work, and 25 per cent between a half hour and an hour. YU students' evaluation of their Talmud studies in RIETS was considerably more favorable, with 38 per cent rating standards below those of scholarly graduate programs, but 19 per cent rating them as better. At the same time, the majority of students approved of BRGS instructors, 56 per cent rating most of them as very effective, and only 11 per cent as ineffective.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF RABBINICAL PROGRAM

Dissatisfaction with the content of courses and level of presentation is not confined to rabbinical students at YU. In fact, the general situation at YU is somewhat less tense than at JTS or HUC-JIR because the greater part of the students' time is spent in the traditional talmudical program, toward which they are highly motivated and which they find intellectually rewarding and religiously satisfying. Nevertheless, the YU student would like to see curriculum changes, and this is particularly true for those expecting to hold positions as congregational rabbis.

Our questionnaire asked the students to evaluate the preparation they were receiving for future careers. (The reader should be clear that we

are dealing here, and in later sections, with the opinions of students, who may not be in a position to judge adequately their preparation for careers not as yet begun. This report, in general, tends to reflect student more than administration or faculty views). Of those who thought it likely that they would become congregational rabbis, 43 per cent called their preparation somewhat inadequate, 28 per cent fair, and 29 per cent good. Of those who did not intend to enter the pulpit, 35 per cent thought it inadequate, 30 per cent fair, and 35 per cent good. None considered it excellent (Table 5).

TABLE 5. YU STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF CAREER PREPARATION

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis		*Non-rabbis*	
	First-year	*Last-year*	*First-year*	*Last-year*
Good	40	18	31	43
Fair	20	36	31	29
Inadequate	40	45	38	29
No answer	0	0	0	0
	n*=10	n=11	n=16	n=7

* Number in the sample.

Students were asked to indicate on a given list of study areas whether the curriculum gave too much emphasis, about the right amount, or too little to each (Table 6).

The future congregational rabbis showed far more eagerness for the introduction of new areas of study than other rabbinical students. The majority thought that, except for Talmud and education (none appeared to mind that BRGS offered no education courses), too little emphasis was given to all areas. The most frequently mentioned were Bible (86 per cent), theology and philosophy (90 per cent), and comparative religion (90 per cent). It may then be assumed that the great majority of future rabbis believe their knowledge in these areas to be inadequate. But responses to an open-ended question revealed that they were most deeply disturbed by their ignorance of practical *halakhah,* which they ascribed to the curriculum's neglect of applied Jewish law and the use of the responsa literature.

Lack of attention to Bible has always been characteristic of yeshivot. What may be unique about YU is its students' discontent with this condition. According to one student, ". the lack of *humash* [Pentateuch] requirement results in almost unspeakable ignorance of things that

TABLE 6. YU STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM EMPHASES

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis			*Non-rabbis*		
Area of Study	*Too much emphasis*	*About right*	*Too little emphasis*	*Too much emphasis*	*About right*	*Too little emphasis*
Talmud	14	86	0	18	77	5
Bible	0	14	86	0	13	87
Midrash	0	45	55	0	67	33
Codes and Responsa literature	9	36	55	0	52	48
Liturgy	0	40	60	0	70	30
Theology and philosophy.	5	5	90	0	26	74
History	5	38	57	0	77	23
Medieval Hebrew literature	0	47	53	0	68	32
Modern Hebrew literature	0	37	63	4	70	26
Hebrew language	0	40	60	0	65	35
Contemporary Jewish community	5	47	47	0	59	41
Education	5	60	35	0	77	23
Homiletics and practical rabbinics	0	41	59	9	61	30
Psychiatry and human relations	0	40	60	0	64	36
Comparative religion	5	5	90	0	44	56

a good eighth-grader should know." Of course, "ignorance" is a relative term. Students at YU are unfamiliar with modern textual and philological studies of the Pentateuch, much less with critical theories. They do know the simple interpretation of a Pentateuch text—although, with the exception of Rashi, most have not systematically covered the other traditional commentators. They are less comfortable with the Prophets and Hagiographa. It should be noted that the situation at JTS is similar, although its students use critical theory in studying substantial portions of the Prophets and Hagiographa. At HUC-JIR, enormous language difficulty poses a different type of problem.

Responsibility for the ordination of rabbis with poor backgrounds in Bible must be put partly on YU's failure to integrate its rabbinical program. True, students in the *semikhah* program are required to take Bible courses at BRGS. But BRGS, which is a graduate school, offers only specialized courses in Bible, and takes for granted that its students possess the necessary background. The rabbinical student has had Bible courses in the YU undergraduate school, which, however, were confined to two

hours weekly of elementary, unsystematic presentation of material, and were not taken seriously. And, whereas the outside student with a comparable background in Bible would not be admitted to BRGS, the YU student is automatically admitted.

Of course, full blame cannot be put on the school and curriculum. Gaps in program will always exist, and it may not be unreasonable to expect students to supplement the formal curriculum with independent study. They will find no shortage of books on Bible and comparative religion; and since the study of Bible is a religious commandment, they should be engaged in it in any case. If students protest their ignorance of Bible, they themselves are in part responsible. Inadequate knowledge of practical *halakhah,* on the other hand, cannot easily be made up by independent study.

On the whole, YU students are guilty of the failing for which American college youth, generally, is criticized—an unwillingness to explore fields of study beyond formal class work and course assignments. Rabbinical students, it is true, often spend part of their time working (generally as teachers in Hebrew or Sunday school) and pursuing graduate studies at other universities. In fact, one attraction of the YU rabbinical program is that students have enough free time to undertake at least a half-time graduate program elsewhere. This, in itself, is a commentary on the nature of the rabbinical program.

Jewish Theological Seminary of America

GRADUATES

Since its inception JTS has ordained 814 rabbis, of whom 702 are still active. Of these, 427 (61 per cent) are serving in pulpits, 17 as Hillel directors, and 17 as military chaplains.

VALUES

JTS has undergone many changes since its founding and later reorganization under Solomon Schechter in 1902. It has increased its courses in practical rabbinics. In the last few decades it has also increased emphasis on Talmud, and, at the same time, introduced courses and curriculum changes reflecting the relatively poor Jewish educational background of its entering students in recent years. But JTS has not changed in one important respect. If anything, it has deepened its commitment to three dominant values not easily compatible with each other: commit-

ment to religious traditionalism, to Jewish scholarship in an atmosphere of free inquiry, and to an indigenous and acculturated Jewish religion in America—Conservative Judaism. Much of our discussion of JTS here will center on the manner in which it seeks to reconcile the conflicting demands of these values.

The normal course of rabbinical studies at JTS is five years, but in certain conditions may vary from four to six years. Students need not spend the entire time at JTS. They may receive credit for a year's work at the Jerusalem JTS center or, by special permission, elsewhere in Israel. The entering student must first enroll in the School of Judaica for one to three years, depending on the level of his Jewish knowledge. Upon completing the third-year studies at this school and passing a comprehensive examination, he receives the M.H.L. and is ready to enter the three-year Graduate Rabbinical School. (At this point some students may be asked to leave the institution.) Ordination follows completion of graduates studies.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission requirements are rigorous and sometimes discourage students from seeking application. For placement in the School of Judaica, a candidate must have an undergraduate college degree and pass interviews with an admissions committee, as well as subject-matter examinations in Talmud, Bible, Hebrew, Jewish history, and Jewish thought. It appears that a student with a good education in an all-day Jewish secondary school, who has done a little independent reading in Jewish thought, should qualify for admission into third-year studies.

Generally, private conversations between the applicant and a member of the admissions committee precede the formal interview and tests. Their purpose is to determine the student's interest and proficiency in Jewish studies and his ability to function as a rabbi, educator, or scholar. He may be questioned on his observance of Jewish law, although the committee is more interested in his commitment to future observance than in his past practice. The stress is on Sabbath, festivals, and *kashrut*. In this spirit, students are required to sign the following statement in the application form:

> A student in the Rabbinical Department must be a member of the Jewish faith. He is expected to conduct and fashion his life according to Jewish law and tradition, including the moral standards taught by the Prophets and the Sages of Israel, the observance of the Sabbath and Festivals, daily prayers and dietary

laws. It is the hope of the Faculty that each student will continually deepen his commitment to, and understanding of, Jewish faith and life.

I have read the requirements for admission to the Rabbinical Department and I believe that I am qualified to apply.

For purposes of admission, areas where Conservative norms differ from those of Orthodox Judaism—such as eating fish purchased in a non-kosher restaurant—are left ambiguous. However, JTS policy follows Orthodox rather than Conservative norms. It is noteworthy that candidates finding it difficult to choose between JTS and HUC-JIR are advised to apply to HUC-JIR.

CURRICULUM

The School of Judaica concentrates on the study of Bible texts, Hebrew, Midrash, Codes, and Talmud. About 20 hours a week are spent in classroom instruction (half of these in the study of Talmud), as compared with eight to ten hours a week in most graduate-school programs, and with the normal 15 to 16 hours a week in undergraduate schools.

The Graduate Rabbinical School also stresses Talmud, but offers additional courses in such fields as Bible, philosophy and history, which are mostly textual in nature. In addition, it offers 38 credit hours in practical rabbinics—homiletics, speech, education, pastoral psychiatry. The speech course is taken in the senior year and focuses on a sermon presented by each senior at Sabbath services in the JTS synagogue.

Pastoral psychology, the most ambitious, is taught by a group of psychiatrists. They attempt to give the students theoretical and practical experience in aspects of human behavior that may come within the rabbi's domain, and to make them aware that at a certain point the help of a professional psychiatrist may be needed. The program has recently been extended under a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. For various reasons, however, students do not take this program seriously. A report prepared by JTS for the National Institute of Mental Health states that, according to the instructors, students feel threatened by studies which, "by emphasizing the biological and the system in the psychological, undercut moral and ethical and religious views of life and behavior determination." Students particularly "resented Pastoral Psychology because by tempting them to reach out to it, it demonstrated to them in an unwelcome way the shakiness of their religious position" —a condition resulting from a failure to integrate sufficiently their theological assumptions with those of behavioral psychiatry. Students are

also aware that a few members of other departments feel "a certain hostility or perhaps even contempt for the course in Pastoral Psychology, implied rather than expressed." Other instructors "have serious questions about the value of the course" [18] although it was approved by the administration.

It is likely that those instructors treat pastoral psychology as trivial not because they feel that psychology and religion are incompatible, but rather because it is not textual in nature and is oriented toward practical rabbinics. Seminaries value scholarship more highly than professional training. At JTS, in particular, the scholar, not the rabbi, has the highest status. In consequence, while every other institution thinks of the rabbi, at least in part, as a teacher, the JTS leadership makes the role of the rabbi analagous to that of the professor in an effort to define it as scholarly. However, a clear distinction is made between the status of the congregational rabbi and the scholar.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

Students in the JTS Graduate Rabbinical School may, with permission, enroll in a "special program" permitting them to concentrate on one area of Jewish studies to the exclusion of other courses, such as practical rabbinics. When the program began in 1957 as part of the Lehman Institute, it offered only talmudic studies. The expectation was that its students would go on for Ph.D.s, and that most of them would eventually teach Judaica either at JTS or at colleges or universities.[19] It was assumed that those choosing the congregational rabbinate as a profession would become leaders of the Rabbinical Assembly, the organization of Conservative rabbis, by virtue of their greater scholarship. It was further believed that their greater exposure to Talmud would make them more traditional in religious observance. (JTS, like traditional yeshivot (p. 21 f.), looks upon the Talmud as the core of Judaism—the Oral Law, which, unlike the Bible, the Written Law, remains the unique possession of the Jews. The Talmud is considered as basic to an understanding of Jewish religion and theology, and, since the Talmud is the essence of tradition, also of Jewish history.)

[18] Jewish Theological Seminary of America, *Final Report For Submission To the Pilot and Special Grants Section Training and Manpower Resources Branch, National Institute of Mental Health* (mimeo., September 1966), pp. 44, 45, 22, 34.

[19] For the growing demand for Jewish scholars, see Arnold J. Band, "Jewish Studies in American Liberal-arts Colleges and Universities," *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 67 (1966), pp. 3–30.

Despite this high regard for talmudic scholarship, until recently JTS has been unable to produce talmudic scholars. In a sense, the problem is one of self-image, for the challenge to produce talmudic scholars comes not from outside, but rather from within JTS, which is desirous of enlarging its talmudic faculty and of countering the threat to its leaders' view of their own enterprise. JTS is simultaneously an institution of Conservative Judaism and a school for Jewish research and scholarship. Its chancellor is also the leader of the Conservative movement, and no fine distinctions between these two roles is possible. But if talmudic scholarship stands at the top of Jewish values as essential for Jewish survival, how is one to evaluate the Conservative movement, which cannot produce the leadership for survival? Since Dr. Louis Finkelstein became chancellor, about a generation ago, JTS has been placing more and more emphasis on Talmud in the curriculum, and appointed talmudists to the permanent faculty to fill vacancies in other fields. The introduction of the special program was the most ambitious move in this direction.

The program was also justified as an instrument for the preparation of future Judaica teachers; but this, in itself, does not explain why it was first exclusively devoted to Talmud, the subject in least demand at colleges and universities, or why participating students were given financial and prestige rewards. Some excluded or non-participating students have charged, no doubt unfairly, that participants were selected not so much for their intellectual competence as for their ritual observance. Student resentment abated substantially when JTS added special programs in Bible, philosophy, and, most recently, history, with fellowships made available and the possibility of substituting advanced seminars in special fields of interest for courses in practical rabbinics.

Since its inception, 46 students have completed the special program at JTS. Of these, 26 hold teaching or administrative positions in institutions of higher learning (primarily JTS), in a few cases combining this with graduate studies at other institutions in preparation for academic careers. It is too early to tell whether the special program will produce outstanding talmudists and rabbinical leaders, or religiously committed scholars in the academic world. One thing is certain: its development creates, within the student body, a group favorably disposed toward JTS's textual emphases in the curriculum and more readily socialized to the values of JTS than to those of the Conservative rabbinate.

JTS AND THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT

JTS is thus committed to Conservative Judaism, Jewish scholarship at the highest level, and religious traditionalism; and its program, in the broadest sense, can be viewed as the pursuit of these values and the mitigation of the tensions among them. At JTS new programs and ideas are evolved at a more lively pace than at YU or HUC-JIR. Many are never tried; others are tried and fail. But programs and ideas that take root, regardless of origin, attempt either to promote the values of JTS or to resolve its dilemmas.

JTS is that institutional part of Conservative Judaism which trains the movement's professional leadership. The other segments of Conservative Judaism are the associations of professionals (educators, cantors, and, above all, rabbis, the latter organized in the Rabbinical Assembly [RA]) and the congregational laity, organized in the United Synagogue of America. The Reform movement has parallel institutions, as does Orthodoxy, although the latter's institutions are not so neatly divided. Yet there is a great difference between JTS's role in the Conservative movement and HUC-JIR's role in Reform, or YU's role in Orthodoxy.

JTS is more than an educational or professional institution, it is Conservatism's dominant institution and, as such, asserts the right to determine the movement's ideological-religious policy. JTS argues, for example, that it must control the Ramah and United Synagogue camping programs, or "The Eternal Light," a television series on Jewish life sponsored by the Conservative movement. This control by JTS is based on the premise that all programs must accurately reflect the teaching of tradition. It is legitimized by pressing the notion that scholarship is central to Jewish life; that a scholarly institution is best able to understand the tradition and guide its application, and that JTS, as Conservative Judaism's scholarly institution, must therefore be central to the movement and exercise the power derived from this position.

Control is maintained through creating the proper climate within JTS as well as within the Rabbinical Assembly and the United Synagogue. The rabbinical students and future rabbis are socialized to the value of scholarship and the centrality of their seminary. More importantly, a sense of group belonging develops between students, faculty, and administration, which ties everyone to JTS regardless of ideological positions. A network of personal relationships evolves between rabbis and JTS in which role distinctions are blurred: rabbis do not relate to JTS only as professionals; they always remain students, as well as rabbis, and their

former instructors may continue to play the role of mentors, confidants, friends, and even father figures. Crucial for most rabbis is the personal approbation of JTS faculty members and, especially, of Dr. Finkelstein.[20]

The United Synagogue is controlled through the JTS executive leadership. The type of persons in leadership positions, their presence in the JTS building, and the nature of JTS support and supervision insure that the congregational association will not adopt an independent position. Funds for both the United Synagogue and the RA are raised in a unified campaign and allotted by JTS. Thus there can be no question that Dr. Finkelstein is the leader of Conservative Judaism. (In contrast, neither Orthodoxy nor Reform Judaism has a single leader. Orthodoxy's outstanding spokesman, when he chooses to exercise this role, is Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. As for Reform, most people, if forced to name a single spokesman, would probably think of Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, president of its congregational group, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Neither of these is head of his movement's seminary.)

But if JTS controls the Conservative movement, then it must bear a responsibility for its religious practices. Yet, in religious ideology a gulf divides JTS from the laity and even the rabbis. The ideological leadership of JTS emanates from Dr. Finkelstein and Professor Saul Lieberman, the rector. Recognition of Professor Lieberman's leadership is based on his reputation as the leading Jewish scholar in America and, outside the traditional yeshivot, also as the foremost talmudic scholar in the world. Both Finkelstein and Lieberman are Orthodox in public behavior and professed belief. Indeed, on some questions of religious law, Lieberman's interpretation is said to be more uncompromising than the prevailing halakhic opinion within American Orthodoxy. Since the imposition of ideological and religious control by JTS on the Conservative movement would probably have created a schism, there has been decentralization of ideological control and substitution of institutional for ideological loyalty. The result is that in principle JTS asserts its right and the need to exercise control, but in practice ignores deviations among its rabbis or laymen by denying that it exercises control in the case in question.

JTS does not in fact have the authority it claims for itself and under

[20] On the personal relationship and importance of JTS faculty and leaders to Conservative rabbis see Sklare, *op. cit.*, pp. 185–90. On the whole, Sklare sees this relationship as analogous to one of a parent (JTS) and child (rabbi), with all the mutual ambivalent emotions that go with it.

which many Conservative rabbis allegedly chafe. For instance, ideological content of "The Eternal Light" is bland and uncontroversial, and requires no control. And at the Ramah camps, which function within certain broad guidelines, the really crucial ideological issues—the relative stress on particular Jewish or universal humanitarian values—are decided by each camp director. Even within the walls of JTS, the student is permitted a great deal of latitude in defining his religious obligations. When Dr. Finkelstein proposed to distribute time clocks to all students for the automatic control of electric appliances on the Sabbath, as required in Orthodox practice but not by Conservatism, potential RA opposition was acknowledged. A compromise was reached by making these devices available to students who wish to have them, and withholding from the faculty information on who does or does not use them. RA has extensive autonomy, its law commission functions independently of, and at times contrary to, the wishes of JTS leadership. Many of RA's restrictions, therefore, are self-imposed.

JTS stands as a force for religious traditionalism in Conservatism and, as such it has prevented many deviations from Jewish law within the framework of its commitment to institutional survival. Significantly, however, its success has often been in the institutional rather than ideological sphere. Although observers believe that there is sympathy for the Reconstructionist position, at least among a small number of RA members, that movement is unable to obtain enough rabbis for its handful of synagogues. The reason is said to be that RA members are unwilling to confront the institutional wrath of JTS that serving a Reconstructionist synagogue might invoke. Yet they do not fear reprisals for nontraditional interpretation of Sabbath laws, ignoring laws of family purity, urging changes in *kashrut* requirements, or denying belief in the divine revelation of the Torah.

JTS AND ITS FACULTY

The ideological gulf between JTS and the Conservative movement with regard to the religious practices and beliefs of Conservative rabbis is not the only religious dilemma for JTS. In resolving the problem of what its Conservative identification means, JTS must also find a way to bridge the ideological gap between its leadership and many members of its faculty. All permanent faculty members are ritually observant in their public behavior, but many are far more liberal than the JTS leadership in personal practice and belief. These faculty members are not merely

paid employees fulfilling their professional responsibility as teachers; they also have ideological and religious convictions, notably that Conservatism should offer real alternatives to Orthodoxy. A partial solution of this problem is JTS's attempt to replace such faculty members, when they leave or retire, with others who appear to be closer to traditional Judaism.

In greater part, ideological differences are overcome through commitment to a different value which commands perhaps the strongest loyalty at JTS—scholarship and academic freedom. It would be a gross travesty of truth to suggest that this commitment is but a device for bypassing ideological differences. At the same time, this historically deep-rooted commitment is functional in that it legitimizes JTS as the central institution of Conservative Judaism while preventing an eruption within the institution. As long as both faculty and administration agree on the primary importance of free inquiry and scholarship, they have the basis for a consensus lacking in religious ideology. Thus, for example, one justification for having had Mordecai Kaplan on the JTS faculty, despite the impact his heterodox teaching may have had on future rabbis, was that his exclusion would have constituted a breach of academic freedom.

However, free scholarly inquiry does not necessarily advance teaching. Scholarship means research and publication, for which a price must be paid. Above all, it requires an expenditure of time that often makes faculty unavailable for consultation and discussion with students. Stress on the value of scholarship also leads to reduced emphasis on more vocational courses, or even theology and philosophy. Here the particular nature of scholarship at JTS must be considered.

TEXTUAL NATURE OF THE COURSES

Scholarship at JTS, and this applies to teaching as well, is primarily text-oriented. This means that the presentation of much of the material takes the form of a careful reading and philological analysis of the text. As one of our respondents put it, students in a particular Bible class have given up hope for a discussion of the message of a Prophet that was being read, or even of the meaning of any one chapter in the Bible. They consider themselves fortunate if the instructor discusses the content of any one sentence; he is more likely to dwell on the derivation and interpretation of single words.

While students realize that mastery of the material requires technical virtuosity, this method of instruction offers little intellectual stimulus or challenge. They find it arduous and, at the same time, elementary. Fifty-

nine per cent considered the academic standards of their courses to be below what they would expect in a scholarly graduate program. Among last-year students, 79 per cent held this view. Since the JTS student is generally bright and intellectually motivated in the pursuit of his secular and Jewish interests, he must find intellectual satisfaction outside JTS, or at least outside its formal program.

A number of reasons may be suggested for the emphasis on text: It is the traditional way of teaching a classical curriculum, the way the professors themselves were taught. It makes teaching easier, for knowledge of the text is the professor's stock in trade, his specialty, requiring least effort though not necessarily least time in preparation. It eliminates ideological divisiveness, because the instructor need not give a personal interpretation of the material, which might conflict with that of another instructor or of JTS leadership. The words are more important than the ideas they convey. Perhaps most importantly, mastery of the text is a necessary tool for scholarship and original research.

While compared with most young Jews or students at HUC-JIR students entering JTS have a good Jewish educational background, the instructors find them on the whole to be ignorant of some basic Jewish sources and incapable of pursuing serious independent study. A student beginning graduate work in social sciences or humanities will, within three or four years at most and at times within a year or two, be able to make a scholarly contribution to his field. Rabbinical students are unable to do so after six or seven years of study. In part, this discrepancy exists because seminarians must absorb a greater mass of material, in part because, unlike other graduate students, they work part-time in fields unrelated to Jewish scholarship and in fact are not really full-time students. Most rabbinical students will never sufficiently master the texts to do creative research. Yet knowledge of text continues to be stressed as both an essential of Jewish scholarship and the ultimate test of a religious Jew.

In this sense, too, JTS reflects the traditional yeshivah concepts of learning and study as the highest Jewish values. It also retains the traditionalist notions of the relative value of the texts, with Talmud primary and Bible secondary. JTS differs from the traditional yeshivah in the inclusion of other subject matter and in the manner of teaching texts. For the average student the stress on texts is not satisfactory, since he will never sufficiently master them or feel entirely comfortable with them. At the same time this emphasis precludes treating these texts, whether Bible,

Midrash, Talmud, or Codes, in a manner more useful to the practicing rabbi and more relevant to his Jewish concerns.

The emphasis on text, while establishing a value consensus among faculty members, also creates problems for them. It establishes a status hierarchy—or one that is perceived as such—that encourages instructors who are less textually-oriented or whose fields of interest are more peripheral to classical Jewish studies to accept posts at colleges and universities offering greater financial and status rewards. In the last decade JTS has lost a number of its most promising faculty members to other institutions, and some have never been replaced with specialists in their particular fields.

Yet the emphasis on text, as we have seen, provides a link between JTS and the Conservative movement's lay and rabbinical bodies. Separated, and even isolated, as JTS may be from the mainstream of Conservatism in religious-ideological matters, it is recognized as the foremost American institution for the pursuit of Jewish scholarship. As such, it lays claim to the support of all Jews.

STUDY OF TALMUD

The study of Talmud, or the orientation of most talmudic study at JTS, is scientific. It is a method that makes no explicit assumptions about the origin or ultimate source of the texts. It views the Talmud as an ancient text that is to be understood on its own terms, rather than by the imposition of categories of thought or general principles. Of course, this sophisticated method is not characteristic of most Talmud classes at JTS. Because of the students' lack of knowledge, the greatest effort is expended in trying to understand the simple meaning of the text. Most classes are therefore conducted on a more or less beginner's level. The distinction between the JTS and yeshivah courses does not lie in the teaching method, but rather in the goal toward which they are oriented.

Actually, not all JTS faculty are agreed on what the goal should be. Some, in fact, do not differ very much in their traditional orientation from yeshivah faculties. In the yeshivot, various approaches to the text may be, and have been, used. Since the time of the Gaon Rabbi Elijah of Vilna and his pupil Reb Ḥayyim of Volozhin, who in 1802 founded the Volozhin yeshivah that was the prototype of the 19th- and 20th-century Lithuanian yeshivot, the primary emphasis has been on a literal understanding of the text in the light of the early commentaries and normative halakhic practice. The text, as we have it today in its most popular

printed edition, is assumed to be accurate. No one claims that variant readings or mistakes may not have intruded, but these are thought to be trivial. And while the Gaon was concerned with correcting the text, this function has rarely attracted the energies of later talmudic scholars. Primarily, the traditional method seeks to increase the student's understanding of the text so that he may know the Oral Law.

Although the study of Talmud is undertaken for its own sake rather than for the resolution of practical legal questions, it is, particularly in the Lithuanian tradition, oriented toward discovering the conceptual-legal principles in the text and in the *halakhah*, as we have it today. By assuming that such principles exist, this method runs the risk of "discovering" a principle where none may be, and of interpreting difficulties in the text to fit a preconceived notion. In fact this is the charge most frequently leveled against the Brisk tradition of study, whose outstanding proponent is Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, grandson of Reb Ḥayyim of Brisk (Brest Litovsk). There also is a pronounced tendency to ignore the nonlegal portions of the Talmud. Although no talmudist would ever admit it, the very de-emphasis of the speculative and philosophical midrashic and aggadic portions necessarily creates a hierarchy of values in which the latter take an inferior position.

The scientific method differs, though not perhaps on this last point. It is not oriented toward practical legal or halakhic application, at least manifestly. It rather attempts to uncover the text and the conditions under which the text evolved.[21] Of course, the scientific study is the application to the Talmud of a textual-philological method that can be used in the study of any text. There are various kinds of scientific method, including the linguistic and historical. Perhaps the most famous essay in English on one type of scientific approach is "The Significance of the Halacha for the Study of Jewish History," in which the late Professor Louis Ginzberg of JTS sought to explain the differences between the two great schools of early rabbinical thought, that of Hillel and of Shammai, by differences of class and socio-economic outlook and interest.[22] The

[21] On the scientific method, its assumptions, procedures, and goals, see Meyer S. Feldblum, "Professor Abraham Weiss: His Approach and Contribution to Talmudic Scholarship" in *Abraham Weiss Jubilee Volume* (New York, 1964) pp. 7–80.

[22] Louis Ginzberg, *On Jewish Law and Lore* (Philadelphia, 1955), pp. 77–124. Our discussion of this and other approaches is obviously not exhaustive. The scientific method has a history dating back to the Middle Ages. Orthodox scholars in America, Europe, and Israel have used it. Within the yeshivah world, however, it was either not tolerated or treated as minor.

historical and socio-economic method was developed further by Dr. Finkelstein in an exposition of the differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees in the first edition of his *The Pharisees*.[23] (In a long introduction to a revised third edition of his book, Finkelstein rejects many of the underlying assumptions of the first edition.[24]) Scientific talmudists of today no longer believe that the evolution of the Oral Law can be understood exclusively or even primarily by reference to economic conflict and group interests—though these need to be taken into account. The socio-economic emphasis continues to find support, particularly among many Conservative and some Reform rabbis, because its assumptions suggest possibilities for radical changes in Jewish law: If particular social and economic conditions have molded Jewish law in the past, then changes in social and economic conditions should warrant changes in the law now. These assumptions, clearly, are similar to those of the classical Wissenschaft des Judentums.

A second approach to the Talmud might be called the comparative-law or comparative-institutions method, often associated with Professor Lieberman and his studies of the Greek and Hellenistic influences on Judaism.[25] It seeks to understand the text through an understanding of the institutions and modes of thought in the Greco-Roman world, in which the Talmud came into being. The rare use of the comparative method in yeshivot can be ascribed in part to their talmudists' ignorance of the classical world, and in part to the radical conclusions it can suggest—that Jewish law is not primarily a product of the rational exegesis of revealed law. Yet, in the last analysis, while an understanding of the Greco-Roman world opens up doors to the understanding of the Talmud, for the talmudist it remains ancillary.

The third approach is the text-critical method associated at JTS with Professor David Weiss, and found in Lieberman's writings. It rests on the belief that the talmudic text has undergone various changes not only since its codification but, more significantly, in the very process of formulation. Since the Talmud evolved over a period of centuries and its content was transmitted orally at first, errors crept into the text. Statements of one rabbi were attributed to another; parts of one sentence were com-

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[23] Philadelphia, 1938.

[24] Phidadelphia, 1962, pp. xlvii–vxxxiv.

[25] Saul Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine* (New York, 1942), and *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York, 1950); see also Boaz Cohen, *Jewish and Roman Law: A Comparative Study* (New York, 1966).

bined with parts of another; arguments were not carried to their logical conclusions. The Talmud is made up of layers of material from different periods, highly condensed.

The text-critical method seeks to identify each layer, to identify authors of individual statements, and, where possible, to resolve apparent contradictions, and to reconstruct the original debates—with the aid of variant readings and interpretations in rabbinic literature. Textual criticism, then, requires an encyclopedic knowledge of Jewish sources, an accomplishment well beyond the students at JTS. Nevertheless, it is meaningful to a student who, while himself incapable of undertaking such research, can thereby begin to understand the ultimate goal of talmudic study. This understanding is important to the student in the special program.[26] The question, however, is whether he will ever reach this goal. And this poses the primary problem in motivation for Talmudic study.

The study of Talmud in the traditional yeshivah, we said, is the means to an understanding of the text or the law; it is also a form of religious experience. The religious value of study motivates the student, and his immersion in the text as an ongoing halakhic disputation, whose consequences are felt in the actual life of a Jew, reinforces his religious commitment. The characteristic price exacted by this motivation is the isolation of talmudic study from contemporary social reality and the assumption that there is a halakhic world extending from ancient Palestine to the contemporary world, which is self-contained and can exist separate from other realities.

Many Orthodox actually welcome this, as providing further incentive for involvement in the Talmud. Those who cannot accept the traditional yeshivah assumptions about the Talmud and the nature of talmudic study become alienated and choose alternative careers. Mastery of the Talmud, the *sine qua non* of religious leadership in Orthodoxy, makes religious leaders necessarily the most traditional in outlook; but this is a dilemma only for the less traditional elements within Orthodoxy. However, there is a second possible problem for Orthodoxy as a whole. If the text-critical school is right in its assumption that the received Talmud text is at some points inaccurate, then the *halakhah* which derives from these points is

[26] The text-critical method of study, as we noted, is also pursued in BRGS, at YU. But studies at BRGS are entirely separated from the core talmudic program at RIETS.

not the true Oral Law. How to solve that problem—if indeed it is one —must be left to the theologians.

It would appear on the surface that the text-critical approach offers an alternative method of study for students (both modern Orthodox and Conservative) who do not necessarily accept the traditional yeshivah assumptions about the Talmud. It might thus produce outstanding talmudists who are not of the religious right wing. But the matter is not so simple.

To be sure, there is nothing explicitly heterodox in the assumptions of that school. No one claims the Talmud text to be divine in origin; even the most traditional merely claim for it that it embodies the Rabbis' discovery of the unfolding Oral Law, revealed by God but written down relatively late.

Still, by uncovering the true text and demonstrating that our present text contains errors in transmission, the text-critical school might also discover that later rabbis were mistaken in their legal decisions. For its adherents this is not a serious problem. They argue that the *halakhah* today, even if at variance with the "real" Talmud, certainly has the sanctity of custom. And no one, they feel, would sensibly advocate radical halakhic change on the basis of textual emendations, for a textual change made today may be completely discredited tomorrow. There never will be absolutely convincing proof. At best, the emendations or clarifications of the critics can be used in special circumstances or in an emergency. There is, in fact, some precedent for this. The impact of the discovery of the works of a medieval talmudic commentator, Ha-Me'iri (Rabbi Menahem ben Solomon), brought no change in the *halakhah* even though, some rabbis hold, the *halakhah* today would be different if the early codifiers had had the Me'iri before them. The text-critical method, it may therefore be argued, will provide a basis for change only to the extent that its masters seek it.

Of course, this is true also of the traditional method of study. In fact, the imposition of particular categories of thought on the Talmud makes possible different interpretations of the text. It may therefore be argued that the text-critical method of study is no more radical in its implications than the traditional method. It constitutes a threat to the structure of *halakhah* only to the extent that those able to apply it may desire radical conclusions. But while the majority of Conservative rabbis might like to see more radical implications drawn, the talmudists are unwilling to do so.

It has been argued here that the scientific method is not necessarily radical. Whether or not this is so depends, in part, on initial perspective. It is possible for a Conservative Jew to view the Talmud with an open mind and even question Sinaitic revelation, yet accept the ritual law—because of a sense of obligation to, and participation in, Jewish history rather than belief in revelation and inspired exegesis. For him the text-critical approach does not present any ideological difficulty. On the contrary, he is apt to feel that that approach offers too little possibility of innovation and change in *halakhah*. If this is so, why would the student who is not deeply involved religiously want to undertake its study? The task is arduous, requiring years of concentrated work that can culminate only in the better understanding of an "ancient text."

For most committed Orthodox Jews the text-critical approach can raise serious ideological or, more properly, structural-psychological problems. They accept the *halakhah* as authoritative because they believe it to be intimately and directly related to revelation at Sinai.[27] An Orthodox Jew might accept with some equanimity the idea that a few laws may have an erroneous textual base, but the recognition of a large number of errors would cast doubt on the whole structure of authority of the *halakhah*. The quantitative would affect the qualitative.

What is more, the scientific method is *psychologically* not congenial for a traditionally-oriented student. By suggesting that rabbinic commentators have been wrong or misinformed on very fundamental questions, it can promote skepticism about the text and challenge the very essence of traditional learning, in which the religious dimension is not so much the study as the learning of the text.

Traditionalist scholars having some familiarity with the text-critical approach also argue that this method is misleading as well as dangerous; and that seeming errors in transmission are not necessarily errors but can be explained or understood—analytically, or dialectically. Essentially, however, textual criticism is too radical to attract the Orthodox, and too purely scholarly to have programmatic implications for an untraditional Jew. It remains, then, a tool for a small number of scholars in the United States and Israel.

[27] The fact that Orthodox scholars of the scientific school deny a traditional sanction for the application of this belief to more than a small portion of the *halakhah* is irrelevant to our concern. Such scholars are few in number.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE CURRICULUM

The textual orientation of the courses is the primary source of dissatisfaction among JTS students. Many found their courses uninspiring, and their preparation for the rabbinate inadequate, because problems raised by Jewish philosophy, theology, or the place of Judaism in the modern world are ignored. There was less dissatisfaction among students in the special programs, who were less likely to enter the rabbinate. Of first- and last-year JTS students, 51 and 32 per cent, respectively, thought it unlikely that they would become congregational rabbis.[28] Many of those who did not expect a congregational career were in special programs. (The existence of the special programs can suggest possibilities for alternative careers even to nonparticipating students, who otherwise might not have considered these alternatives.)

Students who did not expect to enter the congregational rabbinate (hereafter referred to as non-rabbis, although they all expected to be ordained) were less dissatisfied with the curriculum because they were less interested in solving Jewish problems than in preparing for future research. Among last-year students, 84 per cent of those intending to serve in the pulpit (hereafter referred to as future rabbis) rated academic standards as below the level they would expect in a scholarly graduate program, against 67 per cent of the non-rabbis. Their evaluations of career preparation showed significant differences between first- and last-year students, by career expectations (Table 7).

TABLE 7. JTS STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF CAREER PREPARATION

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis		*Non-rabbis*	
	First-year	*Last-year*	*First-year*	*Last-year*
Excellent or good	67	31	36	33
Fair	17	39	0	33
Inadequate	17	31	55	33
No answer	0	0	9	0
	n*=12	n=11	n=13	n=6

* Number in the sample.

[28] Our sample for the comparison of first- and last-year students by career orientation included only six last-year students who did not intend to become congregational rabbis. However, their responses generally confirmed our expectations, and we have confidence in the general validity of the finding, even though the actual, precise percentages may be unable to bear much weight.

The same pattern appeared in the students' evaluation of the relative emphases placed on different areas of the curriculum (Table 8). Thus

TABLE 8. JTS STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM EMPHASES

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis			*Non-rabbis*		
	Too much emphasis	*About right*	*Too little emphasis*	*Too much emphasis*	*About right*	*Too little emphasis*
Talmud	44	52	4	12	76	12
Bible	4	64	32	0	59	41
Midrash	0	30	70	0	44	56
Codes and responsa literature	0	42	58	0	35	65
Liturgy	0	16	84	0	25	75
Theology and philosophy	4	29	67	0	44	56
History	8	60	32	0	59	41
Medieval Hebrew literature	0	30	70	0	44	56
Modern Hebrew literature	0	40	60	0	47	53
Hebrew language	4	32	64	6	29	65
Contemporary Jewish community	0	24	76	0	38	62
Education	4	52	44	14	57	29
Homiletics and practical rabbinics	16	52	32	38	31	31
Psychiatry and human relations	0	67	33	13	67	20
Comparative religion	0	13	87	6	19	75

the non-rabbinical students were satisfied with the emphasis on Talmud, while future rabbis thought there was too much. If we compare only last-year students, we find that more non-rabbis than future rabbis wanted greater emphasis on Hebrew language and medieval Hebrew literature, whereas, as could be expected, more future rabbis want greater emphasis on homiletics and practical rabbinics, education, and the contemporary Jewish community. On the other hand, even future rabbis were more critical of the lack of emphasis on academic subjects than on practical or professional subjects.

"RELEVANCE" OF THE CURRICULUM

The general emphasis on text at JTS is not without justification. It can be defended on the grounds of faculty preference and religious traditionalism, and as prerequisite for scholarly pursuits. It is also defended

because the particular skills needed by the modern rabbi, counseling, administration, homiletics, are acquired primarily through experience and common sense. They cannot in fact be taught, nor are they particularly worthy of being taught.[29] Exposure to texts, to the basic sources of Jewish faith and knowledge, should broaden the future rabbi's outlook and make him receptive to the totality of the Jewish tradition.

This argument begs the question somewhat, since the students do not want practical rabbinics, but a more lively and provocative presentation in academically-oriented courses. Nevertheless, to those who believe in the classical Jewish tradition as both a guide to behavior and a treasure of human insight, the argument of the salutary effects of the rabbi's exposure to text has much cogency. The challenge to JTS, then, is to relate the tradition's wealth of resources to the modern rabbinical student. Whether responsibility for failure to do so lies with the faculty, the curriculum, the choice of text, or with the rabbinical student himself is another question.

The rabbinical student comes to his classical religious culture steeped in the intellectual processes and values of modern secularist society. JTS no longer attracts students from Orthodox or culturally traditionalist homes. Its student today is not very different in his intellectual outlook from the graduate of any good American college or university. He is open to religion, but his concepts of religious piety and values are as much a product of his exposure to the secular world as to his Jewish school and family life. This means, paradoxically, that the student's religious values have become christianized—because the earlier Christian culture has transferred many of its assumptions and presuppositions to the secular realm. He brings theological concerns to the seminary, but the context and language of these concerns are, at times only subtly, Christian in origin. He looks upon religious piety, theology, and social action as disjunctive, rather than conjoint with religious practice or the study of Codes.

JTS has yet to learn to cope directly with this problem. It has failed to do so not only because it prefers to shy away from the problem, but also—remarkably—because its leaders have so successfully solved the

[29] For an analogous argument regarding the teaching of public administration, see Robert Hutchins, "Shall We Train for Public Administration? 'Impossible,'" in Dwight Waldo, ed., *Ideas and Issues in Public Administration* (New York, 1953), pp. 227–29, and Charles S. Liebman, "Teaching Public Administration: Can We Teach What We Don't Know?" *Public Administration Review,* September 1963, pp. 167–69.

problem for themselves. If Chancellor Finkelstein has one characteristic that distinguishes him from the leaders of the Orthodox seminaries, that is neither his piety, nor his scholarship, nor his fund-raising skill. It is, rather, his ability to integrate his traditionalist view of Jewish history and religion, his often simple ideas about American Jews and the American Jewish community, with an awareness and concern for universal moral values and human needs in a secular society.

Those closest to Finkelstein testify to his sincere belief in the importance of the JTS-sponsored interreligious programs, such as the Institute for Religious and Social Studies. These programs are not devices for fund raising or publicity, though they conveniently may serve this purpose. They stem, rather, from Dr. Finkelstein's conviction that Judaism has much to say to the world in its present condition about problems of both immediate and ultimate concern; that it has a distinct ethical message. This philosophy, however, and the type of public program undertaken by JTS find little reflection in the curriculum. For the chancellor, the interrelation of classical textual study and social ethics is obvious; the students can only wonder.

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR)

GRADUATE RABBIS

The combined Reform seminary has ordained approximately 1,200 rabbis, of whom 868 are active. Of these, 646 (74 per cent) occupy pulpits, 20 are military chaplains, and 28 Hillel rabbis.

THE NEW YORK AND CINCINNATI SCHOOLS

In 1954 the administration of HUC-JIR questioned the need for a full five-year rabbinical program in the smaller New York school on the ground that the duplication of facilities with Cincinnati was wasteful, and this no doubt was so. Plans to curtail the New York school's program were abandoned in view of strong opposition from both the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Reform congregational body, which wanted a New York-based institution mainly to provide student rabbis to the surrounding area, and from JIR alumni, who suspected an attempt to destroy the more traditionalist, Hebraist, and Zionist orientation of the New York center.

Differences between the New York and Cincinnati schools are still a touchy subject. There are complaints of discrimination against New York

in the allocation of funds, in physical construction, filling vacancies on the faculty, and many minor matters. The beautiful campus of the Cincinnati center houses the rabbinical school as well as facilities for a variety of HUC-JIR activities. The New York center, on the other hand, has cramped quarters (which, however, are scheduled for expansion). The administration denies discrimination. It asserts that the Cincinnati center was enlarged first as part of an earlier expansion program, and that a shortage of funds did not permit execution of projected plans for New York. But there are many other, at times subtle, differences between the two schools.

While students admitted to HUC-JIR may choose either New York or Cincinnati, those in the New York school may transfer to Cincinnati, but not the other way around. Respondents differed on the reason for this policy, but there was general agreement that if students from Cincinnati were free to transfer, many would do so. There was less agreement on whether this was because students tired of dormitory life, of Cincinnati, or the Jewish atmosphere there. Some pointed out that the administration is located in Cincinnati and this, with the best intentions, necessarily limits the sense of freedom at the campus school. There is no doubt that differences between the two centers are exaggerated by some respondents, both faculty and students. But the exaggeration itself assumes reality when people believe it to be true, and act accordingly. Location has an important, if unintended, role in molding each student body.

It is only fair to report that some faculty members who have been at both institutions deny that real differences exist. Cognizant of the widespread belief within HUC-JIR that New York students are more traditional and have better Jewish backgrounds, they deny any evidence of it. Any differences suggested by the findings of this study, they argue, are peculiar to the particular classes sampled. They maintain that the existing standardization of admissions procedure and curriculum, and interchanging of faculty, have eradicated earlier distinctions. But not all say this. One teacher, ideologically identified with the Cincinnati school, put it simply: "The Jews go to New York and the Nordics to Cincinnati." These views apparently find credence elsewhere. Indeed, differences or expected differences between the centers affect the placement of rabbis; some Reform temples in the South will not accept rabbis ordained in New York.

It is a fact that students seeking a more Jewish atmosphere are at-

tracted to the New York school. Its students are likely to come from the East, where exposure to different modes of Jewish life, ideas, and personalities is greater (though, as we have seen, the majority of students at the New York school come without much Jewish background). And they cannot avoid contact with the world around them, for the school has no dormitory facilities. Besides, some of the students who must support themselves as part-time teachers and temporary rabbis are necessarily directed outside the institution for their Jewish interests. By contrast, the Cincinnati center is more insular. Because off-campus Jewish life is generally shallow, the school can exercise a stronger influence. This continues to reflect, though less today than in the past, a midwestern American Reform tradition.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Cincinnati and New York have identical curricula, virtually identical requirements for ordination, and a single admission policy. Admission procedures are similar to those of JTS, though somewhat more elaborate, including a Rorschach test and a psychiatric interview. The Cincinnati and New York schools each has its own admissions committee, but the student may choose between the two centers after acceptance. (There is now a third center in Los Angeles, where students are offered only the first two years of study and from which they then transfer to Cincinnati.) Los Angeles students are not included in this report.

Students may be granted a year's leave of absence to attend HUC-JIR's Biblical and Archeological School in Jerusalem. At present it offers only two or three courses in rabbinics and, for this reason, the student must make up the year when he returns to the United States. Plans are under way to expand the course of study in Jerusalem so that a full year's credit can be granted.

HUC-JIR has an active program for recruiting candidates. A member of the administration is charged with the responsibility of visiting Reform temples and colleges and universities to talk to students about the possibility of study at the institution. This program, as well as the brochures prepared for recruitment purposes, stress the seminary's role in training Reform rabbis.

CURRICULUM

Most entering HUC-JIR students take an intensive eight-week Hebrew course at Cincinnati during the summer preceding their first year. The

normal program leading to ordination requires five years of study, but students with good Jewish-studies backgrounds may receive advanced standing for one or, in rare cases, two years of work on the basis of written examinations. Undergraduates enrolled in some joint program of Jewish studies may expect to receive an advanced standing of one year. After the second year, students take an examination in Midrash, Bible, Talmud, modern Hebrew, liturgy, Mishnah, and commentaries. Those who successfully complete the examination are awarded the B.H.L. degree. Requirements for the M.A. degree and ordination are three more years of study, a comprehensive examination, and a written thesis.

HUC-JIR differs from both YU and JTS in its emphasis on the rabbinate as a career and on the denominational character of the school. At YU, Orthodox Judaism is assumed, Conservatism and Reform are simply ignored. At JTS, religious traditionalism is assumed, and by and large no official attention is given to the distinguishing characteristics of Orthodoxy, Conservatism, and Reform. HUC-JIR's school of education, on the other hand, offers a course in "Reform Judaism as a Way of Life," and a first-year requirement for all rabbinical students is a course called "Orientation to Reform Judaism."

HUC-JIR's stress on the practicing rabbinate is also reflected in the curriculum, although the relationship between the curriculum and the congregational rabbinate is rather complex. The course of study is based on a 1954 curriculum revision, which was a compromise between the curriculum until then in force, the interests of the faculty at that time, the subject matter some people thought a practicing rabbi must know, and past complaints.

Some 15 per cent of the courses are in practical rabbinics (human relations, education, speech, and homiletics). Students gain most of their practical experience through the required one-year service as part-time student rabbis, a program that simultaneously meets Reform Judaism's institutional needs by making available rabbis to small temples that cannot afford the services of full-time rabbis. Students also officiate and preach at HUC-JIR chapel services. The nature of these programs makes it difficult to judge exactly how much of the student's time is spent in "practical rabbinics." Some students and faculty feel that the courses in practical rabbinics impart only trivial information that deserves little serious thought and is of no practical value. But the discontent with the curriculum at HUC-JIR has nothing to do with practical rabbinics. No one disputes that students who are at the seminary to prepare for a pulpit

career should be given the opportunity to take some professional or vocational courses. No one would further deny that these courses could probably be improved—though some of the criticism is based on the rather naive assumption that class work can fully prepare a rabbi to feel perfectly at ease and know precisely what to do when confronted with a practical situation.

The more critical problem is the presentation of academic subjects. Should courses in Bible, philosophy, theology, history, Talmud, have a purely scholarly approach? Or should they stress the practical by teaching future rabbis to interpret the concepts and practices of the Jewish tradition, or at least a carefully selected part of them, in a manner giving them contemporary relevance and meaning? But this is an oversimplification. The first alternative poses the problems of presenting the material to students who come with little background in Jewish history, classical texts, or Hebrew. The second alternative requires the teacher to take a philosophical or theological stand on Judaism that would permit him to offer judgments regarding the tradition and what is or is not relevant to it.

In the choice of curriculum and faculty, HUC-JIR has taken the scholarly approach. Its official position is that Jewish literature and lore are central to religion; that the rabbi must therefore also be a scholar, or at least strive to become one, even as he is engaged in his ministerial activity. For, the institution's leaders argue, the rabbi must know the sacred texts because he "can interpret modern life only in the light of Jewish literature and law," and must be able to do so authoritatively. He must, according to HUC-JIR's president, Dr. Nelson Glueck, "block off a portion of his life for creative Jewish studies," and it is the function of the seminary to prepare him for this task. To encourage such activity, in 1966 the Cincinnati school reduced the number of required courses, allowing students to take 20 per cent of their credits as electives and thereby concentrate on at least one area of study. The Cincinnati school's impressive and distinguished library offers more than adequate facilities. The leaders, then, see no contradiction between rabbinical responsibilities and scholarly activity.

But this still does not resolve all dilemmas. As one faculty member noted, there are two ways of studying Bible. You can stress the scientific method—biblical criticism and philology—to help in the scholarly understanding of the Bible. Alternately, you can study Bible with the traditional Jewish commentaries and thereby achieve the traditional Jewish

perspective and understanding of the Bible. In fact, the method used actually depends on the proclivities of the instructor.

But the stress on scholarship offers no rational basis for choosing curriculum alternatives and, given the students' poor knowledge of classical Jewish sources, hard choices must be made. Because some students (and alumni) are unhappy with the general scholarly approach in the courses,[30] and others are merely seeking to acquire as much textual knowledge as they will need to function as rabbis, most students prefer instructors with an integrative-theological position, rather than a scholarly-textual one.

FACULTY

The faculty is divided by a wide range of religious belief and practice. Theological differences run the gamut from a kind of existential Orthodoxy to a thoroughgoing untraditionalism. In ritual practice, differences range from total nonobservance to basic observance of the laws of the Sabbath, *kashrut,* and prayer. Most of the faculty members are somewhere between the extremes and, at the Cincinnati school, closer to the less traditional end of the continuum. HUC-JIR is not unhappy with this diversity and is proud of its academic freedom.

The question some people ask of HUC-JIR is what are the limits of academic freedom. Dr. Glueck maintains that the institution would not hire a faculty member who did not accept the God idea, who did not think Israel is important, and who did not believe in the centrality of Judaism. The institution seeks, he says, "a proud, dedicated and passionately devoted Jew." In all other respects a faculty member has complete freedom. This provides a great deal of latitude. It permits the expression of views that even a student from a Reform home finds startling and radical in their challenge to the God idea—or in their suggestion that Reform Judaism is virtually a separate religion.

Curiously, the faculty are not entirely free from ritual obligation. Unlike the students (at least at Cincinnati), they are expected to attend chapel services on Sabbath morning and every weekday from 10:20 to 10:45, when no classes meet. Services are conducted by students, who, within certain guidelines, can organize them as they choose. The incongruity of a Reform institution requiring its faculty to attend religious services is not lost on the faculty. However, it is questionable whether this kind of subtle coercion—if such it is—is particularly religious in

[30] See Edgar E. Siskin, "Rabbinate and Curriculum," *CCAR Journal,* October 1967, pp. 2–5, 30.

intent. At least one outside observer, who, incidentally, was impressed and even moved by the services, found them to be as much an institutional ritual as a religious act. The impression was not of a group engaged in prayer or devotion, but rather of a group that met to reaffirm a common set of values and beliefs, if only by the very act of meeting. Of course, this too may be regarded as religion.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM

The curriculum's general textual emphasis raises the problem of how the material can be mastered. The largest, most tedious obstacle is mastery of the Hebrew language, an obstacle which many students never overcome. Although the students generally know biblical Hebrew and most of them can sight-read passages from the Bible by the time of ordination, they are far from having facility in rabbinical Hebrew or, for that matter, in modern Hebrew. Most students cannot read with facility a modern like Ahad Ha'am, say, whose vocabulary and style are neither particularly difficult nor involved.

To the extent that the curriculum is purposeful, it is directed toward exposing the student to the totality of Jewish tradition so that nothing Jewish may remain foreign to him. The range of the subject matter is impressive, but the coverage has little depth. The curriculum, as one recent graduate stated, serves the function of showing the student how great an *'am-ha'arez* (ignorant Jew) he is, and how likely he is to remain one. The student does not resent exposure to text, though he may feel unhappy about his inability to master it, or about the constant reminder by some faculty members of how little he knows. He would like to see more emphasis on preparation for the rabbinate, though he realizes exposure to the classical texts is part of that preparation.

To put it differently, the student at HUC-JIR wants a more challenging presentation of ideas and a greater emphasis on direct training for serving the needs of the Jewish community, as envisaged by the community (counseling, synagogue administration). On the other hand, neither the rabbinical student nor his institution believes that he must strictly adhere to congregational standards. The student comes to realize that he must also in some way, though not necessarily in ritual observance, serve as an exemplary figure in Jewish life, and this he cannot do if he is ignorant of Jewish sources.

The HUC-JIR student, perhaps more than the JTS student, is cognizant of his institution's problem—to secure both a solid classical Jewish

education and a theology relevant to the modern Jew. Yet he is more passive than the JTS student. Unlike the latter, he is not apt to bring burning theological questions or problems of Jewish identity to his institution. The HUC-JIR student wants to be a rabbi so that he can help people, and he is quite prepared to defer to his institution's judgments of courses and curriculum. To be sure, he desires a change in content and emphasis—like the student at JTS, YU, or, for that matter, at any other institution of higher learning. The difference is that HUC-JIR students are not nearly as agitated about such matters as those at JTS, or even at YU. He knows that if he completes the prescribed studies he will become a rabbi, and this is his primary goal. Within this general context he expresses some dissatisfaction.

Students at HUC-JIR reported satisfaction with their career training. Forty-six per cent of the New York students rated it excellent, and 15 per cent good. At Cincinnati only 2 per cent thought it excellent, but 48 per cent considered it good. Unlike the situation at YU and JTS, the proportion of satisfied students did not diminish between the first and last years (Table 9). Yet 31 per cent of the New York students and 53

TABLE 9. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF CAREER PREPARATION

(*Per cent*)

	First-year	*Last-year*
Excellent or good	62	58
Fair	25	25
Inadequate	12	17
	n*=32	n=24

* Number in the sample.

per cent of the Cincinnati students felt that academic standards were below what they would expect in a scholarly graduate program. This could not be ascribed to lower work requirements. Students spend an average of 15 hours per week in class, and 78 per cent reported that they needed from one to three hours to prepare for every hour of class work. It is noteworthy that New York students, who must travel to school and have heavier outside work schedules, spend slightly more time in preparation and review. In general, the students registered a high opinion of ther instructors' teaching ability. Of the New York students, 85 per cent thought that most of them were very effective; only 9 per cent thought most of them ineffective. At Cincinnati, comparable figures were 49 and 7 per cent.

Striking differences between the two centers were found in student views of subjects receiving too much or too little emphasis. Since the curricula—except for the larger proportion of electives at Cincinnati—were identical, it is particularly instructive to compare the reactions of the two student bodies (Table 10). In the New York school a majority of students thought there was too little emphasis on Talmud, Codes, and comparative religion. Almost half felt this to be true also of Hebrew

TABLE 10. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM EMPHASES

(*Per cent*)

	New York			*Cincinnati*		
	Too much emphasis	*About right*	*Too little emphasis*	*Too much emphasis*	*About right*	*Too little emphasis*
Talmud	0	46	54	5	68	28
Bible	15	69	15	14	81	5
Midrash	0	75	25	8	82	10
Codes and responsa literature	8	38	54	0	73	27
Liturgy	0	62	38	0	83	17
Theology and philosophy	0	77	23	5	62	33
History	31	69	0	5	67	29
Medieval Hebrew literature	0	77	23	7	61	32
Modern Hebrew literature	8	46	46	29	55	17
Hebrew language	8	67	25	17	66	17
Contemporary Jewish community	0	77	23	0	34	66
Education	8	77	15	10	68	22
Homiletics and practical rabbinics	8	77	15	2	50	48
Psychiatry and human relations	0	77	23	0	36	64
Comparative religion	0	20	80	0	15	85

literature. None believed that these subjects received too much emphasis. By contrast, a majority of the Cincinnati students found insufficient emphasis on psychiatry-human relations and the contemporary Jewish community. They agreed with the New York students on comparative religion. They were almost evenly divided on whether there was too little emphasis on homiletics and practical rabbinics.

In other words, the New York students sought greater emphasis on traditional Jewish study and modern Hebrew, while the Cincinnati students wanted greater emphasis on the more practically-oriented courses.

Cincinnati students also expressed this desire most frequently in response to an open-ended question about what, in their view, was lacking in their rabbinical training. As noted before, we are reporting student attitudes, which do not necessarily reflect student behavior. For example, students say they want more comparative religion, but few registered for the elective "Introduction to Contemporary Christian Theology" offered at the New York school. Few make even minimal efforts to acquaint themselves with other religious thought.

INFORMAL SOCIALIZATION

Not all the time a student spends at the seminary is devoted to class or class-related activity. The future rabbi's attitudes and behavior are largely shaped by his life at the seminary, and here his experiences outside the classroom are as important as his formal academic training, and probably more important. The environment, both in the formal and the informal programs, socializes the student to certain values—i.e., it brings about certain changes in his attitudes and behavior that make for a certain conformity in the student body. Generally, there was greater agreement among last-year than among first-year students on a series of questions relating to attitudes and behavior.

Here we must bear in mind that the norms to which students are socialized are not necessarily those of the seminary leadership or faculty. Indeed, many of these are determined by a kind of peer-group culture that emerges among the students, who are influenced more by fellow-students or by career orientation than by other factors or persons. At the same time, of course, students continue to live a life outside the institutional environment. Still, in answer to the question with whom they spend most of their time when not engaged in formal academic activity, no fewer than 31 per cent of the students at HUC-JIR (New York) and as many as 70 per cent at YU reported that it was spent in the company of their fellow students.

The seminary shapes its students not only by what takes place within its walls but also, we may assume, by what does not take place—by its failure to meet certain of their expectations. They prepare for the rabbinate in many ways. The religious observance and beliefs they acquire at the seminary are most likely to influence their performance as rabbis and their expectations of their congregants. The quality of the religious life found at the seminary is also important. YU is no more of a religious

sanctuary in a secular world than JTS or HUC-JIR. But the seminary necessarily has more of a sanctuary, or other-worldly, atmosphere than, let us say, the synagogue. It offers at least the possibility for a more intense religious life that may become the model for the rabbinical student and, after his ordination, the yardstick against which he can measure himself and his congregation. We may therefore assume that the absence of such a model will have consequences for the rabbi in his role as a religious leader. Future rabbis may also expect to find their ideal of what a leader should be during their intellectually formative years at the seminary.

Religion is probably conveyed more by example than by formal instruction—in the old phrase, it is caught rather than taught. The precepts of most religions, and of Judaism in particular, can be taught. But if the Jewish religion is a total way of life, if it encompasses the very essence of a man's humanity, then it must be lived. And for this the student needs exemplary figures. What qualities must such a figure have? Probably three: he must be a significant thinker, be pious (according to each student's own definition of piety), and, perhaps as a corollary, demonstrate a real concern for people, students in particular.

Students are dissatisfied with the quality of religious life at their seminaries. They feel it does not furnish them with a model. More significantly, there is no one person at any seminary whom most of the students regard as an exemplary religious figure. There are at least one or two outstanding Jewish thinkers and spokesmen on the faculty of every seminary. But some do not impress students with their piety, and in almost all cases students feel that these faculty members are virtually indifferent to their problems, needs, and concerns. Thus future rabbis develop a kind of skepticism about the very individuals to whom many in the American Jewish community look for religious leadership.

It is reasonable to assume that many of the differences in attitudes and behavior between first- and last-year students, frequently pointed up in our discussion, are determined by the seminary experiences of the students. Still, we cannot dismiss the possibility that the first- and last-year students in our sample entered the seminary with different attitudes. We have noted that first- and last-year students had somewhat different family and educational backgrounds, and it is entirely possible that these or other characteristics can account for differences. In all likelihood, background characteristics and the socialization process are interrelated, and both account for differences.

In the absence of more positive data, however, we suggest that socialization is the more important variable—as our study suggests, simply because changes in student attitudes and behavior are far more credibly accounted for by socialization than by family background or previous education. In fact, in some cases our findings are quite contrary to what might have been expected on the basis of family or educational background alone. For our purposes we will therefore assume that differences between first- and last-year students are the consequence of socialization.

Yeshiva University

FRIENDSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

In many respects, rabbinical students at YU are integrated into the life of the undergraduate talmudical students and exposed to the same environment and to many of the same influences, not all of which are detailed here. There is one student organization for all RIETS students, both undergraduate and graduate. However, the *semikhah* student usually has family responsibilities, must seek outside employment, and occasionally pursues graduate studies or a career goal at another university at the same time. He is less integrated into student life than the undergraduate.

Students called their social relationships with other students either very pleasant (47 per cent), or pleasant (53 per cent); as noted, 70 per cent reported that most of their non-academic time was spent with fellow-students rather than with other friends or family. This proportion remains constant for first- and last-year students. Although these factors might lead us to expect heavy peer-group influence, YU has no one peer group. By the time students enter their last year, their relationships are determined by career orientation.

To a query regarding the division of their leisure-time activity between Jewish and non-Jewish interests, 50 per cent of the students replied that it was evenly divided and 39 per cent that all or most of it was Jewish. The percentage reporting mostly non-Jewish activity increased slightly for last-year students.

Seventy-four per cent of the students reported that they had attended at least one opera, concert, or theater performance during the past six months. Among students who will probably enter the congregational rabbinate, there was decreasing attendance at such cultural activities (91 per cent of first-year and 73 per cent of last-year students).

INTEREST IN PERIODICAL LITERATURE

Eighty-one per cent of the students regularly read one or more Jewish periodicals. Sixty-four per cent read *Tradition,* the quarterly journal of the Rabbinical Council of America, whose articles on contemporary issues generally reflect leftist or modern Orthodox views. The second most popular journal of Jewish interest was *Commentary* (45%), a quality monthly which however does not devote the major portion of its articles to topics of specifically Jewish interest. Thirty-eight per cent of the students read or subscribed to the *Jewish Observer,* a popular monthly of the (right-wing Orthodox) Agudath Israel. The only other journal attracting at least 20 per cent of the students was *Judaism* (26 per cent), probably the outstanding nonspecialized journal of Jewish thought in America. Eleven per cent of the students regularly read at least one Israeli periodical, and 8 per cent a Yiddish paper or periodical. Only three students read the journals of the Conservative or Reform rabbinical groups. Roughly half the students read at least one non-Orthodox publication of Jewish interest—about half of these, in turn, *Commentary.* Of those who regularly read any periodical of Jewish interest, 16 per cent read one, 24 per cent two, 24 per cent three, 21 per cent four, and 16 per cent five or more.

For measuring the proportion of students interested in general journals of a certain distinction, respondents were asked whether they subscribed to or regularly read any of the following: *Harpers, Saturday Review, Atlantic Monthly, New York Review of Books, Partisan Review, Dissent, Hudson Review, Yale Review, Antioch Review,* and *Commentary. (Commentary,* unfortunately, was included in this question to YU students; it was excluded from the same question posed to JTS and HUC-JIR students.) Only 46 per cent responded that they subscribed to or regularly read any of these publications. It is fair to assume that had *Commentary* been excluded, the figure would have been substantially lower. Among those wishing to become congregational rabbis, last-year students (45 per cent) were less likely to read at least one of these journals than first-year students (64 per cent). This does not indicate that last-year students devoted more time to exclusively Jewish activity, for we found the opposite to be true. Last-year students, generally involved in matters of more immediate and personal concern, devote less time to intellectual pursuits in general.

To a query whether they subscribed to or regularly read any of a

list of the most popular serious Christian journals—*America, Christianity and Crisis, Christian Century, Christianity Today, Commonweal,* and *National Catholic Reporter*—98 per cent replied that they did not. In light of this, it is difficult to understand the expressed interest of these students in comparative religion as a field deserving greater emphasis in the curriculum. The situation is substantially the same at other seminaries.

SOCIAL ACTION

Another question probed the students' involvement in social action during the year. Responses from future congregational rabbis showed that 45 per cent of the first-year students and 36 per cent of the last-year students had participated—all but one in action in behalf of Soviet Jewry. The fact that third-year future rabbis were less, rather than more, involved than first-year students—both in creative or cultural activity of either Jewish or secular content and in social action—may be explained by their growing concern with future careers, with matters such as the chaplaincy, and with problems of raising and supporting families. Their attitudes and behavior also undergo some changes consonant with their career expectations.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE AND BELIEF

Students at YU reported that they were Orthodox in matters of belief and, especially, of religious practice. In a series of questions regarding belief, students were given a choice of answering that "certainly" they believe, "on the whole" they believe, they "don't know," or "on the whole" they do not believe. The only difference between first- and last-year students at YU was that fewer last-year students answered that "on the whole" they believed and more answered "certainly." Seventy-three per cent of first-year and 91 per cent of last-year students gave the answer "certainly" to the question whether they believed in a God to whom man could meaningfully pray; 73 per cent of first-year and 82 per cent of last-year students believed that God gave to Moses the Pentateuch as we know it today. The rest believed it "on the whole." It is clear, then, that YU students were not troubled about matters of personal belief and practice; they were unanimous in expressing adherence to Orthodoxy. At any rate, students had resolved any questions they once might have had by the time of their ordination.

EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

The questionnaire also asked for an evaluation of the religious atmosphere of the formal program at RIETS (Table 11). Forty-eight per cent

TABLE 11. YU STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

(*Per cent*)

	First-year		*Last-year*	
	Future rabbis	*Non-rabbis*	*Future rabbis*	*Non-rabbis*
Promotes religious values.	27	65	45	43
Indifferent to religious values	73	29	55	57
Hostile to religious values	0	6	0	0
	n*=11	n=17	n=11	n=7

* Number in the sample.

thought the atmosphere promoted religious values, and 50 per cent that it was "indifferent to what [they] consider to be important religious values." Last-year future rabbis were more positive in their responses than first-year future rabbis. (The significance of this change will become apparent later.)

In open-ended responses to this question many students were as critical of their fellow-students as of the institution. This was particularly true of *Kolel* and first-year students. One *Kolel* student stated: ". among the students themselves, I find that little emphasis is placed on the spiritual-moral aspects of religion, as opposed to ritualistic observance." Another complained of an atmosphere of religious indifference on the part of "the administration—*most* of the faculty—and unfortunately the older boys of the group. . Even an appreciation of *minyan* (daily communal prayer), for example, let alone attendance, is not emphasized." A last-year *Kolel* student noted that "there is the tendency to be observant of ritual, but there seems to be lacking a feeling for God." And another last-year *Kolel* student:

> Most of the boys spend their hours [when they should be studying] talking about everything other than Torah. There is no religious fervor. The rabbis are indifferent to the students. As a general rule, the administration (even rabbis in the administration) is very secular-minded and secular-oriented.

A second last-year student called the religious atmosphere "more secular than religious." A third stated bluntly: "The atmosphere is hostile to my religious values I feel that most of my growth in Torah comes from my own study and thinking, in spite of the institution." A

first-year student's comment on his rabbinical program was: "It is a showcase of artificial religion, often without religious ethical content. There is an ethical-moral gap between the 'religion' that is taught and the daily practice of students. " Not all students were as negative in their comments, but of those who chose to elaborate, four were positive and 14 negative in their responses.

The students' greatest concern is not the prevailing religious atmosphere, but the lack of religious and intellectual leadership. YU, most of its students believe, lacks a *hashkafah,* a religious *Weltanschauung.* The absence of religious leadership is mentioned again and again by students in personal interviews and in replies to open-ended questions (Table 12).

TABLE 12. YU STUDENTS' PRIMARY SOURCE OF RELIGIOUS ADVICE, GUIDANCE, AND EXAMPLE

(Per cent)

	First-year		*Last-year*	
	Future rabbis	*Non-rabbis*	*Future rabbis*	*Non-rabbis*
Fellow students	0	22	18	0
Faculty	36	33	27	57
Administration	0	0	0	0
Family	18	22	27	14
Rabbi outside the institution	27	11	18	14
Other	0	0	0	0
No source	18	11	9	14
	n*=11	n=18	n=11	n=7

* Number in the sample.

In further elaboration of this question, students were asked to select from a list, or write in, the name of the rabbi who best reflected their own religious-theological-philosophical thinking. Most significant was the finding that no more than 28 per cent of the students chose Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik as the only such person. Yet Rabbi Soloveitchik is YU's leading religious personality; is considered by most Orthodox as the world's leading talmudist; and is the foremost leader of virtually all modern Orthodox organizations, most particularly the Rabbinical Council of America. It is to Rabbi Soloveitchik that one would expect the students to look for intellectual and religious leadership, as well as for personal guidance, and it is indeed to him that students say they would like to look.

Most YU students are aware of and concerned with the problems of

religion in American Jewry. They are aware of the widespread disregard for Jewish law and agree that its authority must be maintained, but are uncertain of what can or ought to be done about it. They seek guidelines from Rabbi Soloveitchik, who is at the same time a trained philosopher, a creative thinker, and a great talmudist. They look to him also for guidance in matters relating to the political-communal aspects of Jewish life, particularly on the relationship between the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox. They seek in him, too, a personal mentor, a kind of father figure with whom they can personally identify and whom they can seek to emulate—one who also feels concern for them and their problems. In this quest most are disappointed.

The image of Rabbi Soloveitchik as an exemplary figure persists because such a figure is so desperately sought, and no one else appears to be as qualified to fill that need. Some of his earliest students found in him the kind of "rebbe" they looked for. He continues to serve as an intellectual model for most students, he does provide some personal leadership, and a few students do establish a personal relationship with him. But this only whets appetites. The "ideal" image of Rabbi Soloveitchik only deepens the disappointment, as each class of students comes to realize that he is not really the leader they desire.

To put the blame on Rabbi Soloveitchik alone would hardly be fair. He is a scholar by temperament, like many other scholars unable to make up his mind on practical matters. In its very broad outlines, his philosophy or way of life finds great resonance among the modern Orthodox, who see in it a vindication of their own involvement in the secular world. But when Rabbi Soloveitchik attempts to apply this philosophy of life to reality, his position is often indecisive, vacillating, and quite contrary to expectations. It is the Orthodox who made of Rabbi Soloveitchik a charismatic leader; he disdains this role for himself. It should be remembered that his central role in Orthodoxy subjects him to demands on his time from a host of organizations and individuals, leaving less and less time for his students.

Very broadly, Rabbi Soloveitchik's position might be described as middle-of-the-road. It acknowledges the value of secular culture and a certain openness to new ideas, while affirming the importance of talmudic scholarship and strict observance of ritual. Soloveitchik's popularity remained constant among first- and last-year students, among those who intended to enter the rabbinate and those who did not. In addition to the 28 per cent who chose him alone, 11 per cent checked both Rabbis

Soloveitchik and Emanuel Rackman, or both Rabbis Soloveitchik and Irving Greenberg, or all three.

Rackman and Greenberg represent a position to the left of Soloveitchik. They favor a more radical interpretation of Jewish law in response to contemporary Jewish problems and concerns; but more significantly, they are more outspoken on community problems. Twenty-one per cent of the students checked either Greenberg or Rackman, or both, as the rabbi best reflecting their ideological position. Among future rabbis, 18 per cent of the first-year students, as compared with 36 per cent of the last-year students, checked one or both of them. Three students (6 per cent) wrote in the name of Rabbi Norman Lamm, who probably is somewhere between the Greenberg-Rackman and Soloveitchik positions; two of them checked Soloveitchick as well.

Seventeen per cent of the students checked rabbis to the right of Soloveitchik, or both Soloveitchick and those to his right. The position to the right of Rabbi Soloveitchik may be defined as opposing secular education and cooperation between Orthodox and non-Orthodox where recognition of non-Orthodox religious positions is implied. Students not intending to enter the pulpit were more likely to identify themselves with this position. The remaining few students wrote in a variety of other names, each appearing only once.

From the students' responses it was evident that no single personality at YU is outstanding in ideological appeal. However, a definite group pattern according to career orientation emerges in the religious positions of last-year students. Among those intending to enter the rabbinate, rabbis to the left of Soloveitchik enjoyed wide popularity. Among students not intending to enter the rabbinate, none in the last year identified with rabbis to the left.

COMMUNAL AND PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES

A similar pattern was evident in other attitudes as well. Students were asked whether relationships between Orthodoxy, Conservatism, and Reform should be closer, were all right as they are, or were too close now. Among future rabbis 27 per cent of the first-year and 64 per cent of the last-year students thought relations should be closer. Among non-rabbis 36 per cent of the first-year students and no last-year student thought relations should be closer. To the question whether they thought the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations (UOJC), their congregational organization, and the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA), their rab-

binical one, responsive to the needs of the American Jewish community, last-year future rabbis were far more likely to say yes than first-year students. Among non-rabbis, last-year students were as critical of RCA as first-year students.

Another series of questions dealt with problems facing American Jews and attitudes toward Jewish organizations. Students were asked to indicate which, if any, of a given list of problems facing Jews deserved highest priority, and which, if any, deserved second- and third-highest priority. The responses regarding highest and lowest priority are given in Table 13.

TABLE 13. YU STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF PROBLEMS FACING AMERICAN JEWRY

(*Per cent*)

	Highest priority	*Little or no significance*
Soviet Jewry	2	2
Strength and survival of the State of Israel *	6	0
Antisemitism in the United States	2	11
Increased dialogue and understanding between Jews and Christians	0	53
Social and ethical values of American Jews	2	2
Intellectual challenges to Judaism	6	2
State of Jewish belief	4	0
Jewish youth on the college campus	2	0
Assimilation	13	0
Intermarriage	4	0
Jewish education	38	2
Decline of religious observance and ritual practice	15	0
Greater Jewish unity	0	0
Quality of Jewish organizational life	0	0
Other or no answer	2	2
None	0	21

* Responses were received before the Middle Eastern crisis in May 1967.

Jewish education, the decline of religious observance and ritual, and assimilation were thought to deserve highest priority. For future rabbis, Jewish education became less important (from 54 to 18 per cent) between the first and last years, while problems of assimilation, intermarriage, and the strength and survival of the State of Israel became much more important. In other words, last-year future rabbis listed as deserving highest priority problems that are of general Jewish concern and least controversial. Where problems of second greatest priority were in-

dicated, a plurality of both future rabbis and non-rabbis chose the decline of religious observance and ritual practice.

Students were asked to check the major organizations to which they would be most willing to devote time and energy. They were also asked to indicate second and third choices, as well as the organizations of which they were most critical (Table 14).

TABLE 14. YU STUDENTS' INTEREST IN MAJOR JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

(*Per cent*)

	Most willing to devote time and energy	*Most highly critical*
Agudath Israel	4	0
American Council for Judaism	0	72
American Jewish Committee	0	2
American Jewish Congress	0	8
Anti-Defamation League	0	2
B'nai B'rith	0	0
Bonds for Israel	0	0
Jewish Federation or local community-wide philanthropic group	0	4
Jewish Welfare Board	2	0
Labor Zionists of America	0	0
Religious Zionists of America	19	0
Torah Umesorah	47	0
United Jewish Appeal	2	0
Zionist Organization of America	0	2
Other	8	0
None	15	2

Consistently with their interest in Jewish education, YU students were most interested in Torah Umesorah, the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools. The only other agency checked by 10 or more per cent of the students was Religious Zionists of America (RZA). Last-year rabbinical students, too, were most willing to devote time to Torah Umesorah, though fewer than non-rabbis.

Among the organizations of which students were most critical, the American Council for Judaism was the overwhelming choice. It was followed by the American Jewish Congress, an organization best known in Orthodox circles for its militant opposition to federal aid to Jewish day schools. Only about half of the students checked an organization of which they were *second most* critical. Among those who did, the organizations were: the American Jewish Committee (17 per cent), B'nai B'rith (11 per cent), again the American Council for Judaism (8 per

cent), and the American Jewish Congress (6 per cent). Last-year students, however, were less critical than first-year students of these secular organizations, and future rabbis less than non-rabbis. Thus last-year future rabbis were least critical of secular organizations. They were also less critical of their own rabbinical and lay organizations; more anxious for closer relations between Orthodoxy, Conservatism, and Reform; more

TABLE 15. YU STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF MOST ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS OF THE RABBINATE

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis	
	First-year	*Last-year*
Opportunity to help people find faith	27	36
Opportunity to make people more observant	18	9
Opportunity to teach Torah	18	18
Time to study and think	18	9
Comfortable living conditions	0	0
Opportunity to preserve Judaism	18	27
Opportunity to serve as leader in Jewish community.	0	0
Opportunity to serve as leader in general community	0	0
Opportunity for social action	0	0
Status of rabbi in Jewish community	0	0
Status of rabbi in general community	0	0
Other	0	0
	n*=11	n=11

* Number in the sample.

TABLE 16. YU STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF LEAST ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS OF THE RABBINATE

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis	
	First-year	*Last-year*
Necessity to listen to people's problems	0	0
Lay control over rabbi	27	27
Inadequate material conditions	0	0
Necessity to live away from large city	0	0
Necessity to preach or espouse religious beliefs and practices without being really sure of them	0	0
Necessity to compromise religious principles	9	9
Lack of privacy in personal affairs	45	18
Lack of close friends	0	0
Congregants' indifference to religious observance	9	27
Congregants' indifference to Judaism	9	18
Other or none	0	0
	n*=11	n=11

* Number in the sample.

concerned with such broad issues as intermarriage and assimilation, and less concerned with Jewish education.

This tendency was reflected in differences between first- and last-year future rabbis regarding aspects of the rabbinate which they find most attractive. Unlike students at JTS and HUC-JIR, those at YU did not become more attracted to the specific responsibilities of the rabbinate as they neared ordination (Tables 15 and 16). The "opportunity to help people find faith" was most attractive to both first- and last-year students (27 and 36 per cent), the "opportunity to preserve Judaism" increased (18 to 27 per cent), and the "opportunity to make people more observant" and the "opportunity to study and think" decreased (18 to 9 per cent, respectively). The "opportunity to teach Torah" remained constant, at 18 per cent. Students who did not intend to become practicing rabbis found the last aspect particularly attractive (44 per cent of first-year and 57 per cent of last-year students).

To the extent that differences between first- and last-year students or between future rabbis and non-rabbis can be ascribed to changes in attitudes and opinion rather than to the predispositions with which the students entered the rabbinical program, they are produced by socialization. As the future rabbi progresses toward ordination, he becomes less critical of his rabbinical seminary, his congregational and rabbinical movements and of non-Orthodox organizations. He accepts more readily the existing pattern of Jewish life and moves his views into closer conformity with those of the Jewish community establishment. He is attracted to such ideological figures as Rabbis Rackman, Greenberg and Lamm, all vocal critics of contemporary Judaism; but the likelihood is that their appeal on the other hand, does not rest on their ideological or political views. They are successful rabbis of the largest American Orthodox congregations, who, either despite or because of their very outspokenness, move easily within the mainstream of American Jewish life. The non-rabbis, by contrast, become somewhat more sectarian in their values, their views coming closer to those of their Talmud instructors.

The YU talmudical faculty generally rejects prevailing community values. Among non-rabbis, therefore, last-year students are more likely than first-year students to look to faculty members as a source of religious inspiration. Among future rabbis, last-year students are less likely to do so than first-year students.

RABBINATE AND CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM

One of the major problems of institutional Orthodoxy is a shortage of congregational rabbis. There has been a sharp decline in the number of ordained rabbis entering the congregational rabbinate, although the number of rabbinical students has increased. Besides YU, the major Orthodox institutions that formerly provided congregational rabbis (p. 23 f.), together probably provide less than a dozen a year. Ten or twenty years ago any one of these institutions could have produced as many.

At YU, too, there has been a sharp drop in the number of students entering the rabbinate. In 1966 only two of the 16 students who received ordination became congregational rabbis—an unusually low number of an unusually small class, to be sure. The average for the past few years has been six or seven. Basically, the problem has been the greater attractiveness of other fields open to students who also have secular degrees. (Each year a handful of students may also choose to enter Jewish education. From YU's point of view, this is considered to be desirable and not competitive with the rabbinate.) However, one reason most students are unwilling to enter the rabbinate is the chaplaincy program, which can be discussed here only briefly.

The armed services each year inform the National Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) of their requirement for Jewish chaplains. JWB, in turn, assigns quotas to the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbinical movements. Until last year YU was solely responsible to RCA for meeting the quota for Orthodox chaplains, since the other yeshivot refused to participate for practical and ideological reasons. While the chaplaincy program was the cause of unhappiness and some tension at all seminaries, at YU the students' dissatisfaction over the program itself, the assigned quota, and the manner of exempting some students and selecting others to fill the quota, had reached a peak. It would not be unfair to say that for a substantial number of students, the year before ordination was poisoned by the fear of being drafted into the chaplaincy and the feeling that the school was unfair in compelling them to have chaplaincy clearance before they could be ordained.

It is not our purpose here to deal with the merits of the program or the procedures. Those responsible for the program accused students who tried to avoid the chaplaincy of shirking their duty toward their school, the Jewish people, and the United States armed forces. The students, in turn, argue that the system was unfair. In response to an open-ended

question, which was asked before September 1967, most of the students suggested as a more equitable solution a compulsory two-year program for all newly-ordained students, either as chaplains or in the service of the Jewish community, as teachers, pulpit rabbis in outlying communities, and the like. The question where justice lay in the entire controversy and whether a compulsory service program was feasible, are rather complex and beyond the scope of this paper.

The chaplaincy program, the student's first real personal contact with the organized Jewish world (the YU community-service division and Orthodox rabbinical groups which have some voice in the program), is so tension-laden that it often discourages the student from entering the rabbinate. Also, to avoid being drafted, some students enrolled in graduate schools while studying at YU and, having earned an advanced degree, at times chose another career

Much of what we say here is conjecture on the part of both the interviewer and the interviewed. No one knows the precise importance of the chaplaincy program for the students' career choices, but one may safely conclude that it did not encourage students to enter the rabbinate. In September 1967 a one-year experiment was begun that put the entire chaplaincy program on a voluntary basis; students of former graduating classes, who had not fulfilled their obligations under its requirements, were relieved of any future sanctions.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONGREGATIONAL AND NON-CONGREGATIONAL RABBIS

Among first-year YU students, 37 per cent expected to be congregational rabbis at some time in their lives; among last-year students, 61 per cent. However, 73 per cent of the first-year and only 36 per cent of the last-year future rabbis looked upon the rabbinate as the most attractive career. Thus, between their first and last year, students come to find the congregational rabbinate less attractive, though a greater number become resigned to their chosen profession.

What is the impact of the student's experience on his intention of becoming a congregational rabbi? Apparently, negligible. On the whole, students do not serve as student rabbis, unless they intend to serve in the pulpit. Field service, which is voluntary at YU, is the variable that most clearly distinguishes those intending to become congregational rabbis from those who do not. Those with field experience viewed the rabbinate more favorably than those without. However, its voluntary

nature does not permit an analysis of its effect on career choice. In any event, for encouraging more students to enter the rabbinate, it would be well to give them more practical experience. An organized program to accomplish that was introduced in 1965 as an elective in the supplementary rabbinics curriculum.

We have noted that students hesitate to enter the pulpit because they feel they lack the ability to answer questions of Jewish law. Did future rabbis feel equally unprepared to perform other rabbinic roles? Were they better prepared than non-rabbis? Since one of the most difficult and sensitive functions of a rabbi is comforting the mourner, we asked students how their training as a whole prepared them for this task—particularly for dealing with questions an intelligent mourner might have about the meaning of life, life after death, or God's justice.

The responses showed no differences between future rabbis and non-rabbis, but last-year students were less likely to think their training would be helpful (41 per cent) than first-year students (61 per cent). Moreover, 72 per cent of the future rabbis did not think their training would be helpful in providing an honest intellectual response. Of course, concepts such as God's justice or life after death belong more properly in the realm of academic study than of practical rabbinics. Incredibly, students reported that these subjects have no part at all in the YU curriculum, and that it is the rare instructor who chooses to discuss them informally.

The talmudic faculty of YU has at times been charged with discouraging students from entering the congregational rabbinate. The data do not support this charge, except perhaps quite indirectly. Students intending to enter the rabbinate were more likely than not to feel that they were being encouraged by the faculty. However, most students were of the opinion that the faculty is indifferent to this question or divided on it. Students uniformly asserted that they did receive such encouragement from the administration.

Nothing in the background of the students distinguished rabbis from non-rabbis, except perhaps that the rabbis were more likely to have belonged to Jewish youth groups before entering college. There were different motivations for entering rabbinical school, as well. Non-rabbis were far more likely to say they had been moved by a desire for a good Jewish education.

Jewish Theological Seminary

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Rabbinical students at JTS have an active student life. They publish a student paper; sponsor lectures and discussions; organize student participation in various social-action programs; take responsibility for placing student rabbis for the High Holy Days (including the pooling and redistribution, on the basis of an elaborate point system, of the honoraria); and show active concern with the JTS curriculum and program. Yet they are probably the most discontented student body of any seminary, particularly with regard to the curriculum. In recent years the administration has responded to student demands for representation on a joint student-faculty-administration committee to deal with a host of technical as well as more basic concerns, such as program. It is too early to tell what, if anything, will come of it.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONGREGATIONAL AND NON-CONGREGATIONAL RABBIS

Not all JTS students expect to become congregational rabbis (50 per cent of all first-year students and 68 per cent of all last-year students expected to hold such positions). At JTS all future rabbis look upon the pulpit as a lifetime career. At YU many of those who expect to enter the rabbinate are not certain they will remain in the field permanently, deliberately preparing also for careers in other fields.

The Conservative movement, like Orthodoxy, suffers from a shortage of rabbis. Unlike YU, however, JTS is less concerned about the number of students entering the rabbinate because those who do not tend to choose other fields of Jewish work. Most of the non-rabbis in fact believe that teaching at JTS or at other institutions of higher learning is the most attractive career. At YU, on the other hand, many non-rabbis leave the Jewish field altogether. Among future rabbis at JTS, half look upon the congregational rabbinate as the most attractive career, while the others are attracted to related areas such as youth work, camping, and, above all, Jewish education. Thus, at JTS, unlike YU, all students choose careers within the Jewish community.

Since non-rabbis at JTS had more scholarly aspirations than future rabbis, the question arose whether they were indeed more suited for scholarly pursuits. The responses seem to bear this out: non-rabbis reported better undergraduate averages than future rabbis and were more

likely to report that they were doing considerably better or better than average at rabbinical school.

At JTS, background variables did not distinguish future rabbis from non-rabbis. No differences in Jewish education, youth-group membership, or Jewish-camping experience were apparent. Among first-year students, non-rabbis were more likely than future rabbis to have been enrolled in a formal program of Jewish studies while in college, but this was not true of last-year students. While future rabbis were more likely to have attended synagogue regularly before entering college, there were no consistent differences between them and non-rabbis in the influence any one rabbi may have had on them at the time. Neither group was more likely to have a rabbi in the immediate family. Most students came from Conservative homes, and only a handful of non-rabbis and none of the future rabbis from homes where parents had no synagogue affiliation.

Differences in students' career choices must therefore be ascribed to scholarly interest and motivation, not to any one background factor. The students who wished to become congregational rabbis felt strengthened in their choice by the encouragement of the administration, but believed the faculty to be indifferent to their career plans. On the other hand, the typical non-rabbi believed that his instructors had a positive interest in his making the best career choice for himself.

FRIENDSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

Students evaluated their relationships with other students as either very pleasant (46 per cent) or pleasant (51 per cent); first-year students and future rabbis were more likely to report "very pleasant" relationships. Here differences between first- and last-year students can be explained by the fact that last-year students tended to spend more time with their families than with their friends.

To a query on division of their leisure time between Jewish and non-Jewish activity, 47 per cent of the students reported that their time was evenly divided. Of the remaining students, about half reported their activity as mostly Jewish, and the others as mostly non-Jewish. There were no differences by year. More non-rabbis than rabbis stated that most of their leisure-time activity was Jewish, and more rabbis than non-rabbis said it was mostly non-Jewish. Almost every student had attended an opera, concert, or theater performance during the past six months.

INTEREST IN PERIODICAL LITERATURE

The most widely read journal of Jewish interest at JTS was *Conservative Judaism,* the quarterly of the Rabbinical Assembly; 62 per cent of the students said they read it regularly. Then followed *Commentary* (58 per cent), *Midstream,* a quality monthly publication sponsored by the Jewish Agency's Herzl Foundation (47 per cent), and *Judaism* (42 per cent). Thirty-one per cent of the students subscribed to or regularly read some Israeli periodical, and 9 per cent read a Yiddish periodical. Four students read *Tradition* and *CCAR Journal,* the organ of the Reform Central Conference of American Rabbis. The only other journals read by 10 per cent or more of the students were the *Jewish Spectator,* a semi-popular monthly of contemporary Jewish affairs (16 per cent), and *Hadoar,* a Hebrew weekly published by the Histadruth Ivrith of America (11 per cent). Only two students said they neither subscribed to nor regularly read any periodical of Jewish interest. About a third of the students read at least *Commentary, Conservative Judaism,* and *Judaism.* Of those who regularly read a Jewish periodical, 20 per cent read one; 10 per cent, two; 25 per cent, three; 12 per cent, four; and 33 per cent, five or more. In general, interest in Jewish periodical literature increased among last-year students, future rabbis reading slightly more than non-rabbis.

Most JTS students (60 per cent) did not regularly see any of the quality periodicals of non-Jewish content (pp. 65–6; *Commentary* to be omitted); last-year students were more inclined to read some of them. The biggest variation was by career orientation: future rabbis (28 per cent) were less likely to read these journals than non-rabbis (59 per cent)—perhaps a reflection of the more scholarly interest of the latter group. Virtually no one subscribed to, or regularly read, any of the quality Christian periodicals (p. 66).

SOCIAL ACTION

Sixty-one per cent of the JTS students reported having engaged in some form of social action during the past year. Future rabbis were somewhat less likely to have done so than non-rabbis, first-year students somewhat more likely than last-year students. Most participants were involved only in behalf of Soviet Jewry; 26 per cent also in opposition to the Vietnam war. Career orientation made little difference.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE AND BELIEF

It is well known within the Conservative movement that JTS leadership is strongly traditionalist in religious orientation, and has become more rather than less so in recent years. Yet its students expressed surprise at the degree of the school's traditionalism. One student leader reported that JTS had had a student faction of traditionalists when he entered school, but that it had virtually disappeared in the absence of any vocal opposition. To what extent has traditionalism pervaded the students' belief and practice? All students expected their wives to light candles on Friday evening. Eighty-one per cent attended Sabbath services regularly; 69 per cent prayed regularly, as a matter of principle. This was more true of last-year (78 per cent) than of first-year students (65 per cent). There were no differences by career orientation.

As for *kashrut* observance, 84 per cent of the students said they would eat cooked fish in a non-kosher restaurant, a practice widely accepted in the Conservative movement but not among the Orthodox. The percentage was somewhat higher among future rabbis. Views on turning electricity on and off on the Sabbath were markedly more divergent: 58 per cent of the students reported that they would, 30 per cent that they would not, and 12 per cent that they would not if it could be avoided. (Conservative rabbis generally permit the use of electricity on the Sabbath. Official JTS practice is not to do so.) More last-year (37 per cent) than first-year students (26 per cent) reported that they do not turn electricity on and off, more non-rabbis (39 per cent) than future rabbis (25 per cent).

The laws of family purity, best reflected in the wife's regular attendance at a *miḳweh* (lustral bath), are basic to traditional Judaism. They are virtually ignored by Conservative rabbis. However, JTS leaders consider them to be important, and a High Holy Day sermon delivered at the JTS synagogue in 1965 stressed their observance. Thirty-seven per cent of the students expect their wives to attend *miḳweh,* or would prefer that they do so; 58 per cent would not expect their wives to do so, or would prefer that they did not. Again, last-year students were somewhat more likely to prefer or expect observance than first-year students (45 per cent, compared with 35 per cent), and non-rabbis more than future rabbis (50 per cent, compared with 29 per cent).

In religious practice, last-year students were generally more observant than first-year students, and non-rabbis more than future rabbis. The

differences between first- and last-year students may be accounted for by religious background and socialization to the seminary's pattern of religious observance. The future rabbi, however, has an additional referent —the behavior of the majority of Conservative rabbis, his future colleagues. As a result, he is less readily socialized to the seminary's practice.

The pattern is more complex in matters of belief. Sixty-eight per cent of the students were certain or thought, on the whole, that they believe in a God to whom man can meaningfully pray. Fifty-seven per cent of the first-year students and 84 per cent of the last-year students stated that they believe this. There are no differences by career orientation. The same is true for the belief that God revealed himself in some way to Moses, which 72 per cent of the students affirmed with "certainty" or "on the whole."

Regarding the belief that God revealed the Pentateuch, as we know it today, to Moses, a belief that is central to traditional Judaism but not to the Conservative movement, there was a division by career orientation. Not only do most Conservative rabbis probably reject this belief, but also it is challenged by the manner in which Bible is taught at JTS. Seventy-three per cent of the students stated that they do not believe in the revelation of the Pentateuch as we know it today to Moses; there were no differences by year. However, the proportion of future rabbis denying this belief was greater (84 per cent) than of non-rabbis (56 per cent).

Asked whether they find prayer to be a meaningful personal experience, 51 per cent of the students replied "almost always" or "often," 48 per cent "sometimes" or "never." There were only slight differences by year and career (future rabbis were more likely to say so than non-rabbis, last-year students more likely than first-year students).

STUDENT EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

Students were asked to evaluate the religious atmosphere in the formal rabbinical program (Table 17).

Fifty-one per cent thought it promoted religious values, 35 per cent felt it was indifferent, and 14 per cent thought it generally was hostile or almost hostile. Advanced students were more critical of JTS's religious atmosphere than beginning students. First-year future rabbis were the most satisfied. However, at JTS, in contrast to YU, students are not more likely to accept the religious atmosphere as they advance toward

TABLE 17. JTS STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

	(*Per cent*)			
	First-year		*Last-year*	
	Future rabbis	*Non-rabbis*	*Future rabbis*	*Non-rabbis*
Promotes religious values.	75	36	46	50
Indifferent to religious values	25	45	38	17
Hostile to religious values	0	19	15	33
	n*=12	n=11	n=13	n=6

* Number in the sample.

ordination. The reason for this divergent development, we submit, is that the Conservative rabbinate is more critical of JTS than the Orthodox rabbinate of YU.

Responses to an open-ended question suggest that though non-rabbis were as critical of their institution as future rabbis, it was for different reasons. In many instances, their criticism was directed against fellow-students, or against the institution for not demanding greater religious observance of the students.

The comments reflected a wide range of opinion. Some found the atmosphere "inspiring and conducive to religious and ethical living," or felt that "the institution teaches the student to participate in movements trying to solve modern Jewish problems from a Jewish point of view." Others, however, observed that "questions of the individual's growth and major social problems are mostly ignored," or that, while observance of ritual exists, there is "no orientation to issues of concern," including theology. One student commented that at JTS, "one lives Judaism vicariously, not enthusiastically," and another that "the atmosphere is hostile to leading a full Jewish life " and to Jewish study for the sake of study.

Although some students complained that JTS is too lax in matters concerning religion, most were pleased with "the liberal religious atmosphere," the religious "leeway"—that "nobody is checking up on me" and that "faculty and fellow-students instruct by example, not coercion." In response to a direct question, 74 per cent of the students thought that the standard of religious observance set by JTS was "about right"; 14 per cent thought it "too stringent," and 9 per cent "not

stringent enough." Among last-year future rabbis, 23 per cent were likely to think it "too stringent."

RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP

JTS, like YU, has no model figure who alone is the religious leader for most of the students. In response to the question, "What do you feel is lacking in your rabbinical training?" one student simply wrote "a *rebbe*." The institutional leaders of JTS are traditionalist in observance and belief and remote from the student body; the students, for their part, are too critical of their curriculum to find it possible to look upon them as their religious leaders.

The most prominent religious personality on the JTS faculty is Professor Abraham J. Heschel, but for a number of reasons JTS students are not drawn to him. True, his religious existentialism, his concern with contemporary theology, his pietistic rather than ritualistic traditionalism, and his involvement in social and political issues constitute the single most popular position. But students are usually not exposed a great deal to his thinking, for he plays only a small institutional role and does not expound his existential theology in courses most students attend. For this and more personal reasons only 18 per cent of the students chose him as the rabbi who best reflects their own religious-philosophical-theological position. Another 7 per cent checked both Heschel and Professor Seymour Siegel, a younger colleague who has stressed the need for greater theological emphasis at JTS and is also more closely identified with the JTS administration; 9 per cent checked Siegel only.

The second in popularity was Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan (14 per cent checked Kaplan only; an additional 7 per cent checked Kaplan together with Heschel or Siegel). Kaplan, of course, is the father of Reconstructionism. On the JTS faculty from 1909 to 1953, he exercised profound influence on the students during those years. His depersonalization of the God idea, his concern for the community of Israel, his reinterpretation of Judaism in the language of Deweyan pragmatism, and his reinvestment of major aspects of the tradition with contemporary meaning attracted many, if not most, students at JTS at one time. In recent years, however, Kaplan's position has declined in importance as a result of his retirement from JTS, the general move toward greater traditionalism in the institution and among the students, and the growing popularity of neo-Orthodoxy and religious existentialism in all religious circles. (Of course, Death-of-God theology is of even more recent vin-

tage and may augur a new popularity for Kaplan's ideas. That is unlikely, however. New fads usually require new high priests.)

The linking by a few students of Kaplan with Heschel, or Kaplan with Siegel, suggests either ignorance of their true positions or some rather esoteric theological interpretation. Heschel, Siegel, and Kaplan, alone or in combination, attracted 61 per cent of the student body.

The remaining students were drawn to a wide variety of positions held by a great variety of individuals, ranging from the Lubavitcher Rebbe to Rabbi Richard Rubinstein, who had recently spoken at a student-sponsored JTS lecture and who comes closest, among respected rabbis, to a Death-of-God theology. Four students listed or checked rabbis neither institutionally nor historically identified with Conservatism: two, Orthodox personalities; and two, Rabbi Eugene Borowitz of HUC-JIR (in combination with Conservative rabbis). Nine per cent of the students reported that there was no one who best reflected their own religious position. This broad distribution makes it difficult to generalize about differences by year or career orientation. The biggest change by year was the decrease from first to last in the popularity of Kaplan, the single leading choice of first-year students (25 per cent).

The absence of a central religious figure was also evident in responses to the question where the students look for religious advice, guidance, and example. Twenty-three per cent looked to the faculty, 21 per cent to rabbis not connected with JTS, 19 per cent to fellow-students, and 16 per cent to their families. The breakdown by year and career is instructive (Table 18).

TABLE 18. JTS STUDENTS' PRIMARY SOURCE OF RELIGIOUS ADVICE, GUIDANCE, AND EXAMPLE

(*Per cent*)

	First-year		*Last-year*	
	Future rabbis	*Non-rabbis*	*Future rabbis*	*Non-rabbis*
Fellow students	18	42	8	0
Faculty	18	33	23	17
Administration	9	0	8	0
Family	9	8	31	17
Rabbi outside the institution	36	0	15	50
Other	0	8	0	17
No source	9	8	15	0
	n*=11	n=12	n=13	n=6

* Number in the sample.

The first-year future rabbi is heavily oriented toward a rabbi outside JTS (probably his family rabbi, who may have influenced him to enter JTS). As might be expected, the student abandons this referent in time; but then he finds no substitute within JTS. The non-rabbi, having a more scholarly orientation, starts with expectations of finding his source of religious guidance at the institution (fellow-students and faculty), but also looks elsewhere as he approaches his final year. Thus, though the student, or at least the non-rabbi, becomes socialized to JTS norms, the institution and its personnel do not serve him as spiritual referents.

COMMUNAL AND PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES

Virtually all (98 per cent) agree that relations between the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform should be closer than they now are. There was fairly even division between students who thought Conservatism put too little emphasis on ritual observance (49 per cent), and those who believed the emphasis was about right (42 per cent). Differences by year or career were negligible. Half the students felt that, on the whole, the United Synagogue of America was responding to the needs of the American Jewish community, 27 per cent thought it was not, and 23 per cent were not sure; last-year students were somewhat more sanguine than first-year students.

The difference by career was much more marked, with 63 per cent of the future rabbis, compared with 28 per cent of the non-rabbis, approving of the United Synagogue's work. The same pattern appeared in the evaluation of the Rabbinical Assembly, except that the students were in general more negative about it: 36 per cent thought that on the whole RA was responding to the needs of the Jewish community, and 39 per cent thought not. Again, last-year students were more favorable than first-year students, and future rabbis more than non-rabbis.

Students were asked about the most and least significant problem of American Jewry (Table 19). Jewish education was voted the leading problem by 42 per cent of the students, and assimilation next in importance (12 per cent). Last-year students and future rabbis were most likely to list education. Future rabbis gave second-highest priority to the problem of Jewish youth on the college campus and, again, to Jewish education. Non-rabbis were more likely to consider the situation of Soviet Jewry and the state of Jewish belief as most pressing.

Students were divided on their choice of an organization to which they would be most willing to devote time and energy (Table 20). There

TABLE 19. JTS STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF PROBLEMS FACING AMERICAN JEWRY

(*Per cent*)

	Highest priority	*Little or no significance*
Soviet Jewry	9	2
Strength and survival of the State of Israel *	0	2
Antisemitism in the United States	0	19
Increased dialogue and understanding between Jews and Christians	0	21
Social and ethical values of American Jews	9	0
Intellectual challenges to Judaism	7	2
State of Jewish belief	9	0
Jewish youth on the college campus	2	0
Assimilation	12	0
Intermarriage	0	0
Jewish education	42	0
Decline of religious observance and ritual practice	7	2
Greater Jewish unity	0	2
Quality of Jewish organizational life	0	17
Other or no answer	0	7
None	0	24

* Responses were received before the Middle Eastern crisis in May 1967.

TABLE 20. JTS STUDENTS' INTEREST IN MAJOR JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

(*Per cent*)

	Most willing to devote time and energy	*Most highly critical*
Agudath Israel	0	7
American Council for Judaism	0	71
American Jewish Committee	10	0
American Jewish Congress	2	0
Anti-Defamation League	2	2
B'nai B'rith	7	0
Bonds for Israel	5	0
Jewish Federation or local community-wide philanthropic group	5	0
Jewish Welfare Board	5	0
Labor Zionists of America	2	0
Religious Zionists of America	0	0
Torah Umesorah	5	0
United Jewish Appeal	12	0
Zionist Organization of America	5	0
Other or no answer	19	5
None	21	14

was no single organization to which more than 12 per cent of the students were most willing to devote time and energy. The United Jewish Appeal was on top of the list, and the American Jewish committee next, with 10 per cent. More future rabbis (86 per cent) than non-rabbis (65 per cent) felt that they would want to work with one of the organizations. They showed particular willingness to devote time and energy to a Jewish federation, as a second choice; two students indicated they would be active in order to change its orientation and priorities. Among last-year students, 23 per cent of the future rabbis, but no non-rabbis, gave Federation as a second choice.

If we assume that most future rabbis were willing to support Federation because they approved rather than disapproved of it, the emergent JTS pattern is similar to that at YU. The future rabbi grows more willing to involve himself in the Jewish community; he accepts its institutional structure and, in the case of Federation, approves (or tolerates) its financial priorities. Twenty-one per cent of the future rabbis but only 6 per cent of the non-rabbis were not highly critical of any organization.

It has been established that future rabbis become more career-oriented as they approach ordination. To what extent does this change affect their image of the pulpit and of the rabbi's functions? The student's views on reasonable salary expectations for rabbis in their first post and for those with five years of experience (Tables 21 and 22) varied according to both year of study and career expectation. Whereas most first-year students, both future rabbis and non-rabbis, chose $7,000-8,999 as a reasonable beginner's salary, last-year students chose $9,000-10,999. A difference in the same direction was shown in the salary expected for experienced rabbis.

TABLE 21. JTS STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF A REASONABLE BEGINNING SALARY FOR A CONGREGATIONAL RABBI

(*Per cent*)

	First-year		*Last-year*	
Salary	*Future rabbi*	*Non-rabbi*	*Future rabbi*	*Non-rabbi*
Under $5,000	0	0	0	0
5,000-6,999	8	0	0	0
7,000-8,999	50	58	8	25
9,000-10,999	33	33	69	75
11,000-12,999	8	8	23	0
13,000-14,999	0	0	0	0
	n*=12	n=12	n=13	n=4

* Number in the sample.

TABLE 22. JTS STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF A REASONABLE SALARY FOR A CONGREGATIONAL RABBI FIVE YEARS AFTER ORDINATION

(*Per cent*)

Salary	*First-year*		*Last-year*	
	Future rabbis	*Non-rabbis*	*Future rabbis*	*Non-rabbis*
Under $7,000	0	0	0	0
7,000-8,999	0	0	0	0
9,000-10,999	8	16	0	25
11,000-12,999	42	58	0	0
13,000-14,999	33	25	62	50
15,000-17,499	17	0	38	25
17,500-20,000	0	0	0	0
	n*=12	n=12	n=13	n=4

* Number in the sample.

Another question probed student opinion of the attractions of the pulpit rabbinate. Among future rabbis, a plurality of first-year students (33 per cent) checked "the opportunity to preserve Judaism." No last-year future rabbis checked this rather vague statement, and the number citing "opportunity to serve as a leader in the Jewish community" also decreased. Instead, the percentage of students choosing more specific answers, such as "helping people find faith," "teaching Torah," and "making people more observant," increased (Table 23). Future rabbis, then, gain an increasingly specific image of their role, one that concerns itself with people, not with community structure or ideologies.

TABLE 23. JTS STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF MOST ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS OF THE RABBINATE

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis	
	First-year	*Last-year*
Opportunity to help people find faith	17	23
Opportunity to make people more observant	0	15
Opportunity to teach Torah	25	31
Time to study and think	0	8
Comfortable living conditions	0	0
Opportunity to preserve Judaism	33	0
Opportunity to serve as leader in Jewish community	25	15
Opportunity to serve as leader in general community	0	0
Opportunity for social action	0	0
Status of rabbi in Jewish community	0	0
Status of rabbi in general community	0	0
Other	0	8
	n*=12	n=13

* Number in the sample.

As for the aspects of the congregational rabbinate that students found least attractive, again future rabbis moved from the more general and communal in the first year to the more specific and, in this case, more personal just before ordination. First-year students chose such things as "lay control over the rabbi" (33 per cent), "the congregation's indifference to Judaism" (25 per cent), and "lack of privacy for myself and family" (25 per cent). Half of the last-year future rabbis disliked, above all, "lack of privacy for myself and family"; 17 per cent "preaching things one is not sure of" (Table 24).

TABLE 24. JTS STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF LEAST ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS OF THE RABBINATE

(*Per cent*)

	Future rabbis	
	First-year	*Last-year*
Necessity to listen to people's problems	0	0
Lay control over rabbi	33	17
Inadequate material conditions	0	0
Necessity to live away from large city	0	0
Necessity to preach or espouse religious beliefs and practices without being really sure of them	8	8
Necessity to compromise religious principles	0	17
Lack of privacy in personal affairs	8	50
Lack of close friends	0	0
Congregants' indifference to religious observance	8	0
Congregants' indifference to Judaism	25	8
Other or none	0	0
	n*=12	n=12

* Number in the sample.

Part of preparing for any career is an awareness of the inadequacies of the chosen profession. A critical time for a rabbi, we know, is his confrontation with a mourner, for this is when his counsel is most earnestly sought and when the community may exercise its severest judgment of his ability. Future rabbis facing ordination were less optimistic than first-year students about their ability to answer adequately the thoughtful and intelligent mourner's questions about the meaning of life, life after death, or God's justice. There was almost unanimous agreement among students that a good rabbi should be able to answer such questions in an intellectually satisfying and honest way. About half of the future rabbis were confident that their training at JTS would be helpful in comforting the mourner. Slightly more than half were also inclined to believe

that their training would help them provide an honest and satisfactory intellectual response.

HUC-JIR

The great majority (89 per cent) of HUC-JIR students expected to serve as congregational rabbis, at least at some time or other; the remaining students were "doubtful." While 71 per cent looked upon the congregational rabbinate as the most attractive career, 14 per cent preferred the position of Hillel rabbi. Only 9 per cent wanted an academic career either at HUC-JIR (4 per cent), or at some college or university (5 per cent). Since the student body was so overwhelmingly in favor of the congregational rabbinate, we will not differentiate here between future rabbis and non-rabbis. We also restricted our comparisons of first- and last-year student attitudes to the Cincinnati campus, because of the New York school's small graduating class (seven students, of whom three had failed to respond to the questionnaire in time for our analysis).

FRIENDSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

The Cincinnati and New York centers have student organizations that arrange lectures, run a bookstore (Cincinnati only), and represent student opinion on joint faculty-student committees. New York students, who usually live at a distance from their school and spend more time at part-time jobs, necessarily lead a less active student life. Thirty-one per cent of these students, compared with 60 per cent at Cincinnati, reported spending most of their leisure time with fellow-students. Almost all HUC-JIR students evaluated their relations with fellow-students as very pleasant (38 per cent; first-year students more than last-year students), or pleasant (57 per cent). Here, as at JTS and to a lesser degree at YU, most students marry before ordination. More last-year than first-year students reported spending most of their free time with their family (45 and 13 per cent, respectively). This suggests the possibility that last-year students were increasingly concerned not only with their future career, but also with the personal and familial aspects of that career—a condition prevalent among other rabbinical students as well.

The majority of the students (65 per cent) reported that their leisure time was divided about equally between Jewish and non-Jewish activity, 15 per cent that it was mostly Jewish and 20 per cent that it was mostly non-Jewish. A somewhat larger proportion of New York students indi-

cated spending most of their leisure in non-Jewish activity. Last-year students, like future rabbis at other institutions, reported more time spent in non-Jewish activity than beginning students. Almost all students (96 per cent) stated that they had attended a concert, opera, or theater performance in the past six months.

INTEREST IN PERIODICAL LITERATURE

Responses to the query regarding Jewish journals to which students subscribed or which they read regularly showed that 20 per cent of Cincinnati and 31 per cent of New York students read none. At the Cincinnati school the most popular journal was *Commentary* (58 per cent; 7 per cent of the students read no other Jewish journal); 54 per cent read the *CCAR Journal;* next in popularity were *Midstream* (41 per cent) and *Judaism* (34 per cent). Other journals read by at least 10 per cent of the students were *Reconstructionist* (24 per cent), *Conservative Judaism* (12 per cent), *National Jewish Monthly,* a popular monthly publication of B'nai B'rith, (12 per cent), and *Tradition* (10 per cent). Two students read *Hadoar,* one an Israeli publication, and none read Yiddish periodicals.

At the New York school the reading pattern was similar, except that its students were somewhat more likely (46 per cent) to read *Judaism,* to which Rabbi Eugene Borowitz, a member of its faculty, had contributed the regular feature "Current Theological Literature" until 1966. Of the students at both schools who read a Jewish journal, 9 per cent regularly read one; 16 per cent, two; 13 per cent, three; 24 per cent, four; and 17 per cent, five or more. Responses from last-year students showed a marked increase over first-year students in the number of periodicals read.

Slightly less than half the students read one of the quality non-Jewish periodicals (p. 65 f.; omit *Commentary*). Last-year students were more likely to do so (68 per cent) than first-year students (35 per cent). Few students (17 per cent) read a quality Christian periodical (p. 66), and last-year students were no more likely to do so than others. If less than half of the students read the theological writings of a member of their own faculty and so few read a Christian periodical, some doubt must be cast on their professed interest in theology and comparative religion.

SOCIAL ACTION

More than half of the students (57 per cent) participated in some form of social action during the year. Last-year students were more likely to have done so than first-year students. (By contrast, at JTS last-year students were less likely to have done so than first-year students.) Of participants in social action, 18 per cent were involved exclusively with Soviet Jewry and 37 per cent with both Soviet Jewry and civil rights, or poverty, or the Vietnam war. Eighteen per cent were involved with civil rights or poverty, or the war in Vietnam alone.

The HUC-JIR experience, then, apparently serves to broaden the student's interest and participation in both general and Jewish affairs, as well as in social action. This is not the case at either JTS or YU, and may reflect differences in the students' image of the rabbi's role at the various seminaries—an interpretation entirely consonant with the greater tendency among HUC-JIR students to think of the rabbi as an active leader in the Jewish community.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE AND BELIEF

In considering changes in religious observance and practices by students while they are training for the rabbinate at HUC-JIR, as elsewhere, we assume that differences between first- and last-year students are the result of the school's influence. At HUC-JIR all students but one expected their wives to light candles on Friday evening. All but one ate cooked fish in non-kosher restaurants and used electricity on the Sabbath; and all but three (5 per cent) stated that they would object if their wives attended the *miḳweh,* or would prefer them not to.

As a matter of principle, about half the students (54 per cent), regularly attended services on the Sabbath. Last-year students were less likely to do so (45 per cent) than first-year (56 per cent). Sixty-six per cent stated that they prayed regularly, as a matter of principle—last-year students slightly less frequently than first-year students. Sixty-nine per cent believed with certainty, or on the whole, in a God to whom man can meaningfully pray; their number decreased, from 82 per cent in the first year to 50 per cent in the last. Thirty-eight per cent believed with certainty, or on the whole, that God in some way revealed himself to Moses at Sinai; 46 per cent did not. Again, there were differences between first- and last-year students—an increase of nonbelievers from 35 to 75 per cent. To sixty-two per cent prayer was almost always, or often, a mean-

ingful personal experience; here too the number decreased in the last year.

To what can the decline in belief between the first and last years be attributed? (It will be recalled that there was no such decline at YU and JTS.) Not to HUC-JIR's leadership, for faculty members describe Dr. Glueck's faith in God as simple and traditional. And while Dr. Glueck's religion is not under discussion, it is important because of the student's image of him as a strong believer in a personal God. The explanation for the growing rejection of this faith as they approach ordination probably reflects the institution's general religious atmosphere, the views of its faculty, and its curriculum.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

Forty-six per cent of the HUC-JIR students felt that the general religious atmosphere of the rabbinical program promotes religious values, 44 per cent that it was indifferent to what they considered to be important religious values, and 9 per cent that it was hostile to such values. Last-year students were more likely to think the atmosphere indifferent (53 per cent) than first-year students (41 per cent). Students at the New York school were generally pleased with what they thought was a liberal religious atmosphere having traditional orientation and possibility for personal development. In fact, 62 per cent, more than at any other institution, believed it promoted religious values.

Cincinnati students interpreted this question somewhat differently from other seminarians, and figures may therefore be misleading. To students at other seminaries, religious values meant either ritual practice, traditional beliefs, or ethical and moral behavior, and they based their evaluation of the school's religious atmosphere on the extent to which it promoted these. Most JTS and New York HUC-JIR students approved of the absence of coercion on students for conformity in ritual behavior, but all seminarians felt that there should be some relationship between their formal studies and religious values. Thus, students describing the atmosphere as "indifferent" to religious values were by and large criticizing their institution or their fellow-students.

This was not so at Cincinnati. Several comments by students who thought the atmosphere *promoted* religious values will serve as illustration. One called the atmosphere "more academic than religious," another noted that "there is more study than practice," others that "there have been instances of discouragement of traditional practices," or that "there

is a healthy skepticism which vitiates practice to some extent—good in the long run."

Almost identical comments came from students who called the atmosphere *indifferent* to religious values. One described it as "ideal one is permitted, and even compelled, to arrive at a meaningful expression of Judaism for himself," while others observed that "God doesn't seem to play much of a role in motivating students" or that "there seems to be little belief that can be translated into action." Another typical comment: "There is a marked tendency toward uninvolved academicism." Those who thought the atmosphere hostile to religious values had much the same to say. From this it follows that HUC-JIR students, unlike those at YU or JTS, do not disagree on the kind of environment the school offers, only on whether it is good or bad.

EFFECT OF RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

Most entering Cincinnati students have had no exposure to any form of Judaism other than their Reform temple or youth group. As part of their first-year liturgy course, Professor Jakob Petuchowski makes it mandatory that they attend for one week morning services at an Orthodox synagogue. For most, this is their first exposure to Orthodox ritual and the only occasion to learn to put on *tefillin*. Unlike most other rabbinical students, they know little of the diversity in Jewish religious life. In the past, many students came to Cincinnati from traditionalist backgrounds. They had rejected traditionalism in favor of Reform, and wanted to become rabbis to help others do the same. In contrast, the students today have made no definite choice, because they are not really aware of alternatives. Their limited Jewish education would preclude their acceptance at YU or JTS anyway.

A student's decision to enter YU, and particularly JTS, expresses his choice of a religious role. More often than not, even among the Orthodox, he has tried out pietism, ritualism, or religious rebellion during the crucial formative years in high school, and at least subconsciously he knows a good deal about his own religiosity before entering the seminary. If this is less true of the New York Reform seminarian, he at least has the opportunity to find out while preparing for ordination. A number of students at the New York school, for example, cover their heads at the time of their ordination. This is certainly no religious command for Reform Jews, and it is not even required by the rigors of Jewish law.

Yet, covering the head may symbolize for some Reform rabbis the decision to adopt one religious role and reject another.

Cincinnati students do not actually have this option because their background and available opportunities give them very few religious choices. They cannot keep the laws of *kashrut* or regularly worship in traditional fashion, except at considerable personal sacrifice, and they cannot even inform themselves meaningfully about differences in religious thought and practice. HUC-JIR is primarily an academic institution. In particular instances, the absence of a religious atmosphere eliminates choice and virtually dictates a pattern. Some students—though they are the exceptions—are sensitive to this situation. As one expressed it, "Opportunities are not really available for a student to *daven* [pray] traditionally or keep *kashrut,* etc., and we need that experience and freedom." On the whole, however, they accept HUC Reform not only as the best, but as the only conceivable way (Table 25).

TABLE 25. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

(*Per cent*)

	First-year	*Last-year*
Promotes religious values	42	43
Indifferent to religious values	45	43
Hostile to religious values	13	13
	n*=31	n=23

* Number in the sample.

The exclusive emphasis on the academic is also accepted as natural and proper. Students can in this way evaluate the atmosphere's effect on religious values as positive, while maintaining that it has nothing to do with religion. A few students are disturbed because they feel that "God is lost among humanistic and scholarly concerns," but the predominant consensus is that the absence of a religious atmosphere gives "a genuinely modern approach to the meaning of religious observance." (In New York, one HUC-JIR faculty member has suggested that students be urged to attend other Jewish institutions simultaneously or enroll in other Jewish-study programs.) Consider the striking contrast between the Israeli schools maintained by JTS and by HUC-JIR. Only the JTS program actively directs its students to explore different facets of Jewish religious life in Israel. In all fairness, one must note that JTS is in a better position to do so because it has a full program in Israel, whereas HUC-JIR offers only selected courses.

The religious baggage the student brings with him to Cincinnati is often no more than Sunday-school notions of God and Judaism and ignorance of the religious sources and tradition. Such notions of God are quickly shattered by older students, by the general atmosphere of religious skepticism, and by some of the instructors, who have strong convictions about religion and convey them to the student.

RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP

For the rabbi who best reflects their own religious-theological-philosophical position, 54 per cent at the New York school chose Rabbi Eugene Borowitz; 23 per cent Rabbi Heschel, or Borowitz and Heschel, or Borowitz and Rabbi Jakob Petuchowski, and the remaining 23 per cent selected Mordecai Kaplan. Borowitz teaches in the New York school, Petuchowski at Cincinnati. Both are theologians. Borowitz is a religious existentialist, and Petuchowski is sympathetic to that position. Both are vocal critics of what they consider to be the theological sterility of contemporary Reform, and both favor greater traditionalism in ritual observance. Both are also good writers and public speakers. Their ideologies differ somewhat; but, except for Petuchowski's outspoken opposition to Zionist ideology—and it is not to this that his followers are attracted—the differences are rather subtle.

At the Cincinnati school 26 per cent listed Petuchowski as the person who best reflects their religious position; 12 per cent Borowitz; 12 per cent, Borowitz and Petuchowski, or both in combination with Heschel; one student checked Rabbi Rackman of YU. Thus, half the students were drawn to religious leaders associated with traditionalism. Of the remaining students, 41 per cent checked individually, or in combination, the names of rabbis representing a more radical religious position: 21 per cent Alvin Reines, professor of philosophy at Cincinnati; 9 per cent Sherwin Wine, the Reform rabbi who has removed references to God from his service, or both Reines and Wine; another 9 per cent both Kaplan and Reines, and one student (2 per cent) Kaplan.

Reines is in fact more influential than the students' replies suggest. He states his position, which is little known outside a small Reform circle, in his essay "God and Jewish Theology" (published in mimeographed form by HUC-JIR in 1967). According to him, " the Community of Reform Jews denies the existence of an authoritative body of knowledge or beliefs whose affirmation is obligatory upon the members of this community." Reform Judaism, he says, is a polydoxy allow-

ing "as equally valid all opinion on the great themes of religion such as the meaning of God, the nature of man and so forth" and disallowing only those beliefs that are "inconsistent with its polydox nature, as, for example, belief in an authoritative revelation or an orthodox doctrine."

For Reines the concept "Jewish," or "Jew," is a symbol that calls upon man to respond to the meaning of God. But he is troubled by the concept because he feels that it has no meaningful referent. In his view, there is no Jewish tradition—only a "continuum of accident rather than essence." Hence, he seeks to redefine "Jewish" in such a manner, as he puts it, as to place the burden of the definition on the question asked.

Reines denies the possibility of proving the reality of God, and without such proof, he argues, one cannot proceed to intelligent discourse or communication. He then proceeds to give the concept of God what he feels is its real meaning—"the enduring possibility of being." After this, he says, one can go on to sensible theological speculation.[31]

The fact that Reines has a strong influence on HUC-JIR students has serious implication for the future relationship of Reform Judaism with other Jewish groups. Petuchowski has noted, critically:

> . . . with every passing year, the ranks of the [CCAR] . are swelled by young rabbis who enter the Reform rabbinate with the sincerely held conviction that Reform Judaism is a new religion, founded in the nineteenth century, which —more or less by historical accident—shares part of its name with the historical religion of Judaism. That new religion, called "Reform Judaism," has only one dogma, and that is the absolute freedom of the individual to think and do what he likes. (See Alvin J. Reines, "Polydoxy and Modern Judaism" in the January 1965 issue of the *CCAR Journal.*) The [CCAR] . . has not seen fit to repudiate that position, and it is not unlikely that, within the next decade or so, it might become the position of the majority of the CCAR membership.[32]

From the percentages quoted here, it would appear at first that the student body at Cincinnati is about evenly divided between radical or traditionalist rabbis, but such a conclusion would be highly misleading. It was first-year students who gave Petuchowski 48 per cent, Borowitz or both Borowitz and Petuchowski 30 per cent, and Heschel 9 per cent. No first-year student listed Reines. Among last-year students, on the

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[31] Reines has also discussed his philosophy in his "Reform Judaism," in Belden Menkus, ed., *Meet the American Jew* (Nashville, 1963), pp. 29–43, and in four articles in *CCAR Journal:* "Authority in Reform Judaism" (April 1960), "Polydoxy and Modern Judaism" (January 1965), "Shabbat As a State of Being" (January 1967), and "The Future and the Holy" (October 1967).

[32] Jacob J. Petuchowski, "Realism About Mixed Marriages," *CCAR Journal,* October 1966, p. 37.

other hand, 45 per cent listed Reines and 35 per cent Wine, or both Reines and Wine, or Reines and Kaplan, a dramatic difference. Among students about to be ordained, radical theology was by far more popular. One reason may be that it is the upper-classmen who have the greatest exposure to Reines, and beginners with Petuchowski. The fact that Petuchowski began teaching theology only in 1965, when the last-year students sampled here had already completed this course, may also be a factor.

The nature of the curriculum is in keeping with the position of Reines rather than of Petuchowski. One faculty member, explaining the difference between first- and last-year students, has stated:

> . there is undoubtedly some significance in the sheer weight of required class hours which a student has to take with certain members of the faculty between the time he completes his freshman year and the time he enters the senior class.
>
> There are three courses in philosophy (with a total of 12 hours) which the student takes with Reines himself. There are four courses in Bible (with a total of 16 hours) in a Bible department which specializes in debunking traditional notions and in undermining any belief in Revelation. There are four courses in history (with a total of 14 hours); and, here again, it should be noted that the history department is committed to economic determinism and to the eradication of the sphere of the holy from any construct of Jewish history. And, then, there are any number of electives which the students can take in the above-mentioned departments.
>
> During that same period of time, the students . . . [have Petuchowski] for four hours of Talmud, and three hours of liturgy—both of them courses which, in view of the students' lack of background and commitment, would hardly be reckoned among the most enjoyable courses taken by our students.
>
> The academic freedom to which we, as an institution, are so dedicated, does not mean that, in terms of its curriculum and required courses, HUC is impartial as between the various theological options possible with Reform Judaism.

And another has said:

> Petuchowski was given the first-year theological courses. Inasmuch as the students, in their first year, have only met Petuchowski, and have not yet been introduced to philosophic theology it would account for their choosing Petuchowski's position—it is the only one with which they are familiar. Moreover, the really scientific Bible, history, etc., courses do not begin until the later years. Since . [Reines's] theological position is thoroughly coherent with these scientific courses, and these courses tend to make incredible Petuchowski's view, what appears to happen is that as a student matures religiously he discards the neo-Orthodox position for one that fits his increased academic and theological development. Furthermore, Petuchowski's position is much like the position that . the normative Reform pulpit would present, and this would tend to be the position that a student would bring with him to the College, and find supported by Petuchowski.

Despite the impact of both Petuchowski and Reines, the students look neither to them nor to other faculty members as a primary source of religious guidance, advice, or example. At Cincinnati 19 per cent of the students (somewhat more than in any other school) stated that they had no such living source; 28 per cent felt that faculty members provided this source (compared with 58 per cent in the New York school), and 21 per cent looked to a rabbi outside HUC-JIR (Table 26).

TABLE 26. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' PRIMARY SOURCE OF RELIGIOUS ADVICE, GUIDANCE, AND EXAMPLE

(*Per cent*)

	First-year	*Last-year*
Fellow students	13	17
Faculty	29	42
Administration	0	0
Family	10	4
Rabbi outside the institution.	19	20
Other	10	0
No source	19	17
	n*=31	n=24

* Number in the sample.

COMMUNAL AND PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES

Student attitudes toward the Reform movement were mixed. There was almost unanimous agreement (91 per cent) that relations between Orthodox, Conservatives, and Reform should be closer; at Cincinnati all the first-year students and 80 per cent of the last-year students agreed on this point. Fifty-five per cent of the students thought that Reform rabbis put too little emphasis on ritual observance and practice, 9 per cent considered it too great, and 36 per cent thought it was about right. At Cincinnati the percentage of students who wanted more emphasis declined from 57 among beginners to 44 for last-year students.

Forty-five per cent of the students believed that, on the whole, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was responsive to the needs of the American Jewish community. Twenty-seven per cent thought it was not. Favorable appraisal increased from 39 per cent of first-year to 55 per cent of last-year students. As for the Reform rabbinical movement (CCAR), 38 per cent of the students evaluated it positively and

29 per cent negatively. The proportion of favorable responses increased from 35 to 60 per cent between the first and last years.

According to the students, the most pressing problems of American Jews were Jewish social and ethical values, Jewish education, Jewish belief, and the intellectual challenges to Judaism (Table 27). A com-

TABLE 27. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF PROBLEMS FACING AMERICAN JEWRY

(*Per cent*)

	Highest priority	*Little or no significance*
Soviet Jewry	5	0
Strength and survival of the State of Israel *	0	4
Antisemitism in the United States	0	13
Increased dialogue and understanding between Jews and Christians	0	18
Social and ethical values of American Jews	27	0
Intellectual challenges to Judaism	16	5
State of Jewish belief	16	2
Jewish youth on the college campus	2	0
Assimilation	11	4
Intermarriage	2	4
Jewish education	18	4
Decline of religious observance and ritual practice.	2	9
Greater Jewish unity	0	5
Quality of Jewish organizational life	0	0
Other or no answer	2	5
None	0	27

* Responses were received before the Middle Eastern crisis in May 1967.

parison of first- and last-year responses showed only one difference: a decrease from 22 to 10 per cent in the top-priority rating of Jewish education. Second highest priority was given to "Jewish youth on the college campus" by 35 per cent of first-year and 10 per cent of last-year students. The selection of problems of little or no significance differed only by school. Thirty-eight per cent of the New York students and 12 per cent of the Cincinnati students saw no need for increased interfaith dialogue and understanding.

Table 28 shows the proportion of students most willing to devote their time and energy to each of the major American Jewish organizations;

TABLE 28. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' INTEREST IN MAJOR JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

(*Per cent*)

Organization	*Most willing to devote time and energy*	*Most highly critical*
Agudath Israel	0	4
American Council for Judaism	0	51
American Jewish Committee	16	2
American Jewish Congress	4	2
Anti-Defamation League	16	4
B'nai B'rith	7	0
Bonds for Israel	2	4
Jewish Federation or local community-wide philanthropic group	13	2
Jewish Welfare Board	2	0
Labor Zionists of America	0	2
Religious Zionists of America	0	2
Torah Umesorah	0	0
United Jewish Appeal	11	0
Zionist Organization of America	4	5
Other or no answer	18	7
None	7	16

it also indicates the organizations of which students were most highly critical.

The most highly rated organizations were the prestigious secular agencies: the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, and local federations and welfare funds, which traditionally have a more Reform and German character than, for example, the American Jewish Congress. Among the New York students the American Jewish Committee elicited little support, and UJA the strongest (23 per cent). At Cincinnati attitudes toward the American Jewish Committee showed the most notable disparity: 37 per cent of graduating students thought it most deserving of their active involvement, as against 4 per cent of first-year students.

Among the organizations that HUC-JIR students were most likely to criticize, the American Council for Judaism again led the list. At Cincinnati the proportion of students so listing it increased from 30 per cent in the first year to 74 per cent in the last.

How does the entering HUC-JIR student's image of the pulpit compare with the graduating student's idea of his profession? Students who

TABLE 29. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF A REASONABLE BEGINNING SALARY FOR A CONGREGATIONAL RABBI

(*Per cent*)

	First-year	*Last-year*
Under $5,000	0	0
5,000-6,999	6	0
7,000-8,999	25	0
9,000-10,999	47	78
11,000-12,999	22	22
13,000-14,999	0	0
	n*=32	n=23

* Number in the sample.

TABLE 30. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF A REASONABLE SALARY FOR A CONGREGATIONAL RABBI FIVE YEARS AFTER ORDINATION

(*Per cent*)

	First-year	*Last-year*
Under $7,000	0	0
7,000-8,999	3	0
9,000-10,999	12	0
11,000-12,999	34	22
13,000-14,999	25	57
15,000-17,499	19	17
17,500-20,000	6	4
	n*=32	n=23

* Number in the sample.

were close to ordination quoted a higher figure as a reasonable salary for congregational rabbis than first-year students (Tables 29 and 30); the trend was the same at YU and JTS. At Cincinnati, however, the student's concept of a reasonable starting salary was higher than at JTS, but his estimate of a reasonable salary after five years of experience was lower.

An analysis of aspects of the rabbinate regarded as most attractive pointed up differences in attitude between Cincinnati and New York students (Table 31). There were no differences by year. New York students were more likely to list "preserve Judaism," "teach Torah,"

TABLE 31. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF MOST ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS OF THE RABBINATE

(*Per cent*)

	Cincinnati school			*New York school*	*Total HUC-JIR*
	First year	*Last year*	*Total*		
Opportunity to help people find faith	22	22	21	8	18
Opportunity to make people more observant	0	0	0	0	0
Opportunity to teach Torah	9	10	9	24	12
Time to study and think	4	5	5	15	7
Comfortable living conditions	0	0	0	0	0
Opportunity to preserve Judaism	26	20	23	46	29
Opportunity to serve as leader in Jewish community	26	25	26	0	20
Opportunity to serve as leader in general community	0	0	0	0	0
Opportunity for social action	4	5	5	0	4
Status of rabbi in Jewish community	0	0	0	0	0
Status of rabbi in general community	0	0	0	8	2
Other	9	15	12	0	9
	n*=23	n=20	n=43	n=13	n=56

* Number in the sample.

and "study and think"; Cincinnati students, "serve as a Jewish leader" or "help people find faith."

The respondents also indicated which aspects of the rabbinate they found least attractive (Table 32). New York students were not greatly concerned about the indifference of congregants or lack of privacy, having much stronger feelings about lay control. A comparison of first- and last-year students showed the latter less concerned about congregants' indifference to Judaism and about lay control, and much more troubled by having to preach about matters in which the rabbi lacks conviction—lack of privacy, and lack of close friends. Last-year students at HUC-JIR, like those at JTS, revealed greater concern with the more personal aspects of the rabbinate.

By and large, there was at HUC-JIR less disparity by year regarding the image of rabbi and pulpit than at JTS—perhaps as a result of the strong career orientation of all HUC-JIR students, who may have a clear and fairly constant idea of their professional role. Illustrative of this point is the fact that first-year students were no more likely than last-year students to believe that a good rabbi should be able to comfort a mourner

TABLE 32. HUC-JIR STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF LEAST ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS OF THE RABBINATE

(*Per cent*)

	Cincinnati school			*New York school*	*Total HUC-JIR*
	First year	*Last year*	*Total*		
Necessity to listen to people's problems	0	0	0	0	0
Lay control over rabbi	22	5	14	38	20
Inadequate material conditions	0	0	0	0	0
Necessity to live away from large city	0	0	0	0	0
Necessity to preach or espouse religious beliefs and practices without being really sure of them	0	15	7	8	7
Necessity to compromise religious principles	4	5	5	0	4
Lack of privacy in personal affairs	9	25	16	23	18
Lack of close friends	0	10	5	8	5
Congregants' indifference to religious observance	13	5	9	8	9
Congregants' indifference to Judaism	39	25	32	15	29
Other or none	13	10	12	0	9
	n*=23	n=20	n=43	n=13	n=56

* Number in the sample.

who raises questions of religious meaning. In general, students at HUC-JIR had greater confidence in their ability to do so than future rabbis at YU or JTS. Most last-year students also believed that their training would be helpful in comforting a mourner (87 per cent) and in providing an honest and satisfactory intellectual response (96 per cent) to his questions.

Summary

Parallels can be drawn between the three major rabbinical schools with regard to the socialization of their students. Future rabbis become more and more career-oriented, as their growing concern with the functions of the rabbi and with adjusting their personal lives to their profession indicates. Future rabbis become socialized to the values of the community and the rabbinical organizations, rather than to the values of each seminary or its faculty. Even at Cincinnati, where students accept a radical, almost revolutionary theology, most last-year students reject its implications if they run counter to accepted community norms. Hence,

last-year Cincinnati students would like to see a closer relationship between Orthodoxy, Conservatism, and Reform Judaism.

The most outspoken critics, at least at YU or JTS, are the students who do not intend to enter the congregational rabbinate and who hold more right-wing religious values. However, their potential activist influence is diminished by their reluctance to become involved in Jewish organizational life.

This should not suggest that future rabbis who have reached their senior year simply accept the status quo in American Jewish life. They do not. They are not satisfied with the state of Jewish belief or with religious practice. They are concerned about the preservation of Judaism, and for most of them the inadequacy of Jewish education is a problem of major importance. But their attitude toward Jewish communal life as now constituted is one of acceptance or possibly of recognizing a need for reform, not one of rejection and advocacy of revolutionary changes. By and large, they visualized their influence as operating on the personal, not the communal, level. This, we suggest, is not because in this case the students really reject the explicit values of their seminaries or, for that matter, of their faculties. It is rather because the seminaries are in many respects quite conservative, have little to say about the Jewish community, and, if only by default, accept its basic structure.

BY WAY OF PERSONAL CONCLUSION

A chief purpose of our study was to gain insight into the rabbinical programs of the major seminaries. Our effort has been to understand and, to a lesser extent, to evaluate each institution—primarily on its own terms. But an understanding of the implications of the programs at each institution requires a more radical critique, that should begin by stepping back and seeking an overview.

The American rabbinical seminaries are, in essence, neither vocational nor professional institutions. Certainly, JTS and HUC-JIR are academic institutions that are close in character to graduate schools of arts or humanities. At the same time, each institution has its prototype in the European Jewish community: For YU it is the East European yeshivah; for JTS or HUC-JIR, the West European rabbinical seminary pursuing the study of the Wissenschaft des Judentums. None of the seminaries is actually oriented toward professional training, and in none is the training of

rabbis *per se* an overriding concern. If they were greatly concerned with this training, we would be able to glean from the program of each seminary its particular image of the role of the rabbi. As it is, we can infer a rabbinical model, but not one that is consciously formulated.

The seminaries conceive the rabbi as knowing the Jewish textual tradition and, secondarily, as having some basic skills in preaching and officiating at religious and quasi-religious functions. Third in importance is his ability to do minimal counseling, and perhaps to recognize serious psychological problems in his congregants. Every rabbi can answer elementary questions of religious law, or at least know when a serious question has been asked; he has some familiarity with the sources, textual or living, which he can consult. He is, then, a good Jew not so much because he lives a good Jewish life, but in the traditional Jewish sense of *lo' 'am-ha'arez ḥasid,* the ignorant man cannot be righteous.

In the community the rabbi's primary function is to be a source of Jewish knowledge. Although the seminary may define his role as that of teacher, he has no special skills for articulating or communicating his knowledge. He is more like an encyclopedia sitting on a shelf, waiting to be consulted. In some ways, the rabbi is also viewed as director or coordinator of Jewish affairs, but primarily as a servant of the community not as a leader who initiates programs or activities for restructuring Jewish society, or even preserving Jewish tradition in modern society.

Our findings imply that the rabbinical schools envisage the rabbi as a conservative, insofar as he works within the established framework of Jewish institutions, and a traditionalist. This image, one may argue, was reasonable in the past. As long as the Talmud and the *Shulḥan 'Arukh* were the constitution of Jewish life, Judaism primarily required authoritative interpreters and teachers of the constitution. But such a Jewish community no longer exists.

One might therefore suggest that the rabbi's primary function today is to recreate a meaningful Jewish community with a meaningful constitution around which Jewish life can be organized. Some may envisage an altered community adopting entirely new consensual or authoritative symbols to replace the older code of law. Others may prefer a revision of the old code. The Orthodox, of course, would want nothing of the sort; but even here new applications of the extant codes or rabbinical traditions to contemporary life may be envisaged.

Whatever the case, if helping to create a more meaningful community were indeed the rabbi's function, he would need training that differs

radically from the one he is now receiving. The seminaries would first have to explicate the goals of Jewish life, as they see it. At both YU and JTS, the goal, as implicitly understood, is the recreation of a romanticized notion of 19th-century East European Jewish life. It is a goal so patently absurd that no one really dares to voice it openly. If they were forced to give serious consideration to the problem, both YU and JTS would offer more meaningful goals. (HUC-JIR simply has no model or ideal of Jewish life.) Once such goals of Jewish life are established, it would be incumbent on each seminary to give the future rabbi an understanding of the contemporary world and of Jewish life as it exists in this world. This task cannot be discharged by undergraduate schools. American colleges, including Yeshiva College, base their instruction on the assumption that the student can gain adequate understanding of the world from a purely secular perspective. It is this assumption which probably poses the most serious problem for religious institutions. As a Protestant authority has put it:

> There is a widespread tendency for academic departments (of Bible, history, or theology) to talk about books, doctrines, movements and characters of the past, and for practical departments to talk about books, doctrines, movements and people of today, adding, perhaps, the sciences which help us understand them. This leaves a number of awkward impressions. In biblical times it is God who is presented as having once been active in delivering men from bondage, whereas in modern time it is industrial technology which appears as the great power causing the migrations of peoples or delivering men from drudgery. Each of these things is true in its way, but often neither is related to the practice of the student's impending ministry. Or, as a Lutheran theologian put it to us in a study conference, Protestant biblical studies have left many people with the impression that God has never acted since Bible times.[33]

After goals are established and an understanding of the Jewish community and the world around it is imparted, seminaries can proceed with the formulation of strategy for the preservation or restructuring of the environment in consonance with their goals. This does not mean that seminaries would no longer teach Bible, or Talmud, or Midrash. It does mean that curricula no longer would distinguish between academic and practical courses. That which is not "practical" would have no place in the curriculum. Either the Jewish tradition and its texts have practical application, in which case they must be taught; or they have not, in which case they are unnecessary. If the former is true, it must be reflected in the teaching. God does not speak to the Jew in his tradition in the same

[33] Charles R. Feilding, "Education for Ministry," *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14.

way as to the Christian, or at least to the Protestant, in his. God is revealed to the Jew primarily through texts and law; nevertheless, He is to be found there by *contemporary* man. This is a matter of faith—the foundation for the entire spiritual enterprise of the Jew.

Here two possibilities must be considered. If the belief in a God who reveals and is revealed in the sacred texts is rejected, the texts have no intrinsic religious meaning. They may be beautiful and inspiring as reflections of the moral and literary achievements of man. As such, they can be pursued in a scholarly fashion, but not in rabbinical school which has too many pressing tasks to devote time to studies having no practical value. (This may not have been true a hundred years ago. But today, when the texts are not familiar to most Jews and at best have retained only broad symbolic meaning, the rabbi needs no more than the most superficial knowledge of their content.)

If, on the other hand, the traditional Jewish belief in the sacred texts is affirmed, the rabbi must be trained to understand the texts, the law, and the history of the Jews in order to understand what God tells us about our problems, our life, and our predicament. It is not necessary that seminaries teach Jewish philosophy, theology, ethics, or the contemporary community. It is necessary that every course and every instructor be grounded in Jewish theology, philosophy, ethics, and the contemporary community. Faculty members need not necessarily know "about" theology, philosophy, or ethics; but they must have a viable philosophy, theology, and ethic that are in harmony with those of their seminary. This means that seminaries could have no place on their faculties for instructors who do not accept the theology in which the curriculum is grounded.

Obviously, such practical courses are not identical with the "how-to-do-it" instruction for future rabbis on financing, administration, personnel, counseling, preaching, and like matters. These are useful, but peripheral, and best learned on the job. If they are offered at the seminary, they should be optional non-credit courses, clearly secondary to the institution's main function.

In theory, at least, such a program probably would have strong appeal for some people. It has the virtue of being so radical and impossible to implement that it could not conceivably be adopted by any existing seminary. It would require faculties different from any presently staffing the seminaries—faculties, in all probability, impossible to recruit. It

would require an enormous degree of initiative, energy, and imagination. It would mean a complete reversal of current trends.

The rabbinical program plays an ever smaller part in the total programs of YU, JTS, and HUC-JIR; they have developed hosts of activities that are either not at all or only peripherally related to rabbinical training. Incredibly, there is not one single person in any of the institutions who has both the full-time responsibility and the authority to direct the rabbinical program. The top leaders are increasingly remote from their rabbinical schools. The major portion of their time and effort is not devoted to training or educating future rabbis, nor to raising funds exclusively for the rabbinical programs.

Thus, if a radical new program for training rabbis were desirable, a new rabbinical school would have to be established for it. But who would provide the resources for such an institution? Surely not those who heretofore have shown no interest in, or concern for, Jewish religion or the American rabbinate. Support would have to come from persons already committed to Jewish religious life. A new seminary also would have to have a theology or religious ideology. It would have to start with certain assumptions about God, revelation, the tradition, the "good life," and other matters. In short, it would have to be at least remotely denominational. The mere enumeration of these needs reveals the paucity of resources available for such an institution. If we measure each seminary against its lay and rabbinical organizations, we must come to the conclusion that there are in the community no emotional, intellectual, or religious resources capable of improving upon the job the seminary is doing now.

In the final analysis, moreover, a good case can be made against the merits of a radical reorganization of rabbinical training. Of course, one's sense of immediacy regarding the need for change depends on one's evaluation of how our rabbis are doing today and on one's assessment of the quality of Jewish life. Most people seem to feel that we are somehow managing to muddle through. Laymen are far less displeased with their rabbis than rabbis with their laymen. But even the rabbis do not noticeably support recommendations for radical changes in the community.

The entire program of radical reorganization is based on the assumption that religion can be communicated to man today—a dubious assumption, indeed. Not only does radical reorganization suggest faith in God and Torah; it also rests on the supposition that we can know the message

of God and Torah for man today—a task that, in the Jewish tradition, requires prodigious scholarship and careful analysis. It also assumes the willingness of the American Jew to hear the message. But none of these conjectures may actually be true. Even if we are correct about God and Torah, and even if we can successfully extract their message for man today, there may not be anybody to listen. Most Jews in the United States live in, and accept, a condition of religious pluralism and Jewish voluntarism. The community lacks authority and power of coercion. Hence, the message of Judaism must transform each individual Jew, not his kings and princes. It must do so in the absence of the ordinary sanctions and rewards, both formal and informal, that are usually available in communities where ideological transformation has occurred. The minimal precondition, then, is dissatisfaction with the status quo. But most Jews are not dissatisfied.

To whom then is the new rabbinate or seminary to speak? In effect, only to itself. But this the seminary already does, at least by implication. The study of texts—the tradition of study for its own sake without expectation of reward or status—exists. It is stronger at some seminaries than at others, but it exists everywhere. Such study may be viewed as arid scholasticism. It may also be considered a rejection, by example if not by exhortation, of the path of contemporary Judaism.

At its best, the study of text is a call, however dim, for the Jew to come to Torah and find his own meaning there. The very arduousness of the task demands that he turn his back upon the irrelevance and emptiness of much of Jewish life today, and to reform and transform himself to the best of his abilities and virtues. The exclusive study of text further implies that the world is hopeless and the predicament of the Jew impossible; that grandiose programs of reform will not succeed because only a handful want to be reformed. It calls upon this handful to intensify the quality of their Jewish life. It suggests that Judaism has always survived and will continue to survive in the lives of a small remnant who pursue the work of God and the word of God at its source, and who can influence only by example.

This should not suggest that seminary life is grounded in such an ideal. By the most generous standard, the average quality of religious life at rabbinical seminaries cannot be called inspiring. As at other academic institutions, rivalries and jealousies exist. Students are often slighted. Masters of the Talmud are preoccupied with seniority rights and whether they teach a more or a less advanced class, while overlook-

ing abuses before their very eyes. Promotions are vied for. Some professors yearn for publicity in the general press, and then enviously condemn successful colleagues. Some are failures who inflict their bitterness on students.

But the vision of an exemplary life exists in varying degrees at every institution. The vision—not the reality, yet the vision must precede the reality.

GLOSSARY

BRGS .....Bernard Revel Graduate School, Yeshiva University
CCAR .....Central Conference of American Rabbis (Reform)
HUC-JIR ...Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
JTS .....Jewish Theological Seminary
KOLEL ....Special program for more intensive study of Talmud, Yeshiva University
RA .....Rabbinical Assembly (Conservative)
RCA .....Rabbinical Council of America (Orthodox)
RIETS .....Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, Yeshiva University
UAHC .....Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform)
UOJC .....Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations
United Synagogue of America (Conservative)
YU .....Yeshiva University