

Emancipation and Schism: The Emergence of Reform and Ultra-Orthodox Judaism

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Abstract

Traditional Judaism underwent a schism in the nineteenth century in the wake of Jewish emancipation. Reform, a version of Judaism emphasizing cultural assimilation developed in western Europe, while in eastern Europe ultra-Orthodox Judaism emerged. We develop a theory of religious polarization which sheds light on this historical case study. Community members allocate effort among market activities and production within the group of a religious club good. Emancipation and economic development raise income in the market sector inducing members to direct less effort to community participation. On the other hand, higher incomes enable members to make greater money contributions to the community. In less developed regions, the first effect dominates. Religious leaders have an incentive to demand sacrifices that stigmatize members in outside activity, which induces them to direct effort toward community participation. We call this strategy *cultural resistance*. In developed regions, the second effect dominates and religious leaders favour a strategy of *cultural assimilation*. The mechanisms identified by the model are supported by historical evidence and partly explain patterns of Jewish religious affiliation today.

Key words:

JEL classification: D23, N33, Z12, J24

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1 Introduction

What drives religious polarization? Why does economic development lead to the adoption of liberal religious values in some communities while other communities impose stricter religious prohibitions? Schism, polarization and religious conflict poses major questions for public policy and are important subjects of study in sociology, political science, and history but, at least until recently, economists have paid them little attention. This paper sheds new light on these questions by examining a particularly instructive historical case study: the emergence of liberal and conservative or orthodox variants of Judaism in nineteenth century Europe.¹

This paper introduces a novel theoretical framework to study this episode of religious polarization. This model builds on the club-goods theory of religious organization (Iannaccone, 1992).² Individuals choose how much effort to allocate to market activities and how much effort and money to contribute towards the production of a religious club good. Individuals have “warm glow” preferences and benefit from contributing to the club good. We assume that religious leaders aim at maximizing total religious production. Through religious prohibitions religious leaders can effectively ‘tax’ outside activities and thereby induce the members of the community to allocate their effort to the production of the club good. Alone this effect might suggest that religious communities should be as strict as possible (or at least sufficiently strict so that members are indifferent between leaving and staying in the community). However, there is also a countervailing income effect. If the religious authority relaxes some of the prohibitions this can induce members to earn income outside of the community and, as a result of their higher incomes, they may make financial contributions to the religious good. On the other hand, if religious prohibitions are strict then members of the community have little incentive to work outside the community and earn higher incomes; hence communities with very strict religious prohibitions will be comparatively poor.

We apply this model to the case study of Jewish emancipation and schism. This example is particularly interesting because this provides a “quasi-natural experiment” that isolates the role economic incentives play in shaping culture. At the end of the eighteenth century all Jewish communities ‘displayed substantially similar political, social, and economic features’ (Vital, 1999, 31). We document how an exogenous event, emancipation — the gradual lifting of formal and informal barriers to Jewish participation in mainstream society — changed this, and provoked radically different reactions among Jewish communities across Europe, which less than a hundred years earlier had shared a common religious

¹We refer throughout to Askenazi Jews. It is estimated that European Jews, the preponderance of whom were Askenazi made up four fifths of the total Jewish population of 2.5 million at the end of the eighteenth century (Dubnov, 1971, 447).

²In Iannaccone’s model by maintaining a high level of tension visa-à-vis the rest of society, sects weed out religious free riders and can consequently support higher level of religious participation. This club good model rationalizes many of the prohibitions and dietary restrictions that characterize orthodox variants of Judaism. This framework cannot, however, explain religious polarization.

culture. Other examples of religious countermovements such as the Amish and the Hutterite communities do not allow us to address this question as cleanly because they were small and localized developments that began in isolated rural areas making it difficult to disentangle whether their rejection of modernization was due to the peculiarities of their local culture or a product of the economic incentives that they faced.

The model sheds light on how different economic regions reacted to emancipation and economic growth and development. It predicts that where emancipation came hand-in-hand with growth, the income effect would dominate and it could be optimal for a religious authority concerned with maximizing religious consumption to reduce the number of religious prohibitions and adopt a strategy of cultural assimilation. Where there was emancipation without growth the substitution effect dominated and religious leaders had an incentive to increase religious strictness to dampen the shift from religious to secular consumption. These predictions are consistent with the historical evidence that we present and can be used to construct a detailed analytical narrative of the most extreme case of religious polarization: Hungary.

Finally, we extend the model to consider how the religious communities can themselves shape the values of their members.

There are a number of recent theoretical contributions to the literature on religious communities and religious extremism that build on the work of Iannaccone (1992). Montgomery (1996) examines how the formation of religious capital affects an individual's choice of whether or not to affiliate with a 'church' or a 'sect'. Berman (2000) shows how the subsidy that ultra-orthodox Jewish groups receive from the Israeli state has induced them to intensify the level of sacrifice required to participate, and in particular, to extend the time spent on yeshiva. Barros and Garoupa (2002), Montgomery (2003,) and McBride (2008, 2010) model denominational choice in a Hotelling-model framework. Shy (2007) develops a model of the intergenerational transmission of religious beliefs. Parents have preferences over their children's beliefs and can educate their children in such a way so as to promote conformity to either religious or secular values. This paper is also related to a growing literature that looks at how religious communities function in practice (see for instance McBride, 2007; Richardson and McBride, 2009). In particular it is closely related to the work of Abramitzky (2008, 2009) who examines how Israeli Kibbutz communities managed to implement egalitarian policies of income-sharing whilst limiting shirking and preventing too much out-migration by high ability members.

The structure of the remainder of the paper is as follows. Section 2 outlines the historical background to our paper. We formalize our theory of religious polarization in Section 3. In Section 4 we apply this model to our historical case study. Section ?? examines the dynamics of the model and Section 5 concludes

2 Emancipation, Reform and Schism

Before Emancipation

Traditional Judaism was organized around the local religious community.³ Jewish communities spread out across central and eastern Europe during the middle ages. They provided club goods to their members: religious services centred on the synagogue; the rabbinical court adjudicated civil and criminal cases; collective insurance operated in the form of a poor house and an infirmary; and religious education was provided through the *cheder* where Hebrew and the Talmud were taught. A ritual slaughterer and bakery assured that food was uncontaminated and bathhouses were maintained for ritual washing (Rudavsky, 1967).

Jewish communities underwent little internal change between the middle ages and the end of the eighteenth century. As Jonathan Israel noted ‘by and large the essential similarities in the institutions of Jewish organized life held true everywhere’ (Israel, 1985, 184). From the point of view of our theory, traditional Judaism was an equilibrium phenomenon in that, insulated from outside influences, the level of strictness or Jewish identity chosen by the religious authorities had adjusted itself to the economic and social environment of early modern Europe. The rights of Jews were restricted across Europe and residency was conditional on the good will of local political authorities.⁴ From 1500 onwards, Jews across Italy and Germany were confined to ghettos. Ghettos prevented or restricted social interaction between Christians and Jews.⁵ In central and eastern Europe, Ashkenazi Jews lived in their own communities and were not confined to ghettos but the overall effect was similar, they lived apart from the majority Christian population, and spoke their own language.⁶ The restrictions Jews faced, limiting where they could work and even whether

³See Botticini and Eckstein (2005, 2007) for an economic analysis of how the development of rabbinical Judaism affected the economic and social profile of Jewish communities in the early middle ages.

⁴C.f. Goldscheider and Zuckerman (1984, 13). The Jewish community of Vienna had been expelled in 1670. Maria Theresa expelled the Jewish community in Prague in 1744 (Vital, 1999, 1–4). C.f. Dubnov (1971, 192–198) and Katz (1974, 12–13). The so-called Pharaoh-law of 1726 meant that only the eldest son of a Jewish family was permitted to marry and settle in Moravia and Bohemia (Dubnov, 1971, 188–189).

⁵The ghettos were overcrowded and disease-prone. For example the Jewish population of Frankfurt, which numbered more than 3000 people by the early eighteenth century was confined to a single street, a quarter of a mile long and no more than twelve feet wide. As a result fires were frequent and in the 1780s the mortality rate was 58 percent higher amongst the Jewish population than it was for non-Jews (Ferguson, 1998, 27–38). Kaplan (2007), however, argues that in general ghettos prevented widespread religious persecution or pogroms. Ghettoization preserved Jewish culture: ‘it stimulated the development of a richer, more comprehensive, more distinctly Jewish culture’ (Kaplan, 2007, 318). C.f. Low (1979) who notes ‘[r]ecurrent expulsions encouraged maintenance of ties with kinfolk in other countries and kept Jewish solidarity alive’ (Low, 1979, 13).

⁶In most of Eastern Europe Jews spoke Yiddish. In Germany the Jews spoke a dialect: Judendeutsch. ‘Until quite modern times, few Jews in any part of Europe had more than such a limited knowledge of the language of a country, namely the language of their gentile neighbors, as might be necessary to conduct

or not they had permission to marry, served to minimize social and economic interactions between Christian and Jewish communities. Developments in the Christian world had little impact on the evolution of religious practice and belief within Jewish communities.

This barrier between Jewish and mainstream Christian society began to fracture at the end of the eighteenth century. The process of Jewish emancipation resulted in Jews eventually obtaining equal civic and political rights by the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Importantly for our argument, Jewish emancipation can be viewed as a largely exogenous shock. Few Jews ‘anywhere in Europe had anticipated emancipation’ (Vital, 1999, 99). However, once it had begun, emancipation transformed traditional Jewish communities: ‘when it was first enacted in France and as the prospect of its enactment elsewhere began to loom, was that it augured unprecedented but also irreversible change in the structure and character of the Jewish people. From this point on, the questions on which virtually everything of importance in the lives of the Jews of Europe would turn was whether, if only as a hypothesis, such a change was to be welcomed or rejected; and whether the welcome—or rejection—was to be flat or qualified. Upon these issues Jews in all parts of the continent would now begin to be deeply and, in the course of time, irreparably divided’ (Vital, 1999, 99).

Where Jewish emancipation first occurred in Germany, a liberal variant of Judaism known as Reform, based on ideas of the enlightenment (*Haskalah*), emerged, becoming the dominant form of Judaism in western Europe by the end of the nineteenth century. In Eastern Europe, where economic and social opportunities remained limited, emancipation resulted in the Jewish religion became stricter. In Hungary a particularly intransigent form of ultra-Orthodox Judaism, emerged in the 1860s. Elsewhere in eastern Europe, under the influence of Hasidism, the Misnagdim, and the Mussar movement, traditional Judaism was reworked into various conservative forms of Judaism that are today called Haredi or ultra-Orthodox Judaism.⁷ These groups all put new emphasis on the concept of strict adherence to rabbinical law (in Hebrew *machmir*). These developments had long-lasting effects. The denominational differences within modern Judaism stem from the series of nineteenth century schisms that we analyze in this paper

commercial transactions with them. Even this rarely extended to the ability to read and write in the vernacular’ (Vital, 1999, 21–22).

⁷We will refer interchangeably to Haredi and ultra-Orthodox. The latter is the term used in the economic and sociological studies of orthodox Judaism (e.g. Berman, 2000). The former is a Hebrew term current in Israel. Haredi Jews themselves simply use the Yiddish term for Jews (*Yidn*) or virtuous Jews (*erlicher Yidn*) (Heilman, 1992, 11–13). Hasidism is a subset of Haredi Judaism. We provide details on the rise of Hasidism in the historical appendix. Hasidism was initially opposed to the Misnagdim, which means the “opponents,” but by the middle of the nineteenth century they had reconciled their differences in order to oppose Reform Judaism. Different branches of ultra-Orthodox Judaism espouse radically different opinions on many political questions such as their attitude to the state of Israel but their attitude towards secular society and Reform Judaism is broadly similar.

Emancipation

Until the nineteenth century, Jewish communities across Europe were bound by a complex system of discriminatory restrictions and regulations.⁸ The process of Jewish emancipation was inaugurated by Christian Wilhelm Dohm's 1781 work, entitled *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden* (*On the Civic Improvement of the Jews*), which began a pan-European debate on the condition of the Jews in Europe by advocating emancipation as a means to make the Jews useful to society at large (Hess, 2002).⁹ The first significant official act of emancipation took place in central Europe when Joseph II (1780–1790), ruler of the Habsburg empire, issued the Edit of Toleration or *Toleranzpatent* in 1782. It was an act of partial emancipation which granted certain civic rights to Jews provided that they attended secular schools and learn German; it did not grant Jews legal equality with Christians.¹⁰ Jewish settlement in Vienna, for example, remained restricted and no public synagogues were allowed to be built (Low, 1979, 15-23).¹¹

A more complete form emancipation resulted from the French Revolution. The doctrine of equal citizenship proclaimed by the Revolutionaries lead the National Assembly to declare that Jews were full citizens in 1791 and this policy was spread across Europe with the armies of France during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars (Berkovitz, 1989, 111–114). Jews across western Germany, the Low Countries and northern Italy gained full civic equality as a result of French conquest and a window of opportunity opened up enabling many Jews to leave the ghettos and begin careers in areas such as law or in government which had previously been closed to them. However, in 1808 some of the rights granted by the French were restricted by Napoleon and, after his defeat in 1815, many of the traditional restrictions on Jewish settlement and on the occupations Jews could have were reimposed in those states that had been conquered by France, and in some instances new, more severe, laws were introduced.¹²

A few German states did make permanent movements towards emancipation. The Duchies

⁸The exceptions to this generalization were Britain and the Netherlands where Jews were granted effective civic equality. Our focus in this paper is on the much larger Jewish communities of central and eastern Europe.

⁹This cameralist strain of thought argued that the Jews could be more usefully employed so as to benefit the body politic if they were freed and integrated. Traditional Jewish religious practice was considered corrupting. For example Dohm 'would go so far as to concede that the Jews were more morally corrupt, criminally inclined, and antisocial than other peoples . . . Using 'sophistic artistry,' rabbinical exegesis had falsified Mosaic Law and had introduced "narrow-minded and petty regulations" to the Jewish religion' (Berkovitz, 1989, 26).

¹⁰It was not in fact the first Edit of Toleration, the Margrave of Baden, Karl Friedrich had issued a similar document, granting Jews some rights but not citizenship in 1781 (Goldstein, 1984, 47).

¹¹Furthermore during the reign of Francis II (1792–1835) a number of additional impositions, and taxes were imposed upon the Jews and, in the major towns of Galicia, Jews were confined to Ghettos for the first time. See Katz (1974, 163–164) and Mahler (1985, 3–10).

¹²For example Jews were expelled from Bremen and Lübeck in 1816. Frankfurt, Hamburg, Hanover, Nassau and other territories reinstated settlement regulations in the aftermath of the defeat of Napoleon (Jersch-Wenzel, 1997, 29).

of Anhalt-Berburg and Anhalt-Köthen granted the Jews '[e]manicipation virtually without qualifications' in 1810 (Rurup, 1969, 75). Prussia followed France in granting Jews a limited form of citizenship in 1812 as part of the modernization programme imposed by Hardenberg, in the aftermath of Napoleon's victory at Jena.¹³ Mecklenburg followed Prussia in 1813 (Sorkin, 1987, 29). Denmark granted Jews civic rights in 1814.¹⁴

Substantive moves towards legal equality in the rest of Germany recommenced in the 1830s and 1840s. Political emancipation was accompanied, and in cases some preceded, by economic integration. Economic change, combined with the end of the legal restrictions on settlement and employment, provided tremendous opportunities for many, even though numerous German states, such as Württemberg, retained restrictions on Jewish settlement until the late 1860s, and the process of emancipation was only completed with the unification of Germany.¹⁵

Reform Judaism

There were three reforming movements in nineteenth century Judaism. The first Reform movement emerged in Germany at the turn of the nineteenth century.¹⁶ It was associated with the career of Israel Jacobson (1768–1828), a prominent advocate of secular education and of preaching in the vernacular, and with the first German-language Jewish periodical *Sulamith* (Meyer, 1988, 28–32). Jacobson built a new religious building in Dessau which he called a Temple rather than a synagogue and in which the service was accompanied by

¹³Jews in Prussia were still prevented from working in government and Judaism was not recognized as a religion. Nevertheless, the partial emancipation of Prussian Jews was significant because they were viewed as 'the culturally most advanced community of Jews in Western Europe' and because it was not subsequently revoked (Katz, 1974, 170).

¹⁴The constitution of Baden granted the Jews emancipation in 1809 and citizenship in 1818. However, this citizenship did not extend to full civic equality and Jewish settlement remained restricted in many districts. Jews were only granted full civic equality in 1862.

¹⁵The last state to extend rights to Jews was Bavaria which did so when it ratified the new German constitution in 1872. The relationship between emancipation, industrialization, and religious change are the subject of a extensive historiography and considerable controversy. See Baron (1938); Berkovitz (1989); Graetz (1996); Vital (1999). The seminar work on the cultural impact of emancipation of the Jewish communities of central and eastern Europe was Katz (1972, 1974, 1986). This sparked a series of debates about how to conceptualize the process of emancipation and assimilation that are contained in the conference volumes *Towards Modernity* (Katz, 1987), *Assimilation and Community* (Frankel and Zipperstein, 1992), *Paths of Emancipation* (Birnbaum and Katznelson, 1995), and *Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered* (Brenner et al., 2003).

¹⁶The most important precursor to Reform was the *haskala* movement begun by Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786). The *haskala* drew on European and, more specifically, German enlightenment thought. It applied the tools of critical reasoning to religion, particularly 'the mode of thought that subjected virtually all matters of contention to the test of universal quality, content and application and significance' (Vital, 1999, 137). It was an elite movement based around a small group of Berlin Jews – the *Maskilim* or young enlighteners – who applied historical and philological techniques to the study of Hebrew. This developed into a critique of rabbinical Judaism. Representative thinkers include Saul Ascher (1767–1822) author of *Leviathan, or On Religion with Respect to Judaism*, and David Friedländer (1750–1834).

choral songs and German prayers and sermons (Meyer, 1988, 42–43).

A second Reform movement built on this precedent by establishing a Temple in Hamburg in 1818 and dedicating a new prayer book, ‘the first comprehensive Reform liturgy’ (Meyer, 1988, 56). Reform finally gained momentum in the 1830s with the third Reform movement when Ludwig Philippson (1811–1889), a moderate reformer was appointed preacher in Magdeburg, and when a more radical advocate of religious reform, Abraham Geiger (1810–1874) obtained the rabbinate of Breslau in 1840. The first radical Reform society formed in 1843, and, at the behest of Philippson, a series of rabbinical conferences were called, in Brunswick in 1844, in Frankfurt-am-Main in 1845, and in Breslau in 1846, to consolidate the various strands of Reform and establish what the movement stood for.

The content of Reform Judaism differed from that of traditional Judaism in a number of ways. Reform congregations introduced new liturgies, replaced traditional chanting and praying with singing, and either reformed or abandoned many traditional Jewish rites and rituals. Choirs and organ music were introduced into the synagogue. This latter was particularly significant, for ‘no other innovation was as likely to cause the Orthodox to withdraw and form separate synagogues’ (Lowenstein, 1981, 270).

For the most part Reform required relatively superficial changes in liturgies and decor but it also meant fundamentally reinterpreting the Jewish religion—separating out the biblical commandants from the later rabbinical injunctions that comprised most of Jewish law. Perhaps most ‘significant was the intellectual effort to reinterpret the history of Judaism to portray it as just another religious “confession” alongside the Christian confessions, one with an ethnic component and different traditions but posing no political challenge to the modern state or cultural barriers to the full incorporation of Jews as German citizens’ (Lilla, 2008, 237).¹⁷

The Reform movement can be viewed, in part, as a religious movement that enabled Jews to accommodate themselves to the social, political and economic changes taking place around them. As a result of emancipation, as Jacob Katz observed ‘the Jew became—via his profession, his mastery of the society, culture, and nation—a citizen, at least partly, of a world that was not his . . . those who deviated from the Jewish way of life under the pressure of these conditions solved their problem by limiting the demands of religion along Reform principles’ (Katz, 1998, 50). It was a religious movement that allowed Jews to enjoy the benefits of modern secular society without abandoning all of their traditions or their community. Reform Judaism made less demands on the time of community members. On the other hand, Reform was accompanied by an ambitious programme of synagogue building. Reformer members did not necessarily consume less religion than members of traditional Judaism had done but they consumed religion in a different form.

Hence we refer to Reform Judaism as an example of *cultural accommodation*. In fact, conservative critics of Reform like Hermann Schab described Reform precisely as ‘an

¹⁷To this end the Reform movement denationalized Judaism, and abandoned prayers for the speedy return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land (Breuer, 1992, xi).

attempt to level down the Jewish synagogue Service to that of the Protestant Church' (Schwab, 1950, 26). Joseph Wolf, a leading reformer described one of the purposes of Reform as demonstrating 'that Judaism in its reconstructed pristine form "is not in the least harmful to the individual or to bourgeois society"' (quoted in Sorkin, 1987, 36).

Schism: Orthodoxy and Ultra-Orthodoxy

Religious communities in much of Eastern Europe remained unemancipated. The large Jewish population of the Russian empire was, from 1804 onwards, confined to the Pale of Settlement where the economic restrictions they faced remained strict. Here traditional forms of Judaism could remain largely intact.

Religious polarization occurred in those parts of central and eastern Europe, where secular opportunities remained limited, but which were not sufficiently isolated from the progress of emancipation in western Germany and Prussia. The most partisan form of ultra-Orthodoxy emerged in Hungary. Ultra-Orthodoxy was diametrically opposed to Reform: while Reform sought to change Judaism in order to accommodate changes in the outside world, ultra-Orthodoxy reformed Judaism in such a way so as to insulate it from these changes. Ultra-Orthodoxy was a form of *cultural resistance*. Reform emphasized the compatibility of Judaism and secular education; ultra-Orthodoxy prohibited secular learning, reduced the value of outside options, and lessened the attractiveness of life outside the community. Reform sought a common ground between Judaism and Christianity; ultra-Orthodox communities elevated features that distinguished them from outsiders. Reform facilitated relations with non-Jews; ultra-Orthodoxy imposed new proscriptions and prohibitions on their members in order to prevent them from acquiring a taste for secular society. It fixed traditional practices as matters of religious law, blurred biblical and rabbinical injunctions and elevated the importance of prohibitions restricting contact with outsiders. As Silber (1992) has argued ultra-Orthodoxy was itself an innovation (Silber, 1992, 25).¹⁸ This historical narrative raises a number of puzzles. Why did emancipation result in a lessening of religious prohibitions and tension in some communities and the strengthening of prohibitions and increased strictness in others? The existing literature can explain a movement in one direction but cannot generate the splinting of Judaism in different directions that we observe historically. We can now introduce a formal model that can explain this phenomenon.

¹⁸it involved 'the invention of a new, more potent tradition . . . In order to preserve tradition uncompromised, these most conservative of men, paradoxically, employed methods in arriving at halakhic decisions which departed from what had been the accepted norm, not only in traditional Judaism, but also in the more recent past, in posttraditional mainstream Orthodoxy' (Silber, 1992, 26).

3 A Model of Religious Polarization

Consider a game played by n individual agents and a religious authority. Agents choose whether to join the religious community (there is only one), and divide effort between market activity and community activity. Market activity generates income that the individual can spend on a consumption good or donate to the community. Effort and money contributions to the community are combined to produce a religious club good. To induce agents to shift effort to group production, the religious authority can impose a ‘tax’ on market activity by its members. Let us begin by analyzing the following one-shot game.

Date 0. An agent can be one of two types denoted by θ , where $\theta = L$ is a type with low attachment to the community and $\theta = H$ is a type with high attachment to the community. The proportion of type- H agents in the population is p .

Date 1. The religious authority announces the ‘tax’ $\tau \in [0, 1]$ on market activity imposed upon community members, e.g. dress, dietary and behavioral restrictions that stigmatize agents in the broader society. The religious authority is committed to τ .

Date 2. Agents then choose how much effort e to devote to religious activity within the community and $1 - e$ to activities outside the community. Effort devoted to activity outside of the community produces income $(1 - \tau)\lambda(1 - e)$ where λ is a productivity parameter. We assume that income can be divided between a unique non-storable consumption good with unit price and religious activity within the community. Let g be the amount of income donated to the religious community.

Date 3. Output of the religious club good is produced by a combination of members’ effort and money contributions and shared equally among members.

We specify the following utility function for each type- θ agent who joins the community:

$$(V_S^\sigma + \beta_\theta V_R^\sigma)^{\frac{1}{\sigma}} + \frac{1}{n} G\left(\sum_{i \in N} (e_i + g_i)\right). \quad (1)$$

The first term is the utility from consumption outside of the community, where secular consumption is given by $V_S = (1 - \tau)\lambda(1 - e) - g$. The second term represents utility from contributing to the production of the religious good: $V_R = e + g$. One interpretation is that this term represents the ‘warm glow’ from contributions to group production.

The third term is the community member’s share of the output of the club good produced by the community, where G denotes the total output. We assume that $G'(\cdot) > 0$.

In addition, $\beta_H > \beta_L$, so that high-attachment types derive greater enjoyment from contributing to production of the club good (i.e. they enjoy religious participation more). Individuals who leave the community cannot contribute to or consume the religious club good, but they also do not face the tax τ on outside activity. Hence their payoff is $[V_S^\sigma + 0]^{\frac{1}{\sigma}} + 0 = V_S$, evaluated at $\tau = 0$.

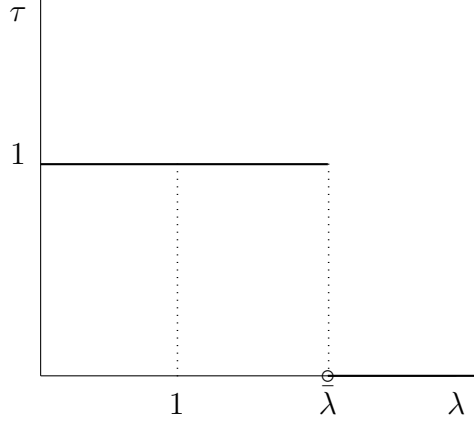


Figure 1: Proposition 1: Strictness τ as a function of economic development λ .

Whereas prior work on religious club goods has focussed on religious proscriptions that increase the “quality” of the religious community (see Iannaccone, 1992, 1994; Berman, 2000), the religious authority in our model faces a tradeoff between quality (monetary and non-monetary religious contribution per member e and g) and quantity (number of members). Specifically, the religious authority maximizes the *total* output of the religious club good. It chooses:

$$\tau^* \in \operatorname{argmax}_{\tau} G\left(\sum_{i \in N} (e_i^*(\tau) + g_i^*(\tau))\right), \quad (2)$$

where $e_i^*(\tau)$ and $g_i^*(\tau)$ are best responses to τ for agent i .

By imposing a higher level of strictness τ and reducing the return to activities outside of the community, the religious authority can induce agents to contribute more to religious activity within the community. However, if the cost, in terms of foregone market activity, is sufficiently large, agents may exit the community and give up religious participation altogether. Religious leaders weigh up these two countervailing effects when choosing their community’s level of τ in order to maximize the output of the religious club good.

3.1 Equilibrium without exit

A priori, it is not clear whether the religious authority should respond to emancipation by reducing or increasing the required level of Jewish identification τ . By becoming more liberal (lower τ), the religious authority can benefit from the higher incomes earned by members. This the *cultural accommodation* strategy. This can be optimal when emancipation occurs in regions where economic development is high, because the increase in wages brought about by emancipation induces a higher level of religious consumption despite their participation in secular activities.

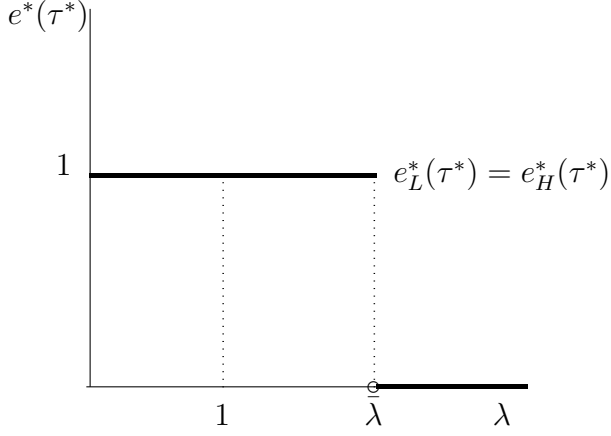


Figure 2: Proposition 1: Equilibrium effort contributions $e^*(\tau^*)$ as a function of economic development λ .

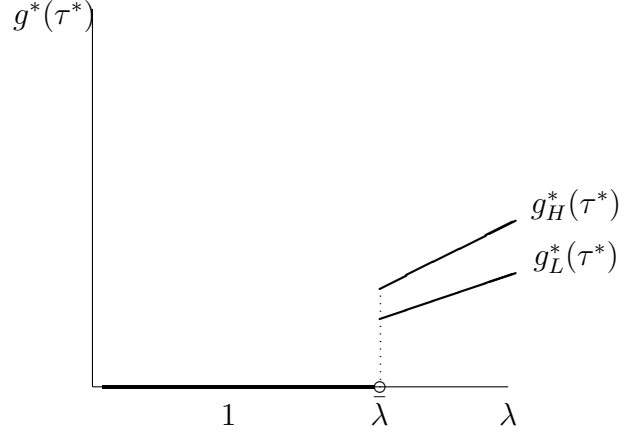


Figure 3: Proposition 1: Equilibrium money contributions $g^*(\tau^*)$ as a function of economic development λ .

Suppose that all agents are members of the community. In this case economic development generates cultural accommodation and the following proposition can be established.

Proposition 1 Cultural Accommodation: *Consider the game without exit. There exists a unique threshold for development $\bar{\lambda}$, such that:*

(i) *For $\lambda \leq \bar{\lambda}$, every subgame perfect equilibrium (SPE) implements:*

$$\tau^* = 1, \quad e_i^* = 1 \quad \text{and} \quad g_i^* = 0,$$

for all $i \in N$.

(ii) *For $\lambda > \bar{\lambda}$, every SPE implements:*

$$\tau^* = 0, \quad e_i^* = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad g_i^* = \frac{\beta_i^{1/1-\sigma}}{1 + \beta_i^{1/1-\sigma}},$$

for each $i \in N$.

The proof is available from the authors on request.

Proposition 2 Cultural Resistance: *Consider the game without exit. There exist thresholds for development $\underline{\lambda}$ and $\bar{\lambda}$, such that the following hold in every SPE:*

(i) *For $\lambda \leq \underline{\lambda}$, all agents are members of the community and*

$$\tau^* = 1, \quad e_i^* = 1 \quad \text{and} \quad g_i^* = 0 \quad \text{for all } i \in N.$$

(ii) For $\lambda \geq \bar{\lambda}$, all agents are members of the community and

$$\tau^* = 0, \quad e_i^* = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad g_i^* = \frac{\beta_i^{1/1-\sigma}}{1 + \beta_i^{1/1-\sigma}} \quad \text{for all } i \in N.$$

(iii) For $\lambda \in (\underline{\lambda}, \bar{\lambda})$ and β_L sufficiently small, there exists a range of λ over which τ^* is increasing and the community switches from including all agents to only high-attachment types.

The proof is available from the authors on request.

4 Historical Application

Section 3 presented a general model of cultural accommodation and cultural resistance. In this section we apply this model to explain the emergence of Reform and ultra-Orthodox Judaism in nineteenth century Europe. First we need to clarify the interpretation of some of the key parameters of the model. In eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe the effective λ facing Jewish community was a function of both the overall level of economic development γ and the degree of emancipation α . Specifically we can think of $\lambda = \alpha\gamma$ where $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ with $\alpha = 0$ representing the situation prior to emancipation and $\alpha = 1$ representing complete emancipation.

The strictness parameter τ reflects how rigorously religious authorities interpreted Jewish law. A high value of τ can thus be thought of as consisting of prohibitions that emphasize a distinctive Jewish identity and were likely to increase the discrimination that Jews faced in Christian or secular society. The religious authority had some discretion over how strictly this could be interpreted. A high value of τ corresponds to the rabbinical concept of *Humrah* (stringency) whereas a low value of τ corresponds to the concept of *kullah* (lenience). Traditional Judaism was based on Jewish law (*halakhah*) as codified by rabbinical tradition. These practices had evolved over the course of the century and reflected the precarious position of the Jews as a unique minority group within Christian society. The *halakhah* regulated the religious life of all Jewish communities. However, many aspects of life were not necessarily matters of the law. Thus Jews wore distinctive clothes but this was a matter of tradition rather than religious law and the *halakhah* had evolved so as to enable Jews to coexist with gentiles. Jewish dress and clothing and other ‘external signs’ were ‘considered tokens of the individual’s membership in his community and testimony to his identification with his faith’ but they ‘were not actually anchored in halakhic sources, and they could be abandoned with the changing conditions’ (Katz, 1998, 50).¹⁹

¹⁹Moderate reformers like Zachariah Frankel (1801–1875) and Nachman Krochaml (1785–1840s) and

Emancipation and Reform in Germany

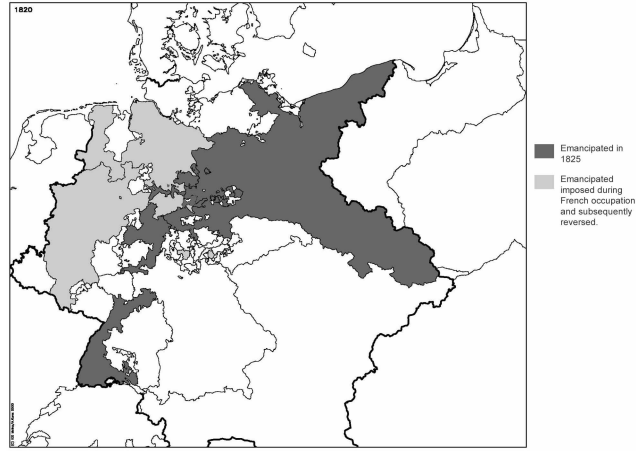
For Jewish communities across Europe prior to emancipation λ was effective zero because, irrespective of how developed the outside economy was, they were unable to participate in it. Traditional Jewish communities were isolated from mainstream society and communities in different parts of central and eastern Europe shared a common set of religious practices.

Emancipation (higher α) in a region where economic development γ was high resulted in a higher value of λ and as Proposition 1 demonstrates this could generate a movement towards cultural accommodation. This is prediction is borne out by the *location* and *timing* of Reform.

Location: Emancipation and Reform were spatially correlated. Figure 5 depicts the German states where Reform communities had sprung up as measured by whether or not they sent rabbis to any of the Reform conferences held in Brunswick in 1844, Frankfurt-am-Main in 1845, or Breslau in 1846. Many German Jews—including many reformers—first experienced emancipation during the period of French occupation so it is worth distinguishing those regions of Germany where some form of emancipation occurred before 1825 from those where no emancipation took place, even though, in many areas, emancipation was subsequently reversed. Figure 4 shows those parts of Germany where Jews were either emancipated in 1825 or where they had been emancipated during the period of French rule.²⁰

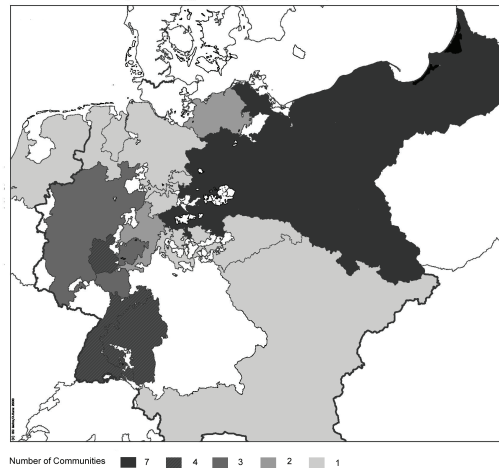
radicals like Geiger argued that the halakhah was manmade and hence malleable; it could be adapted to meet the needs of modern society. Geiger observed that even ‘when the ceremonial laws were much more highly esteemed and considered much more binding, the ancient sages said that in fact a Jew was everyone who rejected idolatry and who did not place another power next to the one God. But Judaism developed greatly later on, and especially so during the last century. In the historical process it has reached a level of knowledge which lays less stress of external acts and more on those fundamental convictions of the unity of God’ (Geiger, 1858, 1963, 240).

²⁰Lowenstein (1981) provides information on the 38 German based rabbi’s who attended at least one of these conferences. Of these 40 per cent came from territories where Jews had obtained civic emancipation and 63 per cent came from territories in which Jews had been emancipated at some point between 1800 and 1825. This is an imperfect indication of the relationship between emancipation and reform because the size of each community could vary greatly.



(a) Emancipation

Figure 4: Jewish communities in Germany that experienced civic emancipation in the first part of the nineteenth century. Data from Acemoglu et al. (2010).



(a) Reform Communities

Figure 5: The German Reform communities that sent rabbis to the Rabbinical Conferences of 1844 to 1846. Data from Lowenstein (1981).

It was in the cities where economic opportunities were greatest that Reform was initially most successful. The movement towards reform began in Berlin, where from the second-half of the eighteenth century onwards, there had been, amongst intellectual circles at least, a considerable degree social interaction between Jews and Christians centring on salon society.²¹

Timing: Reform was also temporally correlated with emancipation and economic growth as Figure 6 suggests. The first period of emancipation occurred during the Revolutionary period at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The second period accompanied the revolutions of 1848. The third and final period of Reform coincided with Jews being granted full civic rights in the Germany and Austria-Hungary began in the 1860s and was complete by the 1870s. Even where movements towards Reform preceded emancipation, as in the case of Jacobson and the *Sulamith*, these can be interpreted as products of the ‘mood of anticipation’ that had been created by Napoleon’s conquests: both were based in Dessau which joined Napoleon’s Confederation of the Rhine in 1807 (Sorkin, 1987).²²

The timing of Reform also coincided with an upsurge in the German economy and is therefore consistent with the model’s emphasis on the significance of outside economic opportunities. The gradual transformation of the economic and legal institutions of the ancien regime resulted in the ‘steady erosion of (Christian) guild privileges and monopolies, a growing freedom of choice of occupation, and with it a larger element of ... social mobility’ (Mosse, 1987, 31). Discriminatory barriers that had previously limited interaction between Jews and Christian were increasingly eroded by economic incentives to participate in a German economy that had begun to develop commercially, even prior to the beginning of industrialization around 1850. Thus emancipation occurred in an environment where γ was high. According to Schofer: ‘the economic opportunities of the post-1848 boom encouraged large numbers of Jews to leave the small-town economy and to enter the urban, national one, (Schofer, 1981, 81). Thus by mid-century, Jews in

²¹Goldfarb relates Rahel Varnagen’s reaction when she visited relatives outside Berlin: ‘[t]here was a chasm between the Jewish life she lived in Berlin and that of other places in the Ashkenazic world’. In Breslau ‘Moneyed folks lived cheek-by-jowl with peasants, as livestock wandered the ghetto’s street. She was awakened early in the morning by the noise of prayer at the synagogue next door. How is this life related to mine? she wondered’ (Goldfarb, 2009, 114). In the rural areas, traditional Judaism could remain intact for much longer. Meyer notes that in ‘the small towns, where most German Jews still lived at mid-century, the desire to avoid controversy generally led to the rejection of religious reforms’ (Meyer, 1997, 322). After the attempt to establish Reform Temple in Berlin failed, the movement spread to western Germany with the prospect of emancipation that followed in the wake of the French invasion of the 1790s.

²²Other motives outside the model were also at work. In cities like Frankfurt, Reform was driven by men like Samuel Holdheim (1806–1860) who were interested in attempting to reverse the reimposition of legal restrictions on Jews that had occurred across much of Germany in 1815. To obtain legal equality, they felt they needed to change the public perception of Judaism and to ‘project an image of being worthy of those rights’ (Liberles, 1985, 31). Similarly, David Fränkel urged Jews to abandon their traditional trades (which were perceived to be corrupting) and become farmers and agriculturalists (see Sorkin, 1987).

many parts of Germany had full economic rights, even if they did not yet possess full civil rights: ‘[i]nter-action with non-Jews, which had been the exception, often deliberately avoided, now became the inescapable norm’ (Pulzer, 1992, 5).

Sustained economic growth in Germany meant that there was space within society for Jews to move into new professions and ascend the class ladder. After 1850 German industrialization rapidly began to raise incomes and newly emancipated and often Reform-minded or secular Jews particularly benefited. As Rahden observes ‘the more the economy was liberalized, and the more trade and industry grew at the expense of agriculture, all the clearer was the road that beckoned to the hard worker, and the more chances emerged for the advancement of Jews from Central Europe . . . From the perspective of many German-speaking Jews in Central Europe, the long nineteenth century was a golden age of economic advancement’ (van Rahden, 2008, 27). All of this suggests that it was the prosperity of the German economy that pushed communities towards Reform.

Moreover, as in the model, it was the pressure imposed by economic integration which led religious communities to relaxing practices which the members of the community saw as barriers to economic and social interaction such as dietary laws and strict observance of Jewish holidays: ‘the need to be economically competitive forced many to do business on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath’ (Lowenstein, 1981, 256). These economic incentives had a powerful effect on the religiosity of Germany Jews. According to Meyer ‘[b]y 1871 the great majority of the German Jews were no longer observant of Jewish ritual law in its totality’ (Meyer, 1997, 352). This did not result in secularization but in a different form of religiosity. By the middle of the nineteenth century, it was possible for Jews to enter secular society whilst retaining their religion. Meyer observes that ‘[w]ithin the urban communities, which now boasted lavish new synagogues and attractive liturgical music, some Jews continued to worship in the old manner but most attended synagogues that installed elaborate organs and used a modified liturgy’ (Meyer, 1997, 352). Reform Judaism permitted urban and secularly educated Jews to retain their religion whilst also allowing them to profitably participate in social and economic spheres previously reserved for Christians.

The Orthodox Reaction

The possibility of exit enables the model to generate the possibility of cultural resistance. Specifically, emancipation in regions where economic development was not far advanced can prompt religious communities to increase τ . If emancipation occurs where economic opportunities remain limited, the religious authority may find it optimal to limit substitution toward market activities by increasing the community’s required level of strictness. Specifically, the model predicts that cultural accommodation has a non-monotonic relationship with economic development: partial emancipation or intermediate levels of development may induce cultural resistance.

Specifically, as λ increases, to keep low-attachment types in, the religious authority cannot

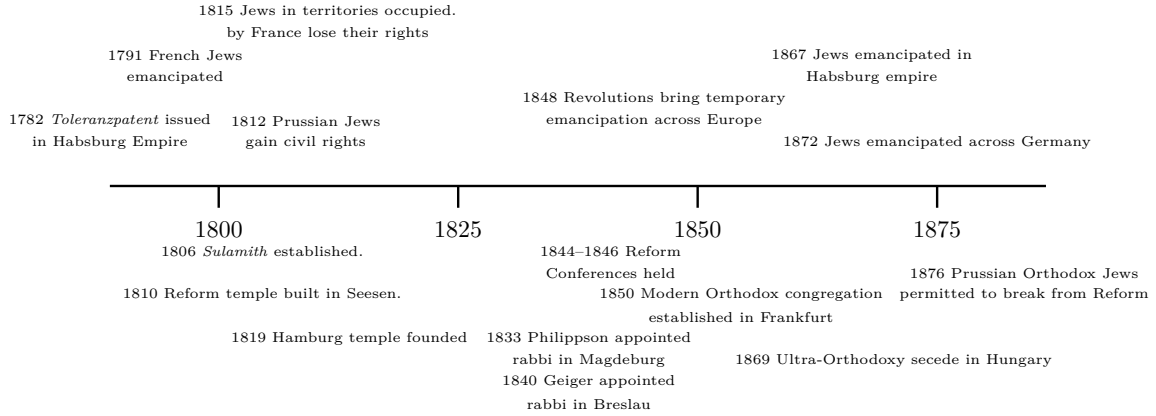


Figure 6: The timeline of emancipation, Reform and schism. Sources see text.

demand as strict prohibitions, so τ initially falls. But this is costly for the religious authority, and at some point it becomes worthwhile for the religious authority to let the low attachment types leave and to cater for the high attachment types at a higher level of τ . At intermediate levels of λ an increase in λ can lead to an increase in polarization.

The historical evidence is consistent with this prediction. Reform provoked opposition from high commitment types. Traditionalists tried to prevent innovation being introduced first in Hamburg and then in Frankfurt and as a result were labeled Orthodox or *Altgläubigen* (Old Believers) by their opponents.²³ Orthodox groups split away from the Reformers forming their own communities where possible. The Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox came to view Reform Jews almost as members of a different religion.²⁴

As Proposition 2 would predict, the traditionalists were not successful in Germany, and although in the 1850s, an updated and comparatively liberal version of traditional Judaism called modern or neo-Orthodoxy emerged, this movement can be interpreted as, along with Conservative Judaism, another variant of the general movement toward cultural accommodation.²⁵ The Orthodox reaction to Reform established itself in regions where emancipation occurred in the context of a stagnant economy. Traditionalists like Moshe Sofer (1762–1839), known as the Hatam Sofer, the most influential figure in Eastern European Orthodoxy, fled from Germany to Hungary so as to avoid being contaminated by developments there. Sofer insisted that the *halakha*—the religious laws—had to be obeyed absolutely and that there was no middle way between their strict observance and abandoning them. All aspects of the religious laws were equal and this meant that no law

²³The term Orthodox or ultra-Orthodox refers to belief but to practice. As we note, Orthodoxy itself was an innovation.

²⁴In Hungary, where the reformers were known as Neologs, Katz remarks that growing up in an ‘Orthodox family like mine, which was not especially extreme or fanatic,’ he ‘was taught to consider the Neologs as members of a different religious community . . . entry into a Neolog synagogue was considered no less taboo in our circles than a visit to a Catholic church’ (Katz, 1998, 231).

²⁵For more details on neo-Orthodoxy and Conservative Judaism see the appendix.

could be changed by the reformers: ‘the attempt to subject the fundamentals of Judaism to reconsideration was itself damnable’ (Vital, 1999, 116). Moreover ‘to the deterioration of tradition in Germany, his native country, and to the first signs of dissolution in Hungary, including his own community of Pressburg, his reaction was not one of accommodation and change but rather of preservation by a conscious enhancement of the tradition’ i.e. higher τ in our model (Katz, 1986, 29).

As in the model, the level of strictness was higher in the new Orthodox communities than it had been under traditional Judaism $\hat{\tau} > 1$. As Dawidowicz notes in *Eastern Europe before the nineteenth century*, ‘rabbinic Judaism had been more worldly, more tolerant, and more responsive to social change. After the *haskala*, rabbinic Judaism became conservative, inflexible, and repressive; hasidism, too, followed suit. The *haskala*’s extreme demands for religious reform caused rabbinic Judaism to lean more heavily than ever on past authority and rendered the rabbis more fearful of exercising independence in interpreting the Law. The smallest deviations from the proscribed way of life became magnified into enormous heresies. Sins of immorality and venality were outranked by sins of modernity, which became identified with atheism and even apostasy. Cutting one’s earlocks, wearing a coat shorter than the traditional style, reading “modern” books — these were the most pernicious sins of all’ (Dawidowicz, 1967, 81–82).

Ultra-Orthodoxy and Schism in Hungary: an analytic narrative

We can provide a richer picture of how this came about through a historical narrative of religious schism in Hungary — the ‘cradle of Ultra-Orthodoxy, the most un-enlightened, ardently anti-assimilationist Jews in Europe’ (Lupovitch, 2006, 4). The historical narrative provides evidence in support of the theory and also indicates where idiosyncratic historical developments outside of our model played an important role in shaping the emergence of ultra-Orthodoxy.

Hungary presents the best example of how this in practice. The experience of Jews in Hungary was distinct from their experience in either western or the eastern European.²⁶ The Hungarian economy remained agrarian and its society status-bound. Emancipation occurred in a different fashion in Hungary compared to elsewhere in Europe. Though the Habsburg empire had been the first central European state to begin the process of emancipation, after Joseph II the process subsequently stalled, and political momentum towards civil rights for Jews only got started again in the 1840s, when it became linked to a more general push for liberal and nationalist reforms in the empire. In Hungary, those advancing the cause of Jewish emancipation were therefore allies of liberal Magyar

²⁶One distinctive feature of Hungary is that the Jewish population there was relatively recent and composed of two different groups ‘in northeastern Hungary (including Transylvania, Carpatho-Russia, and eastern Slovakia) they were mainly migrants from Galicia; farther west, they were mainly migrants from Bohemia, Moravia, and far- western Hungary’ (Lowenstein, 1997, 67).

(Hungarian) reformers, who were pushing for national independence and opponents of the policies of the Habsburg monarchy.²⁷

Jews were given the prospect of emancipation when civic rights were granted by a Hungarian Diet in 1849, only for this to be snatched away from them with the victory of the Habsburg monarchy over the revolutionaries of 1848. A decade of repression followed during the period of Habsburg no-absolutism and conditions only began to become liberalized in 1859. Full emancipation was achieved in 1867, driven through by Baron József Eötvös. In this respect, the Jewish experience in Hungary differed from that in Western Europe because the Jews were not emancipated until comparatively late but ‘in sharp contrast to Jews in the Russian Empire, their civic status improved steadily during the nineteenth century’ (Lupovitch, 2006, 3).

Hungarian Jewry was influenced by the German Haskalah movement from the 1780s onwards. In fact, the Hungarian rabbinate were initially favourable towards the Jewish enlightenment movement: ‘[t]he boundaries between rabbinic and Haskalah culture were not sharply defined in Hungary and the Bohemian provinces. Significantly in these lands the Haskalah was welcomed without abandoning appreciation for traditional rabbinic culture’ (Silber, 1987, 113).²⁸ The social conditions in Hungary were so different to those that obtained in Germany that the Haskalah movement was not initially perceived as a threat to the traditional order. As late as 1840 ‘a large proportion of the Jewish population—about one-third—still lived in isolated clusters of one or two families in villages where the fabric of traditional life was left intact’ (Silber, 1987, 132). In Hungary, unlike in Germany, the institutions of traditional Judaism, the rabbinate and the yeshivot were flourishing.²⁹

The German Reform movement influenced Jews in Hungary via Vienna in the form of a mild variant of Reform—a shadow in Simon Dubnov’s words—of the German model (Dubnov, 1973, 126). This Viennese model of Reform was pioneered by Isaac Noah Mannheimer (1793–1865).³⁰ It was adopted in Pest in 1827, in Prossnitz in 1832, in Prague in 1832, and in Lemberg in 1846.

This Hungarian Reform movement became known as Neologism, and was led by Loeb

²⁷Thus, in 1840 the Lower Diet of Hungary passed a motion granting civic rights to Jews only for the Habsburg government to reject it in favour of opening up the ghettos of Pressburg and granting partial emancipation. And in the revolution of 1848 Jews fought alongside Magyars against the Habsburgs.

²⁸Thus Silber observes that ‘[o]ne would be hard pressed to come up with a Bohemian, Moravian, or Western Hungarian rabbi at the turn of the century who did not display an intellectual curiosity concerning “external studies,” be it medieval Jewish philosophy, grammar, the sciences, in fact all the shibboleths so dear to the radical Haskalah’s criticism of rabbinic culture’ (Silber, 1987, 113).

²⁹‘In some communities much of the autonomy of the previous century was maintained thanks to this same absence of state meddling; the rabbinate was in some respects much more powerful than it had been a hundred years before; the yeshivot flourished’ (Silber, 1987, 133).

³⁰Mannheimer was trained in Reform Temples in Copenhagen, Berlin, and Hamburg. In Vienna, however, ‘he was careful to tone down the radical aspects of German Reform (such as use of an organ, of priestly clothing, or the imitation of church songs), and to avoid any changes that contradicted *Schulhan Arukh*’ (Wistrich, 1990, 24).

Schwab, Leopold Löw and Meir Zipser rabbis from Pest, Szeged, and Rohonc. The Neologs did not advocate a radical reformation of Judaism along the lines suggested by many in Germany. Thus the ‘Neologs opposed any infringement on the fundamental religious laws—marital and ritual law, and especially the Jewish calendar, the Sabbath, and the holidays’ (Katz, 1998, 41). The changes advocated by the Neologs were largely confined to changes in the practice of prayer, educational reforms and the introduction of a vernacular liturgy. Like Reform in Germany, the Neolog movement was in part a response to economic change as ‘the modernization of Hungary, from the reform period onward . . . raised religious-halakhic problems which had no precedent under the former conditions . . . The difficulties confronting the urban merchant who wished to observe the religious laws were many times greater than those facing the villager’ (Katz, 1998, 43). The Neolog movement had support in western Hungary where the ‘majority were materially well situated, having rapidly established themselves in the commercial, financial and to some small degree—industrial life of the Hungarian state, particularly in its centers in Budapest and Pressburg’ (Adler, 1974, 120).

In terms of the model, the Neolog movement can be viewed as an attempt to reduce τ in the face of gradually improving outside options. Furthermore, in addition to the features stressed in our model, the Neolog movement was a response to the political situation in Hungary. The alliance between Magyar nationalists and Jews was fragile, and after 1848 it began to fragment. During the debates of 1848, Magyar nationalists led by Louis Kossuth opposed emancipation. Nationalists demanded that the Jews reform themselves in order to qualify for civic rights. This was an additional but external and artificial stimulus to reform: ‘a politically savvy nobility held out the promise of a tantalizingly near emancipation, but expressly made it conditional on religious reforms’ (Silber, 1987, 135–136).³¹ These religious reforms were combined with a policy of ‘Magyarization’—which was interpreted by traditionalists as the demand that they ‘completely renounced their national identity, and to merge with the Magyars’ (Dubnov, 1973, 303).

As Proposition 2 would have predicted, the Neolog movement provoked a backlash from conservative rabbis and the followers of Hatam Sofer. Hatam Sofer’s doctrine of isolation was influential after his death as his disciples ‘carried the idea of cultural asceticism and organizational separation to extremes scarcely contemplated by the master’ (Katz, 1986, 30). In particular Sofer influenced a group of still more radical rabbis who would break away to form ultra-Orthodoxy.³² The ultra-Orthodox would eventually break away from the rest of the Jewish community.

Sofer’s most influential disciple was Maharam Schick, a founder of Hungarian ultra-Orthodoxy who referred to the Reformers as “the enemies of God” and accused them of uprooting the Torah and the religious law (Ellenson, 1994, 45). He argued that Reform

³¹The nationalist leader Louis Kossuth made the following statement in 1844: ‘in what fashion could Jews prepare their full emancipation most effectively, I would reply, “with timely reforms”’ (Silber, 1987, quoted in 137).

³²According to his biographer ‘Germany had no Moses Sofer, hence apostasy made great progress and caused tremendous devastation’ (Erhmann, 1953, 131).

Jews had effectively ceased to be Jews and that contact between them and orthodox Jews had to be prevented: “Because they are akin to complete gentiles ... they and their sons and daughters are forbidden to us [for they] will certainly lead away your son” (quoted in Ellenson, 1994, 45–46). This backlash, which led to the formation of Hungarian ultra-Orthodoxy was a response to economic conditions, social discrimination, as in our model, but it was also shaped by specifically Hungarian factors. Furthermore, in order to understand the particular nature of the schism that took place in Hungary we have to explain not only why Reform and Orthodox variants of Judaism split from one another but also why the variant of Orthodoxy that emerged in Hungary was so radically conservative.

The split and schism came to a head over the subject of education. By the 1830s and 1840s, there was already a division in how education was provided: some Jews in the north and west of the country sent their children to Christian schools ‘to learn the rudiments of Magyar and German, arithmetic and Hungarian history’ whereas conservative Jews ‘avoided all Gentile schools as a source of contamination’ (Adler, 1974, 122).³³ During the 1850s, the Habsburg government introduced a series of educational reforms that instituted a system of public education and the Jewish communities were ordered to establish their own school. At the start of the 1860s, the Neolog movement appeared to be in a strong position because they, like the ascendent liberal Hungarian aristocracy, were in favour of education in the vernacular.

The introduction of compulsory secular education seemed to ‘strengthened the forces of reform’ (Silber, 1992, 28). But it also provided an opportunity for orthodox opponents of the Neologs for as Adler notes the ‘conservative majority of Hungary’s Jews inevitably resented and resisted this measure’ because it ‘meant loss of control over the most precious part of communal life: the responsibility for the next generation’ (Adler, 1974, 126). This divide continued to widen despite the fact that from a legal point of view all Jews remained members of a single religious community. Ellenson (1994) documents how during the 1860s, the religious leaders of ultra-Orthodoxy like Moses Schick cautioned his more extreme Orthodox colleagues not to antagonize the reformers unnecessarily because so long as they were all ‘compelled by law to be members of a unified community’ actions like banning sermons in the vernacular would be counterproductive (Ellenson, 1994, 47–48).

The ultra-Orthodoxy were strengthened by this development, which undermined the position of Esriel Hildesheimer (1820–1899), the effective religious authority of Hungarian Orthodoxy during the 1850s. He opposed Reform from the position of German Modern Orthodoxy. Hildesheimer’s moderate position provoked an attack from the conservative traditionalists. In 1865, a number of Orthodox rabbis openly attacked Hildesheimer’s programme: most prominent among them was Hillel Lichtenstein (1814–1891) and Akiva Yosef Schlesinger (1837–1922). This intermediate position did not satisfy those religious

³³According to Dubnow: the ‘intrusion of the Hungarian government into the internal life of the Jewish communities served to aggregate the long-standing cultural strife in the communities, and brought about a schism’ (Dubnov, 1973, 304).

leaders who were determined to let Reformers leave the community and to focus their attentions on the devote.

A further meeting held in 1866 marks the effective emergence of Hungarian Ultra-Orthodoxy. The meeting condemned a number of innovations and prohibited entering a synagogue in which there were sermons in the vernacular, choirs, where men and women were not separated, where the prayer platform was not in the center or where weddings had been held. This ultra-Orthodox movement represented only about twenty percent of the rabbis in Hungary but they had disproportionate influence.³⁴

When emancipation came in 1867, it was thus followed by educational reforms in 1868 that made Magyar as the sole language of instruction within Jewish schools. This movement, supported by the Neologs, but opposed by both Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox, gave Schick, and the other leaders of Hungarian Orthodoxy, an opportunity to create a religiously pure community isolated from those they viewed as heretics or ‘evil people’ (Ellenson, 1994, 52)

It presented an opportunity to ultra-Orthodox leaders to break with the Neologs, neo-Orthodox, and Orthodox Jews in 1869 and to form their own separate religious community. In engineering this break, the ultra-Orthodox used the rhetoric of the liberal reformers against them, arguing that the Neologs were a different religion and that by forcing them together the state was violating their freedom of religion. They also differentiated themselves as strongly from other forms of Orthodoxy, particularly German neo-Orthodoxy.³⁵ For the ultra-Orthodox Hidesheimer was ‘a far more dangerous threat than Reform since his very Orthodoxy lent a legitimacy to innovation which had been unhesitatingly denied to the reformers. The exhortations of the ultra-Orthodox were aimed mainly at the mass of vacillating, middle-of-the-road Orthodox who were increasingly tempted to compromise’ (Silber, 1992, 38). Thus the act of emancipation had produced the most anti-assimilationist Jewish community in Europe.

In their response to the threat of emancipation and Reform, the ultra-Orthodox made the Jewish religion more restrictive and onerous than it had even been previously. They elevated the importance of prohibitions within Judaism.³⁶ Jews who spoke German or French ceased to be Jews; in this sense, they held that being Jewish required one to reject the prospect of emancipation or assimilation. Schleisinger argued that a Jew who did not wear distinctive clothes or did not speak a different language ceased to be Jew (Satlow, 2006, 270). Lichtenstein went further than Schick in issuing categorical prohibitions on preaching in German and in condemning all ‘alien wisdom’. They viewed non-normative traditions, in dress and language for example as normative and binding. Schleisinger claimed that ‘secular studies are prohibited even—and this was unprecedented—if they are

³⁴There were about 70 ultra-Orthodox rabbis out of 350 rabbis in total. The majority of these 350 rabbis (280) were Orthodox and opposed to reform.

³⁵Whereas Sofer had worked with other traditionalists to oppose Reform, the ultra-Orthodox employed his rhetoric against less rigorous forms of Orthodoxy (Satlow, 2006, 269–270).

³⁶As a matter of principle “[i]t is good to elevate a prohibition” (Silber, 1992, 48).

necessary for one's livelihood' (Silber, 1992, 62). This distinguished the ultra-Orthodox from their Orthodox neighbours. 'Among the economically better-off Orthodox in western Hungary' Silber notes 'the dedication of the zealots, their readiness for self-sacrifice, evoked mixed feelings. Many no doubt harbored a sneaking admiration for the principled opposition of the ultra-Orthodox to compromise but were also repelled by their excesses' (Silber, 1992, 44).

As the model predicts, Ultra-Orthodoxy was successful in north-eastern Hungary, in Unterland, which was the most backwards and rural part of the country. Overall literacy rates in 1880 in Unterland were around half that of the rest of country (Silber, 1992, 42). These were areas in which economic opportunities remained limited. According to Silber: '[d]welling in the backwater of Unterland enabled one to take a tougher stance, one of resolute rejection rather than weak-kneed compromise' whereas 'a spirit of despondency and cultural despair prevailed among many of the Orthodox in the northwest' (Silber, 1992, 42). In this respect the areas in which ultra-Orthodoxy flourished were those that economically most closely resembled the Pale of Settlement. However, unlike in the Russian empire, the Orthodox in Hungary were directly threatened by a powerful Reform movement and by the prospect of full emancipation

The Persistence of Traditional Judaism in Russia

Our theory is consistent with the observation that in Russia traditional conservative forms of Judaism maintained themselves relatively easily. In Russia, although the Reform movement had some influence in the middle years of the nineteenth century, 'the cohesive force of external pressure and criteria of identifiability like a common language (Yiddish), folkways, etc., which safeguarded their participation, made them so community-minded that thoughts of separatist divisions hardly arose' (Katz, 1986, 16). The reasons for the success of traditional Judaism and the failure of Reform in Russia can be examined by considering the social and economic condition of the Jews in the empire of the tzars.

Russian Jews were far away from developments in Western Europe and Germany; as late as the late 1850s, the 'mass of Russian Jewry was still remarkably untouched by the Haskalah—to say nothing of the German Reform Movement—or by the myriad phenomenon associated with modernization' (Klier, 1995, 82).³⁷ The second reason for the failure of Reform was that discrimination remained high and secular opportunities remained limited (low α). Thus, even for those who were aware of Reform, the premises underlying the movement appeared inappropriate in a Russian context, and it was tainted

³⁷German-style Reformed services were introduced in Odessa, Warsaw, Riga and Vilna (Meyer, 1988, 197). As Dubnow puts it the 'breezes of Western culture had hardly a chance to penetrate to this realm, protected as it was by the double wall of Rabbinism and Hasidism. And yet here and there one may discern on the surface of social life the foam of the wave from the far-off West. From Germany the free-minded "Berliner," the nickname applied to these "new men," was moving towards the borders of Russia' (Dubnow, 1975a, 384).

from the start by its partnership with the repressive Tzarist bureaucracy. Furthermore, even after the regime liberalized following the death of Tsar Nicholas I in 1855, most Jews had scant economic or social incentives to embrace change their behaviour or beliefs because the economic incentive they had to integrate remained low. The reformer Max Lilienthal explained why the cultural reforms failed: ‘So long as the Government does not accord equal rights to the Jew, general culture will only be his misfortune’ (quoted in Dubnow, 1975*b*, 55).³⁸

5 Concluding Comments

This paper has developed a new model of religious polarization and applied to the cases studies of Reform and Ultra-Orthodox Judaism in nineteenth century Europe.

The model has two central predictions. First the level of economic development determines whether or not closed religious communities react to liberalization by adopting cultural accommodation or cultural resistance. Importantly this insight is micro-founded; it emerges out of the self-interested behaviour of local community leaders.

Second, our theory suggests that there is a non-monotonic relationship between development and cultural resistance. Religious extremism can emerge in the presence of liberal-minded reforms and/or economic development but it is most likely to occur in regions where there has been an intermediate level economic development and/or liberalization. The model is consistent with the observation made by many sociologists and historians of religion that religious fundamentalism has typically emerged in the presence of liberal-minded reforms or economic development (see Armstrong, 2000). The contribution of this paper is to refine this observation into a prediction by showing how the reaction of the religious community depends on a trade-off between the quality and quantity of its members.

The application of the model to the historical case study of Reform and ultra-Orthodox Judaism illustrates how similar public policies can produce polar reactions amongst religious communities.

³⁸Further details on the failure of Reform in Russia and its failure in Galicia can be found in the historical appendix.

Mathematical Appendix

Available on request.

Historical Appendix

This appendix provides additional details and references for the historical section of the paper. Section A contains an examination of the similarities and differences between Reform, Conservative, and ultra-Orthodox Judaism. Sections B and C outline reasons why Reform failed in eastern Europe.

A Modern Orthodoxy and Conservative Judaism

In addition to Reform there are two other relatively liberal variants of Judaism that arose in the mid-nineteenth century: Modern Orthodoxy and Conservative Judaism. Our model suggests that both these variants of Judaism were responses to emancipation and economic development in comparatively highly developed economic areas. The precise historical provenance of these movements and the source of their divergence from Reform is detailed in this appendix.

The formation of modern Orthodoxy is often dated to a meeting in Frankfurt-am-Main in 1850, called by rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, which first established a separate Orthodox congregation.³⁹ Modern Orthodoxy is typically portrayed as a reaction to Reform Judaism, which it was, but, as will become evident, it was itself as a form of cultural accommodation.

Both Reform and modern Orthodox Judaism believed in the need for change. Meyer (1988) notes that “[l]ike the Reformers, [Hirsch] sought to make peace with modernity . . . in the process he too “reformed” Judaism, although his principles were very different from those who identified themselves with the Reform movement; (Meyer, 1988, 77).

The doctrinal differences between Hirsch and the Reformers were subtle. Reform Judaism dispensed with traditional practices of sacrifices and atonement. Modern Orthodox thinkers provided a philosophical defence of both of these concepts so that traditional Jewish practice could be justified in the eyes of non-Jewish society. Modern Orthodoxy accepted many of the changes that had taken place in German Judaism during the first of the nineteenth century. They agreed that secularly trained rabbis were required. Leaders

³⁹Liberles (1985) argues that Isaac Bernays who was appointed as rabbi in Hamburg in 1821, and who opposed the reform movement there, should be regarded as the founder of neo-Orthodoxy rather than Hirsch.

like Hirsch wore modern clothes and spoke German. Modern Orthodoxy attempted to redefine traditional Judaism in terms that were defensible in modern terms: German Orthodox Jewish thinkers were as anxious as their liberal colleagues to learn from the scientific advances of the time.⁴⁰

On the subject of secular education, modern Orthodox rabbis disagreed with their Reform colleagues over the significance of secular learning. In theory they held that secular learning was necessarily inferior to studying the Talmud. However, in practice they justified themselves in a manner that demonstrated how great an impact secular learning and contemporary scholarship had made on them. ‘German Orthodox Jewish thinkers such as Wohlgemuth, Nobel, and Breuer, were as eager as their Liberal colleagues to articulate a philosophy of Judaism in modern philosophical terms. They were themselves acculturated members of German society . . . Because of this background, there was nothing alien or artificial to them about explaining and defending Judaism in contemporary philosophical — in this case Kantian — language’ (Ellenson, 1994, 26).⁴¹

Hirsch opposed Reform because it subjugated religion to the idea of progress: ‘For them, religion is valid only to the extent that it does not interfere with progress; for us, progress is valid only to the extent that it does not interfere with religion. That is all the different. But this difference is abysmal’ (Hirsch, 1819, 1980, 180). He argued that the Reformers, despite their intentions, were paving the way to apostasy because they demanded that Judaism satisfy external standards imposed by Christian society. This inevitably meant the Reform motto of religion allied to progress ‘negates the truth of what they call religion’ (Hirsch, 1819, 1980, 180). This difference was great from a theological point of view. However from a practical point of view and from the point of view of both traditional Judaism, and ultra-Orthodox rabbis, it appeared small and insignificant.

Closer still to Reform was Conservative Judaism. Associated with the rabbi Zacharia Frankel (1801–1875) Conservative Judaism broke with Reform over the use of Hebrew in prayer and other the preservation of other traditional rights. Conservative Judaism shared with the Reform the view that Judaism was mutable and capable of evolving with the times.

⁴⁰Hirsch argued that there was no conflict between progress properly understood and religion: ‘Judaism has never remained aloof from true civilisation and progress; in almost every era its adherents were fully abreast of contemporary learning and very often excelled their contemporaries. If in recent centuries German Jews remained more or less aloof from European civilisation the fault lay not in their religion but in the tyranny which confined by them by force within the walls of their ghettos and denied them intercourse with the outside world. And, thank goodness, even now our sons and daughters can compare favourably in cultural and moral worth with the children of families who have forsaken the religion of their forefathers for the sake of imagined progress’ (Hirsch, 1819, 1980, 179).

⁴¹‘By the second half of the century, almost every one of the traditional institutions of Germany Orthodoxy had been transformed: rabbis were increasingly university trained and preached sermons in German; order and decorum reigned in the synagogue; and the education vision was one of cultural synthesis where Western culture was viewed as a necessary complement to Jewish tradition’ (Silber, 1992, 32).

B The Failure of Reform in the Russian Empire

In Russia, there was no schism. Traditional Judaism remained intact. This is consistent with the predictions of our model: no emancipation, no schism.⁴² Other factors did, however, influence the development of Judaism in the Russian empire and these factors were partly response for the fact that when in the late nineteenth century, young Russian Jews did look for creeds that would enable them to interact with mainstream society they opted for revolutionary socialism or Zionism rather than Reform. In this section we first outline how state oppression effected developments within Judaism in the Russian empire. The reasons for the success of traditional Judaism and the failure of Reform in Russia can be examined by considering the social and economic condition of the Jews in the empire of the tzars.

Historically, Russian Tsars had maintained a policy of excluding all Jews from Russia but the expansion of the Russian empire, in the late eighteenth century, particularly the acquisition of large parts of Poland resulted in it possessing Europe's largest Jewish population by 1800. The new Jewish population was confined to an area known as the Pale of Settlement.⁴³ Initially, the population of the Pale were treated as a separate estate within the empire and permitted to preserve a considerable amount of self-governance. In the 1840s, however, this policy changed, and the Russian government began to try to integrate its Jewish population and Count Kiselev was appointed chair of a "Committee for the Transformation of the Jews" to carry out this programme. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, Kiselev's committee aimed at making the Jews more useful for the state and less 'harmful' to their neighbours (see Klier, 1995, 1–11). However, as Vital notes that '[t]he Russia to which the regime was striving was therefore manifestly not one into which the Jews could be fitted ... if they ever to be integrated they had first to be transformed (Vital, 1999, 148–149).

The Russian state also promoted a series of educational reforms under. These reforms, led by Count Sergey Uvarov, and inspired by the example of Joseph II in the Habsburg empire and of Prussia, established state schools for Jews and built two state-maintained rabbinical seminars. The state attempted to control both the education of the population at large and the training of individual rabbis. Uvarov allied himself with maskilm reformers within the Jewish community, invited a German rabbi, Max Lilienthal, to run the new system of schools. Uvarov stated that "the goal of educating the Jews consists in their gradual rapprochement with the Christian population, and the eradication of superstitions and

⁴²This finding is quantitatively important as the vast majority of the Eastern European Jews lived in the Russian empire. Stanislawski (1995) observes that as late 1871 after the emancipations of western and central Europe had been completed, 75 percent of world Jewry remained unemancipated (Stanislawski, 1995, 262).

⁴³The Pale of Settlement was established by Catherine II in 1791. On acquiring large tracks of Polish territory during the partitions, the government of the tzars decided to permit Jewish settlement in the underpopulated southern regions but prohibited Jewish settlement in Russia proper (see Baron, 1938, 53).

harmful prejudices instilled by the study of the Talmud” (Klier, 1995, quoted in). Together these measures were termed as ‘compulsory enlightenment’ (see Dubnow, 1975*b*).

However, the new schools failed to attract significant numbers of children.⁴⁴ Where state schools were open to Jews ‘they clung to *heder* and *yeshiva*’ (Dawidowicz, 1967, 28). Traditionalists, unsurprisingly opposed the reforms, which threatened their position ‘on every possible count: doctrine, the integrity of their own all but monopolist system of schooling, employment, social and moral authority’ (Vital, 1999, 154). Policies that had been successful in Germany ‘took on a totally different meaning within the Russian system’ (Lowenstein, 1984, 304). The reason for this was clear: in Germany, policies designed to assimilating the Jews aimed at ultimately integrating them as citizens with equal civil rights. Russia, however, remained a society of separate orders and lacked any concept of civic equality and absent ‘the possibility of such a final goal, there was little incentive for Russian Jews to make the often difficult changes which German Jews were asked to make to merit equality’ (Lowenstein, 1984, 305). As late as 1910, only 10 percent of Jewish children in the Pale of Settlement attended either private [non-religious] or state schools (Dawidowicz, 1967, 82). While those who had acquired education often found it impossible to return to traditional Judaism. Lev Ossipovich married into a very religious family at an early age. He recall that ‘in Kediany, where my wife’s parents lived, superstition and prejudice were so severe that I was forced to give up these “extraneous” activities and devote myself body and soul to Talmund again’ (Dawidowicz, 1967, 157). Ossipovich divorced his wife and eventually became the first Jew to attend a Russian university.

A complementary reason for the failure of Kiselev and Uvarov’s policies was the fact that they were tied to increasingly heavy state impositions on Jewish communities. High taxes were often levied on specific Jewish communities and in 1839 a special tax was imposed on traditional Jewish dress and many distinctive Jewish practices, such as wearing sidelocks, were prohibited. Kosher meat was taxed as were Sabbath candles. The system of local government based on the *kahal*, which granted Jewish communities considerable legal autonomy was abolished in 1844. The age at which Jews could marry was regulated and there were attempts to draft those Jews were who deemed ‘useless’ in craft guilds (Klier, 1995, 4-5). The most onerous policy was the introduction of military conscription from which Jews had traditionally always been exempt. The regular age of conscription was 18 or 20; Jews were conscripted at the age of 12, serving in cantonist battalions until they reached the age of 18, at which they they would begin the regular 25 years of service

⁴⁴In 1855, ‘when Jewish state schools had been established in almost every major town within the Pale, seventy institutions in all, the entire student body still numbered no more than c.2,500—a minute segment of the Jewish school-age population’ (Vital, 1999, 155-156). At the same time approximately 70,000 Jewish children attended Jewish schools (Klier, 1995, 8). This number would have been lower still had not admittance to the school provided a virtual guarantee of avoiding military service. Klier (1995) notes that many elements of the system were anomalous: ‘[a]lthough a major purpose of the schools was to wean the Jews away from the Talmud, Uvarov feared that Jews would boycott the system if it was stripped of Talmudic studies. Thus study of the Talmud, albeit under strict governmental supervision, was studied in the curriculum’ (Klier, 1995, 7).

(Vital, 1999, 159). The policy was viewed by both the state and the Jewish communities themselves as a means to convert Jews to Christianity: military service became ‘virtually synonymous with apostasy’ (Klier, 1995, 3).⁴⁵

As in our model, the success of emancipation and Reform were closely linked. As late as the late 1850s, the ‘mass of Russian Jewry was still remarkably untouched by the Haskalah—to say nothing of the German Reform Movement— or by the myriad phenomenon associated with modernization’ (Klier, 1995, 82). Even for those who were aware of Reform, the premises underlying the movement appeared inappropriate in a Russian context and it was tainted from the start by its partnership with the repressive Tzarist bureaucracy. Even after the regime liberalized following the death of Tsar Nicholas I in 1855, most Jews had scant economic or social incentives to embrace change their behaviour or beliefs.

Hopes of Jewish emancipation were also subtly raised during a brief period in the 1860s, during which many of the impositions of Nicholas I’s reign were relaxed, and small number of Jewish industrialists prospered. And during this decade a Russian reform movement did gain some momentum, ‘incensed against the obsolete form of Jewish life which obstructed all healthy development; against the fierce superstition of the hasidic environment, against the charlatanism of degenerating Tzaddikism, against the impenetrable religious fanaticism’ (Dubnow, 1975*b*, 211). However, this window of liberalism was so short that its principle effect may only have been to raise Jewish hopes before dashing them. Frankel observes that ‘the Jewish people in Russia had been molded far less completely by the emancipation era’ so that once emancipatory policies had been revised they ‘moved, as it were, directly from a preliberal to a postliberal stage of development, from medieval community to projects for national revival, from a religious to a social secular messianism’ (Frankel, 1981, 2).

Moreover, 1860s reformers in the Jewish community retain their alliance with the state and encouraged the state to interfere in the life of the Jewish community for example, by censoring hasidic books. As Dubnow commented ‘the “enlightenment” propagated by these Government underlings did not win the confidence of the orthodox masses who remembered vividly how official enlightenment was disseminated by the Government of Nicholas I during the era of juvenile conscription’ (Dubnow, 1975*b*, 211–212).

Under Alexander III (1881-1894) emancipation proceeded no further and many measures of liberalization were reversed. Emigration increased in the 1880s as a series of pogroms convulsed Russian Jewry and considerable numbers converted to Christianity in order to attend university or obtain jobs in the imperial bureaucracy but the vast majority of the large Jewish population within the empire remained wedded to traditional forms of

⁴⁵‘It created a small, but not insignificant, class of Jews who, while remaining technically of their ancestral faith and people, had grown away from both. Their language, and to some extent their ways as well, were now Russian. Even those who had managed secretly or even openly to stick to their Judaism, were now Russian. Even those who had managed secretly or even openly to stick to their Judaism, were likely to have acquired an outlook that was loosely secular or marginally receptive to Christianity—having been exposed to it for so long—in a way that to other Jews were normally foreign’ (Vital, 1999, 161).

Judaism or to Hasidism. Certainly a ‘movement dedicated to purely religious or theological problems, groping for new foundations with reference to the traditions did not evolve on the Russian scene’ (Katz, 1986, 17).⁴⁶

C Hasidism and the failure of Reform in Galicia

Haskahal and Reform failed to succeed in large parts of the Habsburg monarch for similar reasons that explain its failure in Russia. As in Russia, the efforts of Maskilim reformers like Nachman Krochami (1785–1840) and Joseph Perl (1773–1839), was irretrievably implicated in the attempts that the Austrian state made to germanize the population. Another factor which, though it played a part both in Russia and in the Habsburg empire, was particularly significant in the Hasburg province of Galicia was Hasidism.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries East European Judaism became increasingly influenced by the mystical tradition of the Kabbalah. This tradition reached its fullest development in Hasidism. Hasidism was originally a fringe movement, led by itinerant holy men and opposed to traditional rabbinical Judaism, which spread rapidly across Galicia, Poland, the Ukraine and White Russia during the eighteenth century (see Satlow, 2006).⁴⁷ Hasidism was a broad-based folk movement that drew and incorporated many of the popular beliefs of the Jews of East Europe. In those parts of Eastern Europe where Hasidism predominated, reformers did not have only to oppose the traditional rabbis, they also had to confront a popular social movement opposed in principle to the Haskahal. Hasidism was fundamentally opposed to secular learning and enlightenment because of ‘their kabbalistic Weltanschauung . . . every secular area of inquiry is opposed to God, as it originates in hokhmah hizonit (external science) which comes from *sitra ahra* (other side), and is thus essentially empty and false’ (Mahler, 1985, 15).⁴⁸

The second factor that made Galicia infertile ground for reform was the Austrian state. The Edit of Toleration of 1782 was accompanied by a number of measures that were intended to transform the economic and social conditions of the Jewish population. Whatever their original intent, subsequently these policies became increasingly repressive and over time they were subordinated to the fiscal interests of the state. For example, in 1745–1785 Jews were forbidden to trade, operate taverns, lease mills, collect tolls. In 1789

⁴⁶An additional factor for the failure of the Haskahal was that the intellectual environment of Russia was inhospitable to the concept of a reformed religion because Orthodox Christianity ‘left no room for a religious faith whose authoritative texts had been shown to be the product of historical evolution’ (Meyer, 1988, 200).

⁴⁷A classic account of Hasidism is Buber (1960). Details of Hasidic practice are provided by Wertheim (1992).

⁴⁸Hasidism was initially a protest movement against traditional rabbinism. Dubnow noted that ‘rabbinism and Hassidism concurred only in one aspect : in their hatred for the new enlightenment, the *Haskalah*, that was beginning to infiltrate from Germany, from the circle of Moses Mendelssohn and of the “Berliners.”’ (Dubnow, 1971, 407). By the nineteenth century they had become effective allies in opposing the Maskilim.

Jews ban from villages unless they worked in handicrafts or agriculture. Overall, ‘the bungled efforts of Josephinian officialdom aimed at their ‘productivization’ . . . simply led to the loss of livelihood of much of the rural Jewish population in Galicia and its growing proletarianization’ (Wistrich, 1990, 18).

A special tax on ritually slaughtered meat was introduced in 1784 and increased several times in 1780, 1810 and 1816 until kosher meat costs twice as much as non-kosher meat. In 1797 a candle tax was introduced and then trebled over the next twenty years. Similarly, taxes on marriages, residency, and synagogues were increased and implemented by the policy. The state ‘assumed the role of guardian of Jewish piety in order to increase its financial exploitation of the Jews. Thus, the eating of nonkosher meat was punishable by fine or imprisonment, and any Jewish woman who did not light Sabbath candles was subject to arrest, force labor, and even whipping’ (Mahler, 1985, 5).

The Austrian government accompanied this economic exploitation with a ‘concerted attempt to germanize its Jew by attempting to eradicate their national distinctiveness, by, among other measures, destroying the Yiddish language’ (Mahler, 1985, 5). This aim was shared by the Maskilim who in their writings and teachings promoted German and Hebrew and denigrated Yiddish. The Maskilim drew support from the commercial centers of Brody, Lemberg, and Tarnopol but had little, if any, support in rural parts of the country where the Austrian government estimated that six out of seven Jews adhered to the Hasidism. The Maskilim predominantly ‘belonged to the class of Jews that did not suffer national oppression, but prospered as a result of the general economic expansion in Austria and Russia’ (Mahler, 1985, 54). As in Germany, the Maskilim promoted the cause of education. Perl established a school in Tarnopol where German was the language of instruction (Mahler, 1985, 40). In Galicia, ‘education was regarded as a means of proving to the nations that the Jews were also a people of learning and culture and that not all Jews were to be identified with the fanatical, ignorant, and superstitious Hasidim’ (Mahler, 1985, 37). Religious reformers in Galicia focused less on reform doctrine or practice because their main aim was reducing the support enjoyed by Hasidism. Few rejected the Torah as a source of Jewish law: most ‘also sanctified the very essence of the rabbinic tradition. Most of them did not go beyond expressing hostility to Hasidism, to its faith in zaddikim and to the superstitions that were widespread among the people’ (Mahler, 1985, 41).

A further reason for the failure of reforms is that a defining characteristic of the Maskilim was ‘loyalty to the absolutist monarchy, which was seen as the means whereby Jews could become integrated into the civil life of the country’ (Mahler, 1985, 53). The educational policy of the government was a failure. In 1830, 25 years after they had been allowed into Galician state schools, only 408 Jewish pupils were enrolled out of a total population of almost 300,000 (Dawidowicz, 1967, 18). As in Russia the combination of a lack of economic opportunities for educated Jews and a botched project of education Reform undermined the aims and ambitions of the Maskilim. The Hasidim, on the other hand, drew their strength from their opposition to the Austrian state. The Hasidim viewed

‘the germanizing policy as but another element of the Austrian system of oppression and fiscal exploitation of the Jews’ (Mahler, 1985, 15). They defended Yiddish and the old ways customs and acquired a reputation for defending the interests of the poor. Hasidic solidarity was famed. According to the Austrian commissioner for Brody in 1827: ‘The Hasidim are bound to each other with heart and soul’ (quoted in Mahler, 1985). This solidarity enabled them to evade many of the most onerous duties and restrictions imposed upon by the state such as the restriction of the number of marriages. Thus ‘Hasidism was a significant factor in uniting the Jewish masses in Galicia to resist the oppression and fiscal exploitation of Austrian absolutism’ (Mahler, 1985, 23). Over time, the remaining non-Hasidic traditionalists, the Misnagdim, who had initially strongly opposed the movement, were forced to join with them in opposition to the state: ‘the oppressive measures taken by the Austrian government, together with the necessity of consolidating all conservative religious forces in the face of the Haskalah, resulted in the virtual triumph of Hasidism in Galicia by the middle of the nineteenth century’ (Mahler, 1985, 25).

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