



A Landmark Synagogue Story **MUSEUM AT ELDRIDGE STREET**

ACADEMIC ANGLES





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The Eldridge Street Synagogue is a National Historic Landmark, the first major house of worship built by East European Jews in America. When it opened in September of 1887 it was an experiment, a response to the immigrants' desire to practice Orthodox Judaism, and to do so in America, their new Promised Land. Today the Eldridge Street Synagogue is the only building on the Lower East Side—once the largest Jewish city in the world—earmarked for broad and public exploration of the American Jewish experience. The Museum at Eldridge Street researches the history of the building, uncovering new ways and stories to bring the building and its history to life. Learning about the congregants and their history ties us to broader trends on the Lower East Side and in American history.

To help explore these trends, the Museum at Eldridge Street asks leading scholars to lend their expertise. In the following essays, based on lectures they delivered at the Synagogue, they use the Eldridge Street Synagogue as a springboard to discuss the migrations, practices, and encounters of the immigrants, as well as the preservation of the building.

MIGRATION

The migration theme looks at the places from which the synagogue's founding members came; the places they went to after the Lower East Side; and the mobility of Jewish immigrants, and of congregations, across the United States.

Daniel Soyer is an Associate Professor of History at Fordham University, where he teaches American immigration and ethnic history.

Deborah Dash Moore is the Frederick G.L. Huetwell Professor of History and Director of the Frankel Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

PRACTICE

The theme of practice explores how American norms shaped synagogue services at the turn of the twentieth century.

Riv-Ellen Prell is Professor and Chair of the American Studies Department at the University of Minnesota.

Jeffrey S. Gurock is the Libby M. Klaperman Professor of Jewish History at Yeshiva University.

ENCOUNTERS

The theme of encounters explores the impact of New York City upon immigrants; the impact of the immigrants upon the city.

Jeffrey Shandler is a Professor of Jewish Studies, Rutgers University.

Tony Michels is the George L. Mosse Professor of American Jewish History at the University of Wisconsin.

PRESERVATION

The theme of preservation explores the physical design of the synagogue and influential architectural styles and trends, situating the Eldridge Street Synagogue among other eminent or distinctive houses of worship. We also trace the effort to save and restore our landmark structure, becoming along the way a model for reclamation projects across the country.

Samuel Gruber is an architectural historian and cultural heritage consultant involved in a wide variety of documentation, research, preservation, planning, publication, exhibition and education projects.

Marilyn Chiat, Ph.D. is a retired faculty member in the University of Minnesota's Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies and has authored many books and articles on religious art and architecture. She is the historical consultant to the Friends of B'nai Abraham, an organization dedicated to the restoration and reuse of the historic synagogue in Virginia, Minnesota.



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MIGRATIONS

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GOLDENE MEDINE, TREYFENE MEDINE: JUDAISM SURVIVES MIGRATION TO AMERICA

DANIEL SOYER

Standing on the corner of Canal and Eldridge Streets on the Lower East Side of New York, one can glimpse three buildings that serve as monuments to contending forces within the immigrant Jewish community at the turn of the twentieth century. In the distance, where Canal meets East Broadway, looms the Forward Building, former home of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, the world's greatest Yiddish newspaper and bastion of immigrant Socialism. Closer on Canal the Jarmulowsky Bank building stands, a monument to immigrant capitalism. Halfway up the block on Eldridge sits the grand Eldridge Street Synagogue, a reminder that traditional Judaism survived the Atlantic crossing to vie with Jewish radicalism and American materialism for the hearts and minds of the Jewish immigrants and their children.

For the Jews of Eastern Europe, America was the *goldene medine*—the golden land—a place of plentiful jobs, material prosperity, and physical security. But for some, it was also the *treyfene medine*—the impure/non-kosher land—where all sorts of pressures pushed newcomers to give up their traditional religious beliefs and practices. From 1783, when none other than patriot Haym Salomon tried to dissuade an uncle from coming to America because there was “*veynig yidishkayt*” (little Jewishness) here, pious observers warned that by migrating to America Jews risked their spiritual health. In turn-of-the-twentieth century Eastern Europe, rabbis as great as the *Hafetz Hayim* (Rabbi Israel Meir Kagan) tried to stem the growing tide of migration, to little avail.



Eldridge Street Synagogue, Forward, Jarmulowsky's Bank

Pious Jews were not the only ones to see in migration a threat to religious tradition. In the nineteenth century, Roman Catholic leaders, too, expressed concern that by crossing the ocean, migrants removed themselves from the authority of the church and thereby endangered their souls. Irish, German, and Italian priests and nuns set up missions in the immigrant neighborhoods of American cities—as if they were remote corners of the world peopled by heathens in need of the gospel. Not only the tribulations of migration and resettlement—the long voyage, the lack of clergy, the difficult struggle to make a living—but also the very things that immigrants sought in America—abundance, freedom, mobility—seemed to religious leaders of many faiths to be secularizing influences.

In retrospect, though, many historians question the pious condemnation of America. While some equate modernity with secularization and America with modernity, and thus agree that religion was a waning influence on immigrant life, others have argued the opposite: that the uncertainties of migration and resettlement often brought immigrants *closer* to God and to their faith traditions. On the way over, travelers appealed to God to help them through their trials (even as formal rituals were neglected by necessity). Once settled, immigrants were influenced by American habits of congregationalism, often taking the initiative to build religious institutions even before the arrival of clergy. Those institutions frequently became the skeletal frames that gave shape to ethnic communities. Indeed, over time, religion came to define ethnicity, surviving as it usually did peculiarities of language, national sentiment, old-world regional differences, and even common descent.

The classics of American Jewish history, though, come down squarely on the side of the rabbis, ironically since historians Moses Rischin and Irving Howe hardly share the rabbinical agenda. Though they agree that America was indeed a *treyfene medine*, Rischin's *The Promised City*, and Howe's *World of Our Fathers* celebrate the decline of traditional religion and its replacement by a progressive and secular ethnic culture. Rischin only discusses Jewish religious institutions and practice in the context of their retreat in the face of commercial opportunities, Americanizing pressures, and radical critiques. His section entitled "Religion at Half Mast" covers fewer than four pages, and non-Jewish holidays from May Day to St. Patrick's Day receive as much attention as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Howe

acknowledges that most immigrants had a sentimental attachment to tradition and recognizes religion as part of the perennial background noise in the immigrant community. But he still contends that "the Lower East Side was a secular community. It could not be otherwise." The importance he attributes to the various expressions of Jewish identity can be gleaned from the attention he pays them: thirteen pages on religious Judaism, seventy-two on the labor and Socialist movements, 137 on secular Yiddish culture.

Rischin and Howe certainly have a point: traditional Judaism was on the defensive at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. But tradition's retreat was not all the result of migration. Nor was it America's fault. Rather, tradition was under attack from within the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe, and many immigrants had been wholly or partly secularized before they even began their journeys. The nineteenth-century Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) called for the modernization of Jewish religious forms. Jewish radicals were even more hostile to religion, which they associated with social hierarchies within the community. Some Jewish women were angry at not having been given any education at all, while some Jewish men resented the sort of education they had been given in *heder*, the traditional elementary school.

Migration and resettlement further eroded religious observance. Hunger drove emigrants to compromise on *kashrut* when kosher food was not available *en route*. People might find themselves with no other choice but to travel on the Sabbath. Then, too, the absence of rabbinical authority and the watchful eyes of family and neighbors allowed those whose religious commitment was already weakening to take the final step in abandoning observance altogether. Arrival in America strengthened this sense of freedom, adding to it the possibility that one could define oneself as one wished, not as others dictated. Commercial entertainments such as the Yiddish theater and the ubiquitous dance-halls competed with the synagogue for attention, and often won. The editors of the Yiddish press competed with the rabbis for authority, and they often won as well. Finally, economic necessity forced many immigrants to work on the Sabbath, whether they wanted to or not.

There is therefore truth to the idea that religion was in retreat, not only in terms of the number of the observant, but also in terms of the power of religious rhythms to regulate communal and individual lives.

And yet...Judaism survived in America to a far greater extent than secularist historians like Rischin and Howe acknowledge. A minority of immigrants strove mightily to maintain their piety. On the trip over, they either found kosher food or limited themselves to bread, potatoes, and tea. Once here, they established synagogues and yeshivas, patronized kosher butchers, and made time to study Talmud in the study halls. Gradually, they formed an Orthodox Jewish milieu that sustained them in their kosher and Sabbath-observant way of life. Most immigrant congregations met in storefronts or lofts. A few, whose members had begun to move up in the world, purchased old church buildings or took over synagogues left behind by German Jews moving out of the neighborhood. The Eldridge Street



Eldridge ark or bimah

Synagogue was the first synagogue in New York built from scratch by East European immigrants who had done so well for themselves that they could afford to proclaim the continuing presence of Orthodox Judaism through a beautiful and imposing structure.

Pious Jews often had to struggle within their own families, with spouses, siblings, children, even sometimes parents, who wanted to give up the old ways—to eat without the blessings, to neglect the Sabbath, or to keep the business open on Saturdays. They imposed their traditionalist viewpoints on their family members with varying degrees of success. Some simply had to look the other way as the



The success of this store—Kalman Paston's Judaica shop—at 18 Eldridge Street testifies to the way in which Jewish immigrants maintained Jewish rituals and customs.

Sabbath was desecrated in their own homes. But others managed to bring their families along with them. Only a small minority of Jewish children received any sort of Jewish education at all, but a minority of that minority were thoroughly educated in Orthodox day schools in which the old values were respected and perpetuated.

The most difficult challenge facing the Sabbath observant was making a living. The normal workweek was six days long, even in Jewish-owned factories, and Sunday blue laws forced stores to choose between losing two days of trade each week or staying open Saturday. A vow not to work on the Sabbath made it difficult to find and keep a job or to maintain a business. But some figured out how to do it. They peddled on the street; they accepted the loss of business in their stores; or they found jobs in the factories, mostly the smaller and more unstable sweatshops, that did close for the Sabbath. Ultimately, through their determination, they constructed an infrastructure of businesses and institutions through which they could make an adequate living without compromising their religious principles.

Probably the majority of immigrants were more than willing to compromise on strict Orthodoxy, but at the same

time rejected the overt secularism of the radicals. They partook of the commercial culture that America offered, but also found time to go to synagogue and to observe holidays. In the freedom of America, a wide continuum of religious observance and attitudes emerged. Some attended synagogue only on Yom Kippur, living completely secular lives the rest of the year. Many gathered with extended family on Rosh Hashanah and Passover. Others attended synagogue weekly, lit candles and said *Kiddush* on Friday evenings, and kept kosher at home (even as they might violate the Sabbath rules in other ways and eat non-kosher food outside the home). Especially in the difficult early years, some immigrants attended services and said *Kiddush* on Friday evenings, only to go to work on Saturday morning—a compromise they justified by its necessity. But even as the realm of necessity shrank, the immigrants and their children retained of the tradition the elements that made most sense to them and that did not threaten their integration into the American cultural mainstream.

In America, the very conditions of voluntarism that allowed some to give up on religious Judaism altogether allowed others to elaborate a variety of new Jewish options. Few East European immigrants were attracted to Reform Judaism, which seemed to them inauthentic and foreign, the creation of upper class German- and English-speakers. But Eastern Europeans, and more especially their American-raised children (some of whom did join the Reform movement), invented forms of Judaism that met their needs as modern and increasingly middle-class Americans. The Modern Orthodox and Conservative movements provided their members with forms of observance with recognizable kinship with East European tradition, but at the same time adapted them to American cultural and aesthetic norms. Above all, they allowed their members to both affiliate Jewishly and to participate fully in American society.

Within those movements, individuals developed all sorts of syntheses of religious and secular thought and practice. Not all those who attended services or lit Sabbath candles believed literally in the words they were reciting, or even in God at all. But in maintaining some level of Jewish practice, they were affirming their connection with Jews in other times and places, with their own parents, and with a tradition they felt was theirs. And then there were social reasons. As the famous anecdote attributed to various authors puts it: A child asks his father why he goes to synagogue when he does not believe in God. “You see my friend Moyshe

Goldberg over there?” the father replies. “Moyshe goes to *shul* to talk to God. I go to *shul* to talk to Moyshe.”

A century later, the staying power of Jewish religious identification has proven stronger than that of the secularist options that Rischin and Howe thought so vibrant within the immigrant community. Where Jewish Socialism and secularist Yiddishism have become increasingly marginal, the synagogue remains at the heart of Jewish communal and cultural life. The synagogue has become central even to Jews who do not believe in the traditional articles of Jewish faith. Religion has indeed become the skeleton of Jewish ethnicity in America, even if it has also been infused with values gleaned from secular sources. The resurgence of Orthodoxy in recent decades has drawn more attention to those “Jewish Jews” (as they called themselves) who kept alive the flame of traditional Judaism through the challenges of migration and resettlement. The Eldridge Street Synagogue is their monument.

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THE MEANINGS OF MIGRATION: AMERICAN JEWS, ELDRIDGE STREET, AND NEIGHBORHOODS

DEBORAH DASH MOORE

Usually when we speak of American Jews' migration in the modern world, we place a prefix before the term and discuss either *immigration* to the United States or *emigration* from Eastern Europe. While the trip from the Old World to the New certainly remains a core experience shaping Jewish life in the United States, smaller journeys across rivers and even just to new neighborhoods continued to influence how Jews thought about themselves and the communities they created. Indeed, one of the amazing characteristics of American Jewish life is the ongoing relevance of migration. Arriving in the United States was never quite enough for Jews. No sooner had they settled on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, home at its peak to 75% of all New York Jews, than they picked up and moved. In fact, within less than a decade after raising funds to build a magnificent synagogue on Eldridge Street, several key leaders had decamped for Harlem and were doing their best to convince the congregation to open a branch there. Their loyalty to the Eldridge Street synagogue did not prevent them from leaving the immigrant neighborhood for greener pastures; rather they expressed their dedication to Kahal Adath Jeshurun by urging it to follow them. Community and congregation, they seemed to be saying, should come in the wake of individual decisions to migrate. This would become standard operating procedure for American Jews throughout the twentieth century. But in the early decades, moves often occurred within the same area as families responded to a rise or decline in their fortunes. No wonder Bella Spewack, who had a successful career as a writer of Broadway shows, called her childhood memoir, *Streets*. In it she chronicled her many moves from one tenement to another on the blocks of the Lower East Side. However, Bella and most Jews dreamed of moving out and by that they



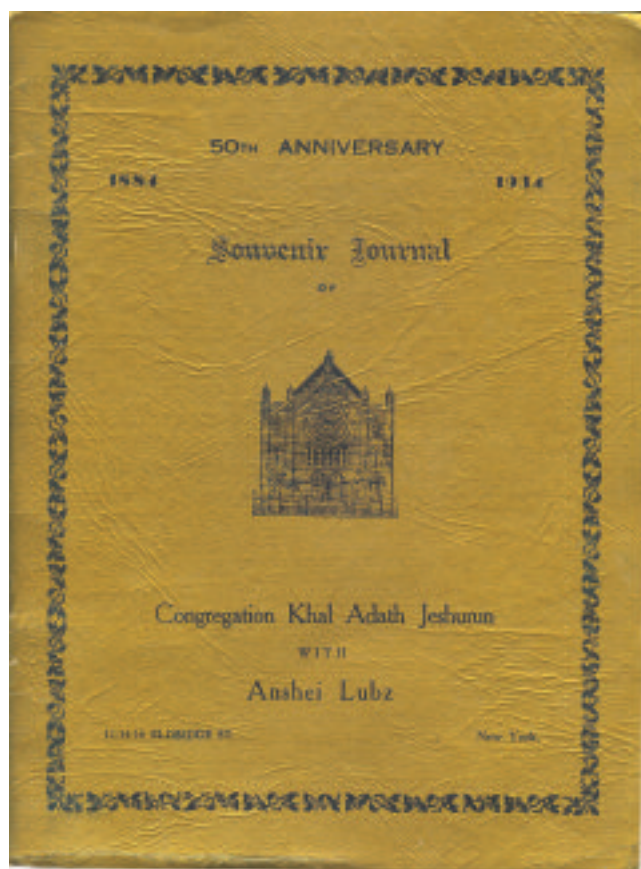
The Eldridge Street Synagogue opened in 1887; by 1900 many of its founding members had moved uptown.

meant moving up, going from an immigrant slum to a middle class section of the city, not just from a cold-water tenement to a modern apartment with indoor plumbing.

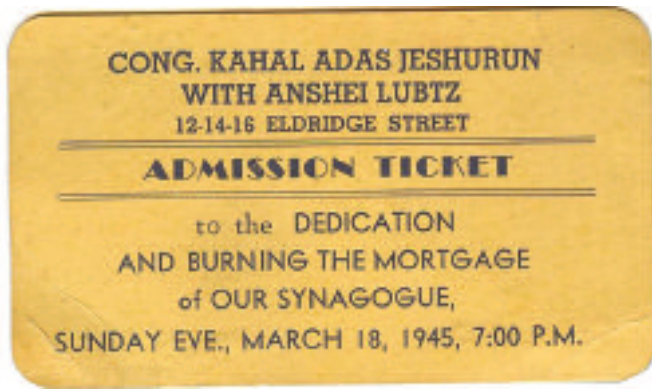
These dreams seemed to have started before Jews ever boarded a boat for New York harbor. They yearned for new possibilities even as they fled poverty, persecution, and declining fortunes. Many immigrants started their migration with a more modest move, from a village to a town, or a

town to a city. Yet this initial dislocation took them away from aspects of the familiar: landscape, school, community, and, of course, extended family. It brought Jews into new networks of friends, co-workers, peers, that is, people like themselves who were also newcomers and who shared bonds forged through ideology, work, and religion. The replacement of family ties with friendships, of intergenerational connections with a single generational cohort of young people, inducted Jews into a peer society. Living in a world of peers, who share similar aspirations, introduced Jews to both choice and chance. Yet much remained familiar: language, status as a Jew, family pressures and responsibilities, gender roles. Of the many who chose to move to burgeoning cities in the Pale of Settlement, to explore new towns like Odessa or Bialystok, far fewer decided to take the more fraught and expensive journey to the United States. Yet of the roughly 2 million—or one third of the Jewish population of Eastern Europe—who came during the era of mass immigration interrupted by World War I, the vast majority landed in New York City and settled, even if briefly, on the Lower East Side. They carried in their baggage an urge to move that never quite left them, a desire that they would transmit to their children. Migration seemed to be an answer to life's problems: to poverty, to prejudice, to violent neighbors, even to getting old.

I spent a year teaching at the Hebrew University on a Fulbright in the mid-1980s that made me realize just how distinctively American was this itch to migrate. My students couldn't understand why Americans, let alone Jews, would want to leave a perfectly nice neighborhood where their parents lived for a new one. Why move away? Their persistent questions forced me to explain. Migration meant mobility, and mobility meant socio-economic mobility, or a chance to set out on one's own to make something of one's self as the old myth of the frontier had implied. Mobility also connected with another powerful American myth: the idea of an errand into the wilderness that would lead to the creation of an ideal society, a city on a hill. It wasn't just individual ambition, although that played a role. Collective dreams propelled Americans, including Jews, to move to new city neighborhoods, to start cooperative housing projects, to migrate to the suburbs, to build gated retirement communities. Yet I had to admit that some immigrants and their children resisted these temptations. Italians, for example, stayed put and remodeled tenements into middle class housing.



In the 1930s the congregation held an anniversary party to launch a fundraising drive to pay off the mortgage on the synagogue. In March of 1945, they held a party to celebrate their success, and happily burnt the mortgage, whose remnants are kept in this jar.



This ticket gained entry to the March 1945 party celebrating the burning of the mortgage.

Catholics generally preferred not to forsake their parish church, unlike Jews who easily picked up a portable Torah scroll and built a new congregation around it. Catholics maintained a strong sense of sacred space within parish boundaries and a church hierarchy that made decisions often against abandoning substantial investments in real estate and infrastructure. By contrast, Jewish congregationalism empowered wealthy members and encouraged a mobility that left poorer Jews behind.

Eldridge Street Synagogue's history reveals the tug of migration and its costs, even as it speaks to a counter-trend of loyalty to congregation and neighborhood. The costs of moving were evident within a decade: new members constantly had to be recruited and integrated into congregational life in order to maintain adequate support for religious activities because old members left the Lower East Side. The decision to merge with another shul, that of Anshe Lubz, helped to sustain the synagogue during the early decades of the 20th century when the neighborhood population began gradually to shrink. But very early a counter-trend emerged, one evidenced in decisions by members who had moved away to Brooklyn and the Bronx to return to Eldridge Street for rites of passage such as bar mitzvah and weddings as well as for the high holidays. This trend revealed the depth of connection to the congregation, the power of friendship circles, and the spiritual influence that radiated from the synagogue. With a wider circle of former members, what might be called the Eldridge Street diaspora, to complement active members still living on the Lower East Side, the congregation developed a message appealing to those who had moved away for financial

support. Thus the Eldridge Street synagogue resisted the dominant pattern where American Jews took their institutions with them and transplanted them in new soil. Instead it proclaimed its significance for New York Jewish history, arrogating to itself layers of meaning as a place of spiritual beauty and solace beyond that of a holy congregation, an Orthodox synagogue. It was, in Rabbi Idelson's words, "among the first that were built in holiness from the foundation." In such ways the congregation mitigated the social costs of migration by transforming Eldridge Street into a heritage site to be partially sustained by a diaspora.

Such strategies of recruiting migrating Jews to maintain their ties to a congregational community depended in part upon sentiments of nostalgia and a yearning for what had been left behind that complemented the appeal of moving, the excitement of something new, a chance to reinvent oneself, an opportunity to forge a fresh peer group society and to narrow the circle of friends and family. Migrations from the Lower East Side took Jews into less dense neighborhoods, less dirty, crowded, noisy, tough, and, less Jewish neighborhoods. All of those attributes attracted Jews, who wanted new neighbors as well as fresh views from their kitchen windows. Yet much as Jews sought to leave old worlds behind, whether in Europe or in Manhattan, they also tried to rebuild institutions that would proclaim their arrival. Thus the Eldridge Street synagogue served as a model for a second generation of Jews, who fashioned new congregations in urban neighborhoods with suburban residential characteristics. These congregations catered to families rather than deriving from landsmanshaftn. They aimed to become a surrogate for Jewish community since the neighborhood itself lacked sufficient density of Jews. Although they espoused different ideals from Eldridge Street—many joined the Conservative movement—they replicated its ambitions to speak for an authentic Judaism.

Of course, the process did not stop with the second generation. After World War II the circle of migration widened not only to include suburbs beyond city limits but also to embrace such distant cities as Miami and Los Angeles. Enticed by many of the same allures as drew their parents and grandparents to migrate, Jews left behind their old homes (though often they were less than three decades old) for new ones. And once again they built houses and synagogues that reflected their dreams of arrival, security, and permanence. Perhaps, in the back of their minds, they

knew it would last fifty years if they were lucky, half that if new neighbors started to move next door, but they acted as if it would be forever. Meanwhile, they looked back longingly not only on the Lower East Side and the Eldridge Street synagogue, but on their childhood neighborhoods in Brooklyn, the Bronx and Queens where Jews had lived in apartments, shared rooms with siblings, played games on the sidewalks, borrowed books from public libraries, and took subways or buses to school and work. For men and women who drove in their automobiles to work and shop and school and sports, it seemed so different, so far away, so much another world and era. And yet, these Jews were replicating continuities of behavior, building congregations and communities, establishing peer group societies.

Thus migration constantly reshapes American Jewish life, sparking innovation as well as reproducing patterns of action. It behooves us to look for meanings in migration, seeking to explain why American Jews moved so readily. What did they desire? What were the attractions of moving, and what were its costs? It is worth asking if other synagogues can reproduce the strategy of Eldridge Street. And what about recent trends that are taking some Jews back to inner city neighborhoods? Do they reflect similar desires, not to mention the role of wealthy Jews in setting communal priorities? How does the self-selective process of migration, the primacy it gives to each individual to make choices about where to live, affect collective decisions about the character of Jewish religious life? There are many questions, and the history of the Eldridge Street synagogue holds answers to some of them.

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PRACTICE

The theme of practice explores how American norms shaped synagogue services at the turn of the twentieth century.

A CULTURE OF ORDER: DECORUM AND ELDRIDGE STREET SYNAGOGUE

RIV-ELLEN PRELL

Synagogues, like all public places, are situated in time and culture as well as space. We require then effective ways to decode or read the story of a synagogue that will fully account for what is being communicated by and through it not only as a building, but as a center of community and social relationships. In 1887 when this synagogue opened its doors, Europe's great capitals, including Berlin, Paris, Budapest and Prague, were also sites of beautiful and impressive new synagogues. If their synagogues spoke of Jews as cosmopolitan, urbane, optimistic and worthy of the citizenship, what can we say of a Lower East Side synagogue? Knowing that synagogues built in New York City just a few decades later did not look like the one built on Eldridge Street only makes the question of understanding the values coded by this public place even more tantalizing. We know that decoding the story of the Eldridge Street Synagogue requires us to understand those who led the congregation and helped to build this building through their financial gifts and loans, as well as those who came through its doors to worship here.

The founders of the synagogue have left us documents to help us decode the synagogue's story. The congregation's 1913 Constitution, adapted from the original 1887 document, offers a priceless window onto the world of the congregation. One of the keys to understanding that world is encapsulated in the word "order," which appears no fewer than ten times on a single page of the document. For example, the president's duties were defined by his responsibility to "maintain order and decorum." The duties of the trustees of the synagogue were in part defined by their responsibility to maintain order and decorum during what they describe as "the divine service." If the trustees "orders" were disobeyed congregants would be fined and reported to the president. Members were



The Constitution

"urgently requested" to maintain order and decorum by staying seated or refraining from conversation.

Kahal Adath Jeshurun's leaders, and those who wrote its constitution, prized an orderliness that required remaining seated during worship, being quiet, respecting a hierarchy of leadership and taking turns at speaking during business meetings. They wanted deferral to authority whether it was during prayer or discussions of dues. These behaviors were the sine qua non of order. Those who were disorderly could be fined and removed. Those who belonged were the ones who knew how to behave.

The pursuit of order was hardly unique to the Eldridge Street synagogue. Churches and synagogues alike focused



Sender Jarmulowsky, the first president at the Eldridge Street Synagogue, and all subsequent presidents, used the gavel to keep order during the congregational meetings.

on order, as did theaters and concert halls, and the dining tables of families and friends under the sway of new books on etiquette. What these various venues of public and private life had in common was a new cultural emphasis on control of behavior and life for those who aspired to be part of the middle class or to be perceived as thoroughly American.

THE PARADOX OF ORDER

The heavy hand of decorum, order and control was not the only claim on the immigrants and their children who lived on the Lower East Side. Their commitment to the exercise of democracy was equally, if not more compelling. Immigrant Jewish organizations, secular and religious, and large and small all had constitutions because they epitomized the

exercise of democracy. Rules were clearly articulated; rights and responsibilities were laid out formally. It is no surprise then that the Yiddish press of the period routinely carried articles about voting and democracy and took positions on the important events of the day. The left wing Yiddish press was, for example, a staunch supporter of suffrage. The conservative press opposed it vehemently. The emphasis on order seemed to contradict the free exercise of power embodied in democracy.

It is important then, to be alert to the anxieties embodied in the constitution. Legislating order suggests that it is difficult to achieve. Fining people for their failure to be orderly suggests that other values are at work, that the culture of those who attended the synagogue was not readily invested in the acceptance of the decrees of officers or styles of worship that prohibited talking during services.

What then is the purpose of demanding order? Does it reveal a community in transition from the Old World to the New World? Do we see an attempt to control new immigrants, and are more established immigrants afraid of the judgments of others?

WHY ORDER?

Many historians have focused on the importance of order in the late 19th and early 20th century American synagogues, fraternal associations, and women's organizations. Why was order a touchstone of Americanization? What was the America to which these men and women were acculturating? Why were they dogged by a yearning for order that seems, at least for this period, so often to have eluded them?

Immigrant European Jews hardly came from a world that could be characterized as a sea of chaos. Those from the Russian empire, which constituted a significant percentage of immigrants, as well as those from Eastern Europe, lived in societies undergoing changes associated with industrialization, urbanization, political transformation and anti-Semitism. At the same time, they lived in well established communities with strong Jewish communal relationships and extended families. In contrast to Western Europe, however, many Jews did not yet share the bourgeois sensibility that historians George Mosse, Robert Wiebe, and Lawrence Levine have characterized as "a search for order" in both Europe and the United States, albeit at different and overlapping periods. Traditional notions of order that characterized Jews of small towns and enclaves were

focused on Jewish law and commandments. The order of a new bourgeois class concentrated elsewhere. That demand for order was grounded in a culture and economy that linked the demands of the workplace to the demands for cultural constraint. From the smallest matter of the silverware used at a meal to the licensing of physicians, teachers, and lawyers by the state, the concern for order was marked by political and economic hierarchy, control over the body and appearance, and an emphasis on restraint.

When the synagogue of Eldridge Street opened in 1887, these cultural and economic issues were at the forefront of American society.

THE UNITED STATES AND ORDER

The members of Kahal Adath Jeshurun were part of the mass waves of immigration to the United States. Most, but not all, European Jews were preceded by immigrants from China, England, Scandinavia, Ireland and Scotland. Jews, as well as Southern and Eastern European and Irish immigrants came to newly burgeoning industrial cities, which offered work. At the same time the United States was being transformed from a rural to an urban nation, a Catholic and Jewish nation as well as a Protestant one. Urban centers drew not only immigrants but African Americans who fled a brutal, post Reconstructionist South. These groups challenged the nation that they found. They introduced new forms of music and recreation, practiced religion in new ways, spoke foreign languages, and had different ideas about politics, than many native born Americans. The elites among others fought back against a changing and pluralizing nation. Not only did they attempt to restrict immigration and create racist laws and religious barriers, they drew boundaries around what was culturally “acceptable” and what was “offensive.” The native born elites found difference threatening and frightening, and judged it as inferior. What was different to them was judged and labeled as “chaotic,” and “uncivilized.” Worship, or performances of theater, concerts, and operas that engaged people actively and robustly were judged ‘inferior’. In particular, they cajoled and shamed those who were different by asserting a single standard for what they would come to call proper behavior and “high” culture. They stood for “order”.

A CULTURE TO BE TAMED

The Yiddish theater, which flourished in the United States beginning in 1890 and with the closing of immigration was being eclipsed by the 1930s, provides a good example of how many groups of people from many parts of the world experienced culture. Audience members came to the theater in families. They brought food and ate it through the performance. They responded actively to the play, often speaking to characters, chastising villains and weeping over the lives of the virtuous. In some plays audience members loudly condemned the performers for smoking on the Sabbath, despite their presence in the theater on Friday night or Saturday afternoon.

Similar tales could be told about how audiences responded to Shakespeare in the United States and England in the 19th century, Italian-Americans to opera, or working men to vaudeville. Audiences typically sang and spoke along. They mixed food, fun and performances.



Worshippers required tickets for High Holiday services at the Eldridge Street Synagogue.

Worship and performance share many qualities. In cultures where audiences actively participate in the performances they watch, their prayer lives are not surprisingly interactive, audible, and animated. The demand for silence and order in the worship lives of congregants was directly tied to the demand for silence among theater goers.

How were immigrant and native-born audiences dissuaded from this deep engagement with what they saw and heard? By the end of the 19th century America's industrialists, bankers and wealthy classes had built museums, opera houses, and concert halls as shrines to a high culture. They regulated who could attend by the high price of tickets, and once audiences arrived they were greeted with posted rules and regulations. Conductors shushed audiences during performances. The Metropolitan Museum of Art opened its doors to working people and hired guards not only to protect the art but to monitor the clothing museum-goers might wear and the volume of the voices with which they were allowed to speak. Order came to mean constraint and control, and for those who aspired to join the middle class or to be true Americans, these manners and rules held sway.

The path to order is visible in the constitution and the beautiful building of the Eldridge Street Synagogue. We can hear the voices of a Protestant elite in the constitution constraining shul goers who were accustomed to non-unison prayer. We can see the anxiety of Americanized leaders who seeking the status of acculturation, sought to restrain the exuberance of members who disagreed with rules. And yet something doesn't quite add up that makes this story more interesting. What were the motivations of those framers of the synagogue constitution? They knew that those uptown Protestants would never see their constitution, let alone walk into their beautiful synagogue. It is useful to offer a range of possibilities for their motivations.

Did they feel the eyes of a more established and affluent community of German New York Jews upon them? Were they proving wrong those who saw Eastern European immigrants as incapable of becoming true Americans like they were?

Were they making a statement about Orthodox Judaism, which they assiduously guarded in their constitution as well? Were they suggesting that there was nothing incompatible between life in America and Orthodox Judaism, that the Old World could join its new counterpart?

Was the more affluent leadership imposing its will on the synagogue's more ordinary members, those without the money, those who could participate in a more marginal way, through asserting the importance of order within the synagogue itself?

Were the leaders simply trying to persuade themselves that the prying eyes of a shaming cultural elite would find them acceptable?

COMPLICATING THE STORY— A LIVING CULTURE

What is puzzling is that the codes we can see so thoroughly in place in architecture and constitution were not complete. They did not put an end to every custom from the Old World. They maintained what many American born Jews considered the most disorderly custom that was offensive to a Western sensibility, *shnoddering*. The selling of Torah honors during services did not decrease until 1915. What do we make of this odd incompatibility between the orderly and the disorderly, the leveling of fines and an insistence on decorum with the linking of money and worship?



At the Eldridge Street Synagogue, aliyahs from shnoddering were entered into this binder. Courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society

The best way to decode the complex story of the Eldridge Street Synagogue is precisely through focusing on, rather than reducing, these “contradictions,” and cultural rules and expectations. We see just how alive Judaism was for these men and women as it engaged and was engaged by the nation they entered. These congregants lived lives as Jews and American simultaneously. As Orthodox Jews they resisted the homogenizing demands of the United States, but they did it by bowing to the cultural expectations of a Protestant middle class which was ever on guard against Jewish unacceptability, poor manners, and unattractive differences. As they embraced a system that attempted to constrain and to control their behavior, they enforced those controls on one another in the entirely Jewish space of the synagogue. That outlook lived in microcosm as Jews managed other Jews through the power of the wealthy members and the insistence on decorum and order. They simply applied it within traditional Jewish practice. That interesting and complex mix reveals most importantly the lively culture and world of the synagogue.

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CLOSING THE AMERICANIZATION GAP BETWEEN THE ELDRIDGE STREET SYNAGOGUE'S LEADERS AND DOWNTOWN'S RABBIS

JEFFREY S. GUROCK

The builders and leaders of the Eldridge Street Synagogue have been often and aptly described as Jews who made considered accommodations in their religious lifestyles as they made their way in America and came to grips with this country's mores. Their goal was to maintain the essence of the East European Orthodoxy as they sought to live harmoniously within two cultures. Interestingly, they made their judgments and adjustments without consultation with or the authorization of downtown rabbinical authorities. So, for example, although Kahal Adath Jeshurun was one of the constituent congregations who hired and helped pay the salary of Rabbi Jacob Joseph of Vilna, who served as the Chief Rabbi of New York (1887-1902), they did not feel obliged to follow his lead or dictates. In a classic case, in 1891, when Rabbi Joseph sought to control Passover matzo-baking—to ensure that it was done with all due regard for Jewish law—and also to set the price for that essential holiday commodity, synagogues officials demurred. They voted to monitor that industry themselves and asserted that if their committee ascertained that prices were too high, they would bake that provision themselves at their own expense.

All too often, these accommodating congregational lay leaders—not to mention their rank and file of men and women in the pews—have been depicted as residing in a very different place from transplanted rabbis. The archetypical resistant organization was the Agudath ha-Rabbanim (Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada), a group of fifty-nine East European-trained rabbis who served immigrant communities throughout the United States and Canada. Beginning in July, 1902, this group mounted an organized response to the decline of religious commitment among Jews. As they saw the

community, the masses around them violated Sabbath strictures, neglected to provide their children with proper forms of Orthodox religious education. In their view, the most unscrupulous among them tricked unwary consumers, who still adhered to kosher regulations, by purveying *treyf*, or unkosher, cuts in their butcher shops. Essentially these rabbis hoped to achieve as a combine what Rabbi Jacob Joseph had failed to do as an individual authority.



The lay leaders of the Eldridge Street Synagogue sat in seats of honor along the Eastern Wall.

A traditional narrative of their activities has it that the rabbis projected their objectives with a heavy hand. For example, on the crucial question of Sabbath desecration, after pronouncing to the faithful, in their 1902 Constitution, that “all hope is [not] lost for Sabbath observance in this country,” the rabbis went after—among others—bakers whose stores stayed open on the holy day, warning “the people not

to buy bread from those transgressors." In their view, "not only is purchasing such products considered aiding a sinner" whose economic actions had to be punished, but they contended that "it is practically certain"—even without any formal inspection—that there is non-kosher oil and shortening in the baked goods."

However, upon closer examination, it appears that these rabbinic authorities also possessed a more flexible, accommodating side in their efforts to "discover... ways to strengthen" this cardinal mitzvah within the community. One remarkable stratagem was their interest in building an alliance with unlikely confederates, heads of secular labor unions, most of whom harbored little commitment to, or even respect for, Jewish religious traditions. In other words, while Agudath ha-Rabbanim members might be quick to condemn from their pulpits the most radical elements in the labor community around them as "the dregs of our people," they also recognized the advantages of pragmatic cooperation. Accordingly, the rabbis' union plan called for them to reach out to the workers' leaders, to initiate a dialogue towards "includ[ing] the right for Sabbath observance" among the laborites "just demands." In return, the rabbis pledged to "pressure the owners and employers to comply with the requests of the union." For the record, the calls for alliance went unanswered by union officials. Perhaps, staunch dogmatism of a secular type prevented the achievement of common cause among very disparate factions in the Jewish immigrant community.

The paradigmatic resisters also made concessions to the power of that most powerful of Americanizing agencies, the public schools. For the Agudath ha-Rabbanim, the ideal educational institution was always the old-world style yeshiva. There, its Constitution read that teachers [who] "must be Godfearing and their deeds in accordance with the Torah" would instruct their youthful charges in "Yiddish, the language of the children's parents." Of course, before entering his heder room, every teacher had to have "a certificate of approbation from one member of the Agudath ha-Rabbanim and two pedagogues... testify[ing] to his religious devotion and teaching abilities." Moreover, a "supervising committee" was empanelled to be on hand to assure that Torah "study is properly organized so that the yeshiva students will truly succeed in their dedicated endeavors."

Yet, at the same time, in a partial bow to how the public schools ran their operations, the Constitution also spoke of

the need "to draw up a proper curriculum for the various levels of study" making clear that "important topics must no longer be left in the hands of individuals on an ad hoc basis." The rabbis' organization also recognized the need for "a graded system or study so that teachers will no longer have various levels of students in one class." Arguably, through these moves the East European transplant was reformed with American pedagogic values and models in mind. Most importantly, they assented that when "necessary for the clarification of the topic, the teachers may also utilize English [and] in areas where only English is spoken, it may be the basic tongue." The *rebbe*s, presumably rabbis and teachers with East European pedigrees, had to know the language of the new land. This skill would be of particular importance to members who lived in communities like Omaha, Nebraska, Louisville, Kentucky, Denver, Colorado, Bangor, Maine, or Hazleton, Pennsylvania., locales far removed from the metropolis. (Only fourteen of the original 59 members of the UOR hailed from the New York City area.) Moreover, back in New York, home to but two fledgling yeshivas, Etz Chaim and the Rabbi Jacob Joseph School, provisions had to be made to teach "necessary... secular subjects" in their schools, albeit "by qualified instructors."

The sort of American training these general studies faculty had to have become clear a year after the Agudath ha-Rabbanim's founding. Then it ruled that "graduates from the normal schools in the employ of the City Boards of Education" should be engaged to moonlight in the all-day yeshivas, a concession to United States law, if not customs.

Finally, while never gainsaying the yeshiva as the ideal educational institution, as early as 1903, the organization was also on record in support of "evening schools for those youths who work or attend secular schools by day," a systematic curriculum and financial support "for all talmud torahs and hedarim," as well as the need to establish Hebrew schools for girls.

This degree of pragmatism and acceptance of the realities around them ironically grew out of their own East European background where over *there*, the Agudath ha-Rabbanim men of the future were among the most accommodating rabbis of their time and place. Most of the Agudath ha-Rabbanim's founders were Orthodox supporters of Hibbat Zion, disciples of Rabbis Isaac Elchanan Spektor and Isaac Jacob Reines. And they were soon to be members of the American branch of the Mizrahi movement, a faction



Avraham Aharon Yudelovitch served as the rabbi of the Eldridge Street Synagogue from 1918-1930.



Yisroel Idelson served as rabbi of the Eldridge Street Synagogue from 1930-1943.

and a vision within the Zionist camp that was organized the same crucial year of 1902. As such, they subscribed to that proposition that Orthodox Jews must understand and react effectively to the modern world around them—with the goal always of maintaining the essentials of the religious tradition. In this case they averred that they had to play a major role within the Jewish national revival to assure that Zionism progressed with regard to the teachings of the Torah. Needless to say, in occupying that position, these “moderns” effectively rejected the millenium-old notion that Jews should play no role in hastening their redemption. In Russia, Poland, and Hungary, this Religious Zionist position was a minority stance within the Orthodox rabbinate. However, in America, it long endured as the majority opinion.

No less compelling in comprehending the nuanced world-view of these transplanted rabbis is the recognition that as men on a mission in this country, they had parted company with the majority East European rabbinical view that opposed the very migration of Jews to this *treif* land. Unquestionably, the most famous naysayer was Rabbi Israel Meir ha Cohen Kagan, better known as the *Hafetz Hayim*—who rose to call for a halt to such perilous spiritual travel. Though progress had surely been made over more than two centuries in making America hospitable to those who wanted to maintain the religious traditions of the old world,

for the revered rabbi of Radun, Poland, settlement in this libertine country was still fraught with danger for devout Jews. In his plaintive work, *Niddehei Yisrael*, that appeared in 1894, addressed to the “dispersed and wandering Jews in distant lands,” Kagan went beyond calling upon the faithful on the move to make heroic efforts to keep the Sabbath, observe kashruth and follow the laws of family purity in that “curse[d]” place where “desecration of the Torah” was rampant. He instructed those who would listen to him that, in the end, “the only one proper solution” for those desiring “to live properly before God” was to not settle at all in America. For him, the only observant immigrant who was even conceivably worthy of praise was that rare “God-fearing man” whose presence in this barren land might “strengthen religious life.” However, on balance, he continued, if a “proper person” had made the tragic mistake of emigrating “he must return to his home where the Lord will sustain him. He must not be misled by thoughts of remaining away until he is financially wealthy.” For only back in Poland and Russia, he believed, could a Jew live the right type of religious life and “bring up his sons in Torah and piety.”

Effectively, future Agudath ha-Rabbanim members ignored this definitive ban when they boarded ships to America. If they had to answer charges that in so doing they were breaking with the authority of a great Torah sage,

perhaps these rabbis on the move would have responded that they were among those special case Jews; “God fearing men,” whom the senior rabbi prayed might against all odds “strengthen” American Jewish religious life. More likely, they would have proudly asserted that they were conforming to the authority of equally-renowned and respected rabbis Hayim Soloveitchik and Isaac Elchanan Spektor. Although these leaders’ views were the minority position among European sages—most colleagues were sure that since the Judaism of migrants would founder on foreign shores it was no place for the devout—Spektor made clear to many of those whom he personally had ordained that they were obliged to do their utmost to reclaim those on the move away from Judaism. Here, the Jewish religious legal tradition that a Jew must not only be pious, but be concerned with the religious behavior of others was surely in play. Rabbi Soloveitchik went even further in his charge. Not only “had the needs of the time... thrust an obligation” upon rabbis “to ameliorate Judaism” in America, he also projected this “impure” country as potentially “a secure refuge for our people.” This optimist looked at the freedom that Jews enjoyed in the United States, contrasted it with what Tsarist oppression was doing to his people in Russia, and prayed that his rabbis would not only “ameliorate Judaism.” They could be the vanguard who would “build a secure refuge for our people and our Torah.” They could construct the next great Diaspora Torah center until “the redemption to Zion would occur.”

It was sentiments like these that warmed and motivated Agudath ha-Rabbanim members to both resist many aspects of the American way, but to also accommodate pragmatically the world around them. It was this mindset that closely resembled that of downtown’s Orthodox lay leaders, like those who operated the Eldridge Street Synagogue, who sought their own ways for Orthodoxy to survive and advance in the United States.

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ENCOUNTERS

The theme of encounters explores the impact of New York City upon immigrants; the impact of the immigrants upon the city.

A TALE OF TWO CANTORS: PINHAS MINKOWSKI AND YOSELE ROSENBLATT

JEFFREY SHANDLER

Shortly after the Eldridge Street Synagogue opened in 1887, visitors came not only for its visual splendor but also for auditory inspiration. This came primarily from Cantor Pinhas Minkowski, then one of the most famous cantors in the world and, thanks to the Eldridge Street Synagogue, one of the highest paid. The congregation's leaders lured Minkowski from his synagogue in Odessa by making him a financial offer he couldn't refuse, including a \$2,500 annual salary (at the time, the average New York City worker earned less than \$450 a year).



Pinhas Minkowsky was the Eldridge Street Synagogue's first cantor.

Minkowski was not the first cantor to be lured to America from Eastern Europe with a large salary. In fact, he arrived during the height of what was subsequently termed the "cantorial craze" of the 1880s, when New York congregations vied to see which could employ the most renowned cantor for the largest sum. Being a craze, this phenomenon began suddenly and didn't last long—and, as the term also implies, there was something less than rational about it, at least in retrospect. Brief though it was, the cantorial craze of the 1880s offers revealing insights into Jewish religious life on

the Lower East Side during this first decade of large-scale immigration from Eastern Europe.

Amid immigrants' encounters with manifold disparities between the life they had led in the Old World and their new life in America, cantors epitomized the religious experience these Jews had left behind. The emotional power of the cantors' performances not only carried the congregation's prayers to heaven, but also bore the affective charge of immigrant longings and uncertainties. These immigrants may have prized the sound of *khazones* (the music-making of the cantor) that much more because of its relative scarcity. During the 1880s few Jewish men who were trained as cantors came from Eastern Europe to America. More established American Jewish communities had their cantors, of course, but theirs was not an East European sound. The concentration of new Jewish arrivals from Eastern Europe in the immigrant neighborhoods of major American cities—none more concentrated than the Lower East Side—intensified the sense of scarcity of talented cantors who sounded "authentic" to immigrant ears. This new cultural marketplace was, in effect, a sellers' market.

Celebrity cantors like Minkowski played an emblematic role in immigrant life. Historian Jonathan Sarna argues that, for these immigrants, the celebrity cantor represented "the ultimate synthesis of the Old World and New...: observant yet rich, traditional yet modern.... He personified the great heritage of a European world-gone-by, yet succeeded equally well in Columbus's land of the future. In short, a cantorial performance simultaneously served both as an exercise in nostalgia and as living proof that in America the talented could succeed handsomely." Significantly, Sarna notes, this was "a synthesis most immigrants sought to achieve but few succeeded" in realizing.



The cantor's stand at the Eldridge Street Synagogue had a ledge, with saw-tooth hinges, that adjusted according to the cantor's height.

Minkowski seemed to exemplify this synthesis. Born in the Russian town of Belaya Tserkov in 1859, he was the son of a cantor and, as a boy, sang in his father's choir. The younger Minkowski had a traditional Jewish religious education. In addition, he had something of a modern education, learning both Russian and German as a young adult. His musical education also expanded beyond traditional training in *khazones*, culminating in travel to Vienna. There he studied voice under the director of the Conservatorium, from which Minkowsky obtained a diploma. His cantorial career included positions in major cities in the Russian Empire, eventually in Odessa, from which he was lured to Eldridge Street. Indeed, Minkowski's artistry was the musical equivalent of this building: grand, showy, costly, rooted in European tradition and enhanced by a modern aesthetic sensibility, whether state-of-the-art notions of sacred architecture or au-courant musicology.

However, this match of synagogue and cantor did not last long. At first, the congregation was so taken with Minkowski's success as *the* star cantor of the Lower East Side that they offered him an annual bonus of \$500. But by 1891, the synagogue's leadership found themselves financially unable to offer the cantor this bonus. The following year, as the congregation was considering renewing Minkowski's

contract, they received a letter from him stating that he had decided to return to Odessa. Beyond financial disappointment, it appears that Minkowski felt personally slighted by the congregation. Moreover, he wished to return to the much more established religious culture in Odessa. There he not only continued to lead his congregation in worship but also composed and published sacred music and wrote works of modern scholarship about Jewish liturgy.

After Minkowski's departure, the Eldridge Street Synagogue did not pursue another celebrity cantor. The cantorial craze of the 1880s had waned, reflecting the dynamics of religious life in this rapidly expanding immigrant community. In the 1880s, skilled cantors who knew the East European style of *khazones* were in short supply and great demand. A decade later, as greater numbers of Jewish immigrants arrived in New York, men with the requisite musical knowledge and talent were more readily available. The expense of star cantors also proved difficult for immigrant congregations to sustain. What had been a sellers' market quickly became a buyers' market. Rather than seeking out major cantorial talents in Europe, immigrant congregations took their pick of local talent. Thus, after Minkowski's departure in the summer of 1892, the Eldridge Street Synagogue held auditions and hired



This 1910 ticket advertised a special Hanukkah cantorial concert at the Eldridge Street Synagogue.

Yehezkel Borenstian, who was engaged only for the High Holidays. For several years the Eldridge Street Synagogue hired cantors on a short-term basis.

Meanwhile, Minkowski might have spent the rest of his life in Odessa, were it not for the Bolshevik Revolution. Russia's new communist government made it increasingly difficult for religious institutions to continue to function, and in 1922 Minkowski decided to return to America. However, he found it difficult to find a permanent post and instead

performed special services in various American cities. This phase of Minkowski's career did not last long; in 1924 he died at the age of 65.

Memorial services for the cantor were held in several American cities; over 1,000 people attended the service held on the Lower East Side. His funeral included a performance by "two hundred cantors and one hundred choir singers," all under the leadership of Cantor Yosele Rosenblatt, who epitomized a new generation of celebrity cantors that flourished in America in the early decades of the 20th century.

In some ways Rosenblatt's celebrity resembled Minkowski's. Rosenblatt was born in 1882—by coincidence, in Belaya Tserkov. He also began his career in Europe before coming to America, with much fanfare, in 1912, having already achieved acclaim as a cantor in Munkács, Pressburg, and Hamburg. But Rosenblatt's fame was configured differently, thanks to an array of new vehicles for cantorial stardom, including expanded press coverage, publishing of sheet music, elaborately promoted concert tours, and the new media of sound recordings and, later, talking motion pictures.

Sound recordings perhaps played the largest role in establishing Rosenblatt as the most famous cantor in America during the 1920s and '30s, not only among Jews but the general public as well. Rosenblatt made several dozen recordings of cantorial music and other musical selections—Jewish art music, Zionist anthems, Yiddish songs, and Tin Pan Alley Judaica ("My Yiddishe Momme"), and recital standards such as "The Last Rose of Summer" and "Song of the Volga Boatman"—mostly for Victor and Columbia. Several of Rosenblatt's recordings were issued to mark special occasions, such as a version of the memorial prayer "El Male Rachamim" for victims of the Titanic, released in 1913; Massenet's "Elegy" in 1917 for victims of World War I; and "Onward, Jewish Legion" in 1919, honoring Jewish soldiers who fought in the British army during the war.

By contrast, Minkowski never made recordings—not because of a lack of opportunity, but rather as a matter of conviction. When the first commercial recordings of cantorial music were made, Minkowski denounced the phonograph as a "disgraceful screaming instrument." He also expressed outrage that in Odessa, cantorial recordings could be heard through the windows of prostitutes' rooms in the city's red-light district. Minkowski's outrage may seem peculiar today, but it demonstrates his awareness that a recording of a performance of sacred music didn't simply document or

preserve it, but transformed it. Sound recordings are what R. Murray Schafer calls *schizophonic* phenomena—that is, they separate sound from its original source. In the case of *khazones*, recordings remove cantorial singing from the synagogue and the specific occasion of worship. By separating these performances from their original sacred intent—addressing God within the rubric of communal worship—recordings situate cantorial music in a new listening context. Cantors, record producers, marketers, and audiences have all demonstrated their awareness of this transformation. For example, many recordings of *khazones* feature instrumental accompaniment that would not be heard when this music is performed in those synagogues where playing instruments is forbidden on the Sabbath and holidays. The shift away from worship is also signaled on many (though not all) recordings, in which cantors substitute the words *Adoshem* and *Elokeinu* for names of God traditionally uttered only when actually praying. Thus, within the protocols of *khazones* itself performers marked their recordings as being something other than worship.

Whereas recordings marked a limit beyond which Minkowski would not venture as a celebrity cantor, violating his sense of propriety as a pious Jew, opera marked the same limit for Rosenblatt. Among the most significant episodes in his career was a performance he chose *not* to give: In 1918, the Chicago Opera invited Rosenblatt to sing the lead role in Halévy's *La Juive* for \$1,000 per performance. Rosenblatt's eventual refusal—despite assurances that he would not have to perform on the Sabbath or cut his beard—received national attention. The *New York Times* even reprinted a letter from the Chicago Opera to the president of New York Congregation Ohab Zedek, which then employed Rosenblatt as its cantor, stating that Rosenblatt had agreed to sing in *La Juive* only if the congregation would permit it.

Despite rejecting opera, Rosenblatt gave recitals in concert halls and even performed in vaudeville in the 1920s. He undertook the latter in order to wipe out debts from bad investments he had made in a Yiddish newspaper and a ritual bath, projects intended to enhance Orthodox Jewish life in New York. In Rosenblatt's biography, written by his son Samuel, the cantor's concert and vaudeville appearances are characterized not as compromising his commitment to *khazones*, but rather as an extension of his values as a pious Jew and a Jewish artist. Indeed, the cantor's son championed

his father's touring the vaudeville circuit as an opportunity to perform religious ideals quite apart from his musicianship:

His very conduct on the variety stage and the demands he made from the managers to satisfy his religious scruples were an ideal medium for teaching the non-Jewish masses of America something of the tenets of the Jewish faith while acquainting them with Jewish music. The announcements on the billboards that Josef Rosenblatt would not be heard on Friday evening or Saturday matinee, because he was observing his Sabbath, constituted a real *Kiddush Hashem*, a glorification of the Jewish religion.

With the advent of talking pictures in the late 1920s, film became another important medium for cantors to test the limits of modernity. Several cantors appeared in American-made films in the '20s and '30s. Typically, the plots of these films addressed the Jewish struggle between tradition and modernity, in which the cantor figured as a strategic example. The most famous of these films is the 1927 feature *The Jazz Singer*. Today best remembered as the film that marks the transition from silent to talking pictures, it is also a remarkable artifact of American Jewish culture and includes Rosenblatt's first appearance in a film. *The Jazz Singer* chronicles the career of vaudevillian Jack Robin (played by Al Jolson)—born Jakie Rabinowitz, the son of an immigrant cantor—as Jack struggles between his professional ambitions as a jazz singer and his obligations to family and community as a cantor. At a strategic moment in the film, Jack, while on tour with his vaudeville act, attends a recital by Rosenblatt. This scene prefigures later scenes in the film in which Jack's devotion to the theater reveals both its tension with and its indebtedness to *khazones*.

Rosenblatt's biography claims that Warner Bros. originally approached him to play the role of cantor Rabinowitz, Jack Robin's father, who, committed to Old World values, denounces his son's stage career. Rosenblatt reportedly rejected the offer (the part was eventually played by Warner Oland). Once again, Rosenblatt affirmed his status as a celebrity cantor by discussing a role he chose *not* to perform (while identifying himself as that role's ideal performer).

In what would prove to be the final journey of his life, Rosenblatt traveled to Palestine in 1933 to appear in another film, *The Dream of My People*. This hour-long Zionist travelogue offers scenes of Jewish life in Palestine together with performances by Rosenblatt, hailed in the opening credits as "The Greatest Omed Singer In His Last Song."

Rosenblatt sings six solos at different sacred sites, including the Western Wall and Rachel's tomb.

While filming at the Dead Sea, Rosenblatt died suddenly of a heart attack. Remarkably, his passing is incorporated into the film's penultimate sequence. After the narrator announces that Rosenblatt "saw the land and died," a collage of notices of Rosenblatt's death appears on screen, followed by footage of the crowds attending his funeral in Jerusalem. The film then ends with a sequence on Tel Aviv, the "city of youth and gaiety." Rosenblatt is positioned in *The Dream of My People* at the juncture of two contrasting narratives. In the film's tourist narrative of Palestine, the cantor seems the embodiment of the diaspora Jew, who has come to venerate the old and admire the new but is ultimately unable to engage with the Zionist project. At the same time, *The Dream of My People* offers a counter-narrative that centers on the sacred, more so than on the secular, and on Rosenblatt, rather than on Palestine, in which the cantor figures as a modern-day Moses, a venerated Jewish leader who comes to see the "promised land" and then to die. Read this way, *The Dream of My People* becomes a vehicle for telling the final chapter of the cantor's life as the culmination of a sacred journey. Samuel Rosenblatt writes in his biography of his father that the cantor had long wished that "his last pulpit might be in the Land of Israel."

WORKS ON WHICH THIS COMMENT DRAWS

Part of this essay is drawn from the first chapter of Jeffrey Shandler, Jews, God, and Videotape: Religion and Media in America (New York University Press, 2009).

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THE JEWISH GHETTO MEETS ITS NEIGHBORS

TONY MICHELS

The Lower East Side has long been viewed as the quintessential ghetto, a term that came into American usage around the turn of the twentieth century in reference to precisely that section of New York City. With a Jewish population surpassing 540,000 at its peak, the Lower East Side was, to quote Moses Rischin, “the densest and most visibly volatile critical mass of immigrants in the nation’s history.” Poor, overcrowded and predominantly Jewish, appellations like “The New York Ghetto,” “The Great New York Ghetto,” and “The American Ghetto” seemed entirely appropriate.

The Lower East Side “ghetto” was depicted in two conflicting ways. One was that of a blighted “Jewtown,” as described in Jacob Riis’ classic, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890). The other was first made famous by Hutchins Hapgood’s *The Spirit of the Ghetto* (1902), which presented a culturally vibrant enclave, animated by educational striving and social idealism. Yet, as different as they were, both books presented an insular view of the Lower East Side. One would not know from reading them that many of the Lower East Side’s denizens, starting with its intellectuals, formed close and regular contact with others elsewhere in the city. Its sizeable intellectual community gave the Lower East Side a cosmopolitan atmosphere: European-orientated, freewheeling, radical. That atmosphere was what drew outsiders like Hapgood to the Lower East Side in the first place. The Lower East Side may have appeared to be a ghetto, but it was far from isolated. It provided meeting ground for intellectuals of diverse backgrounds, whose influence extended in any number of directions. This openness was evident even in that most seemingly insular of Jewish settings: the orthodox synagogue. The Eldridge Street Synagogue was open to Jews of various social backgrounds, without regard to



The Eldridge Street Synagogue's diverse congregation, 1891.

geographic origin or class standing. In the words of an 1892 article in *Century* magazine, “E pluribus Unum receives a new meaning here.”

A distinct sub-community of Jewish intellectuals took shape on the Lower East Side in the early 1880s. Its members were young, rebellious students who immigrated to New York from Russia in the wake of the notorious pogroms of 1881–1882. Hundreds of them came to the United States with the intention of establishing agrarian communes somewhere in the far west. Their dream did not last long, but they would make a strong impact in New York and pave the way for an untold number of Russian Jewish intellectuals who would arrive in subsequent years. Those later arrivals came to the U.S. in order to escape arrest or because their entry into institutions of higher education had been blocked by

anti-Jewish restrictions or because they found life in Russia to have been generally intolerable. On the Lower East Side, they would establish themselves as leading writers, lecturers, and labor leaders.

The Lower East Side's Jewish intellectuals cultivated ties with their non-Jewish neighbors early on. They started, in the early 1880s, with German radicals. At that time, Germans (mostly non-Jews) comprised the majority of the Lower East Side's population, which was why the area was then known as *Kleindeutschland* (Little Germany). Radicals occupied a prominent position in the German immigrant community and were generally well disposed to the Jewish intellectuals who started to appear on the scene. Individuals such as Abraham Cahan, the future editor of the *Forverts*, attended German lectures, frequented German saloons, and read German newspapers. From the Germans, they acquired new ideologies (such as Marxism and anarchism) and models of organization (such as unions and political parties), which they would later introduce to the immigrant Jewish



German and Jewish immigrant leaders, such as John Most, Justus Schwab and Emma Goldman, mingled on the Lower East Side.

community. Germans even donated money to help the Jews establish their own labor organizations and Yiddish publications. The crucial help provided by Germans led directly to the establishment of the Jewish labor movement, one of the most potent institutions in New York's immigrant Jewish life.

The Jewish labor movement achieved such large dimensions that it began to draw in radical Jewish intellectuals from cities as far afield as London, Minsk and San Francisco. Other cities had given birth to Jewish labor movements of

their own, but none was as large as New York's. This was due to the size of its Jewish population, the frequent outbreaks of large strikes, the possibilities of free expression, and the absence of traditional structures of Jewish authority. Nowhere else in the world had so many intellectuals adopted Yiddish as their primary medium of political communication and literary creativity, and nowhere else in the world did radical Jewish intellectuals enjoy so much authority within such a large Jewish population.

During the 1890s, then, New York was the leading center of radical Jewish politics. This meant, in part, that Russian revolutionaries—both Jewish and not—looked to New York for financial and material support. This signaled a second important connection, one between the Lower East Side “ghetto” and the revolutionary movement in Russia. New Yorkers shipped thousands of copies of Yiddish newspapers, pamphlets, and journals overseas to be smuggled into Russia, then distributed by a variety of surreptitious means. This aid was crucial because the Russian Jewish labor movement, at its outset in 1893, did not possess the means to produce its own reading materials. It did not own a hectograph until July 1894 or a printing press until May 1897. Furthermore, state censorship made it impossible to publish materials freely, so that almost everything had to be imported from abroad. Russian Jewish activists were well aware of their dependence on New York. According to Julius Martov, a founder of the Jewish labor movement in Vilna, he and his comrades decided to begin organizing Jewish workers on the example provided by the preexisting Jewish labor movement in New York and on the understanding that New York would provide the needed material support needed. In other words, New York helped give rise to the Russian Jewish labor movement and enabled it to function to the extent that it could as an underground movement.

The relationship between New York and Russia expanded into the 1900s. Publications from New York continued to flow eastward, possibly in larger numbers than before. All major branches of the Bund and its political prisoners in Siberia, for instance, received copies of the monthly journal, *Di Tsukunft*, on a regular basis between 1907 and 1914. However, after the 1905 revolution, Russia no longer needed to rely on New York for publications because the government had loosened censorship restrictions. Even so, it became dependent on New York for money. In and around 1905, all the major political parties sent emissaries to New York to

raise funds. Even non-Jewish parties sent representatives because they understood that the city's Jewish population provided a large reservoir of support. The East Side's Jewish intellectuals founded aid organizations to raise funds and organize rallies on behalf of one party or another, thereby exposing Russian parties to a wide American public.

The Socialist Revolutionaries, for instance, sent Katherine Breshkovskaia, known as the "Grandmother of the Russian Revolution," to New York in 1904 to raise funds for the party. The party sent Chaim Zhitlovsky to accompany her precisely because Zhitlovsky, a Yiddish-speaking Jew, could provide entrée into New York's Jewish immigrant population. The two emissaries raised about \$10,000 in several months, which they used to purchase weapons in San Francisco. Other Socialist Revolutionaries came to New York over the next two years and raised tens of thousands of dollars. When the SR leader, Nikolai Tshaikovsky, expressed gratitude to Mark Twain for the American people's generosity, Twain corrected him, pointing out that the bulk of funds came from immigrant Jews. Christians, Twain reportedly said, "have lost [their] ancient sympathy with oppressed people struggling for life and liberty..." The Bund also conducted extensive fund raising activities. In the last two months of 1905, emissaries collected \$25,000 and in the spring of 1906, the Bundist leader, Gregory Maxim, raised about \$10,000, some of which he used to purchase weapons from a manufacturer in Cleveland. A report to the Bund's annual convention estimated that American donors provided up to half of the budgets of local party organizations. The Jews, Maxim Gorky stated during a tour of the U.S., are "the most influential bearers and representatives of the new religion, socialism."

The connection between immigrant Jews and the Russian revolutionary movement made them especially interesting in the eyes of native-born intellectuals, who had coalesced in Greenwich Village by the turn of the century. Writers such as Hapgood, William Dean Howells, and Lincoln Steffens had been visiting the Lower East Side since the 1890s. Hapgood developed a friendship with Cahan, who showed him around the East Side in encounters that would result in the publication of *The Spirit of Ghetto*. Such interactions would play a pivotal role in the development of the American intelligentsia, as the historian David Hollinger argued more than three decades ago. According to Hollinger, "They [non-Jewish intellectuals] looked to a new intelligentsia to manifest a more diverse, more broadly based emotional and intellectual



In 1902 Hutchins Hapgood devoted months to studying Jewish life on the Lower East Side. He had his artist, Jacob Epstein, capture the bustling café life.

existence, and they were eager for this cause to be advanced by persons of any ethnic origin." Thus alienated children from respectable, gentile homes started visiting the Lower East Side's cafes and bookstores, where they mingled and observed, and walked away deeply impressed. They saw in front of them a remarkably vibrant cultural life: lectures, debates, street corner speakers, voracious readers. Jews gave hope to them that immigrants were not only fit for democracy, but could help lead the way toward a more democratic, inclusive, broadminded country.

Consider the following quotations, starting with this by the social reformer Ida Van Etten. "The Russian Jews are naturally radicals on all social questions..." Van Etten wrote in 1893. "Thousands of disciples of Karl Marx may be found among the organized Jewish workingmen. Their intense desire to study and discuss social questions I have never seen equaled." Six years later, James Reynolds of the University Settlement identified in Jews "an extremist idealism, with an utter disregard for the restraining power of circumstances and conditions." "Any Jew," the *New York Times* reported in 1910, "has to struggle hard to keep from being a philosopher, and for a Russian Jew the effort is impossible." And, finally, there is this observation from James Huneker's

1915 book, *New Cosmopolis*, “The East Side is an omnivorous reader. Stupendous is the amount of books studied and digested; the books of solid worth, not ‘best sellers’ or other flimflam...We need the Jewish blood as spiritual leaven; the race is art-loving and will prove a barrier to the rapidly growing wave of fanatical puritanism.” Jews, Huneker and his contemporaries hoped, would serve as a kind of catalyst, a “spiritual leaven” for a new America.

A young intellectual who developed an intimate relationship with the Lower East Side was William English Walling. The son of a wealthy and politically prominent Kentucky physician, Walling moved to New York in 1902 after graduating from the University of Chicago. He took up residence as a writer and social worker at the University Settlement, an important meeting ground for native-born reformers and immigrant Jews. As the historian Leon Fink has shown, the Lower East Side’s Jews had a profound effect on Walling. Through contacts with them, Walling moved toward socialism and cultivated an interest in Russian literature and politics. “[M]ake friends with these settlement people and listen, listen all the time,” Walling counseled a newcomer to the University Settlement. “They’ve got a lot to teach us boys, so for the love [of] Jesus Christ don’t let’s be uplifters here.” Through the University Settlement Walling met Anna Strunsky. A Russian Jewish immigrant raised in a prosperous San Francisco family, Strunsky moved to New York at the turn of the century already a committed socialist. She married Walling, the two would travel to Russia to report on the 1905 revolution, and they would later become founders of the NAACP. Walling had indeed traveled a long road from Kentucky, and his stop through the East Side had a deep and lasting effect.

It is possible to trace the contacts Walling made through Strunsky. Walling surely would have come to know William Edlin, for instance, a close friend of Strunsky’s from San Francisco. Edlin had moved to New York in the late 1890s specifically to participate in the Jewish labor movement, which he had read about on the West Coast. Edlin had become a highly regarded theater and opera critic, a leader of the Workmen’s Circle, and editor of the Yiddish newspaper, *Der tog*, one of the most culturally sophisticated of the Yiddish dailies. A second person Walling would have come to know was Edlin’s brother-in-law, Louis Boudin, a recognized legal scholar in the English-speaking world and perhaps the country’s foremost authority on Marxist

thought. Boudin and Walling were both contributors to *The New International Review*, a theoretical journal associated with the Socialist Party’s left-wing. Strunsky would have also introduced Walling to one of her dearest friends, Dr. Katherine Maryson, a Yiddish writer and prominent anarchist, which would have led to her husband, the Yiddish writer, Dr. Jacob Maryson. He was a close friend and political associate of Dr. Chaim Zhitlovsky, the Socialist Revolutionary leader, theoretician of Yiddish cultural nationalism, and towering figure in immigrant Jewish life. It says something about the inter-mixing of the time that *The Nation* ran a substantial and favorable review of Zhitlovsky’s journal *Dos naye lebn* (The New Life)—the first high-brow theoretical journal in Yiddish—despite the fact that few of *The Nation*’s readers could read Yiddish. *The Nation* evidently believed its readers should know about Zhitlovsky and his magazine.

Walling’s marriage to Strunsky provides an example (and examples within examples) of the multiple interactions between immigrant Jews and non-Jews. Those interactions as the historian, Christine Stansell, has observed, were important in that they moved native-born intellectuals “from the staid realms of reform into a bohemia open to different sorts of radicalism.” They show how immigrants were not only influenced by the surrounding society, but helped shape it. Individuals from disparate backgrounds, belonging to distinct communities, nonetheless spoke to and affected one another. Jews met Germans, who encouraged them to establish a Jewish workers’ movement using the Yiddish language; New Yorkers came to the aid of revolutionaries in Russia and helped to create a Jewish labor movement; and denizens of Greenwich Village came to realize that the grimy Lower East Side might actually provide the basis for an expansive American national identity. *Kleindeutschland*, the Jewish ghetto, Greenwich Village fertilized one another and helped to foster the dynamism of modern New York.

WORKS ON WHICH THIS COMMENT DRAWS

Hutchins Hapgood, *The Spirit of the Ghetto*, 1902

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PRESERVATION

The theme of preservation explores the physical design of the synagogue and influential architectural styles and trends, situating the Eldridge Street Synagogue among other eminent or distinctive houses of worship. We also trace the effort to save and restore our landmark structure, becoming along the way a model for reclamation projects across the country.

THE CHOICES WE MAKE: ELDRIDGE STREET SYNAGOGUE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

SAMUEL D. GRUBER

*Men from your midst shall rebuild ancient ruins,
You shall restore foundations laid long ago.
And you shall be called
“repairer of fallen walls,
Restorer of lands for habitation.” (Isaiah 58:12)*

In December 2007, the sanctuary of Eldridge Street Synagogue reopened to the public after a long period of decline and abandonment, and then, since the early-1980s, of documentation, conservation and restoration. The history of the Eldridge Street Project is well known. It was—and is - a pioneering project, and its process confronted, over three decades, myriad technical, historical, architectural, religious, financial, cultural, interpretive, ethical and philosophical problems and issues.

Throughout the restoration people came to love Eldridge as it was, essentially as a rediscovered ruin. Walking into Eldridge with the pigeons flying, paint falling, and the light shining through the dust motes was a revelation for those secular Jews who had little contact with the life of their parents and grandparents gone by, and no conception of what Judaism and their Jewishness must have meant to them during their first years in a new land.



The Eldridge Street Synagogue's sanctuary, pre-restoration and post-restoration.

The rediscovered Eldridge Street Synagogue was an evocative, even romantic place, but its appeal perhaps said more about the people who found it than the people who had used it for a few generations. Preservationists could read into the building what meanings they chose—literal or metaphoric. The crowds of worshippers who once filled the prayer hall, however, had never known the building like this, with its crumbling ceiling and broken windows. They had mostly left the Lower East Side by the time the building slid into its sorry state. They and their children had helped build new synagogues and new neighborhoods, first in Brooklyn and the Bronx, and later in the suburbs. Their choice was to move and to build, not to stay and restore.

Significantly, none of the first preservationists who worked to save the building had any specific ties to it. Their desire to perpetuate the history of the Jewish immigrant



experience on the Lower East Side was not specific to Eldridge (though the architecture and decoration of Eldridge did seem special, even in its ruined state). They wanted to protect and pass on something glorious of the past, a past that hitherto was mostly represented and remembered through dark photographs and dark accounts of an impoverished ghetto. The now-documented rich history of Eldridge was then hardly known. Despite its proximity in space and time to its first “contemporary” explorers, its revealed splendor was as exotic to them as a pharaoh’s tomb, and as unknown as the then-lost synagogues of Eastern Europe.

Why do preservationists—or any of us—choose to save what is old and ruined, and give it new meaning and life? It begins with a love of buildings, recognizing that buildings are practically and symbolically important in our lives. It results from realizing that buildings encapsulate the history of those who made and used them. Every building has its own history and stories, sometimes prestigious, sometimes humble. Sometimes these stories are specific, centered on famous or infamous individuals; sometimes they are collective, recounting a community’s life. Historic preservation must select those buildings and stories we want to save. These might include buildings designed to last, posturing toward history; or might include accidental monuments, survivors against all odds. Not every building can be saved, so those that are must balance their own singular qualities, while also serving as surrogates for what is lost.

Humans individually and even more so collectively have a strong sense of place. Buildings represent the human interaction—for good or ill—with places. Even in New York City, buildings are rarely ephemeral. Good architecture, when valued over the generations, can seem eternal. Architecture is one way that the present can talk to the past (and vice versa). Sharing a place with another generation connects us inextricably to an historical continuum. In Judaism, especially, that continuum is a defining aspect of who and what the Jewish people are. If a picture is worth a thousand words, a surviving building speaks a million. The experience of an old building is a means of establishing a connection with ancestors long gone, strangers perhaps so different in their perceptions, but yet most likely what we ourselves would have been had we lived in that earlier age. The continuity of Jewish traditions, rituals and devotion to community cements our ties to the past and links the

generations. The style and details chosen for a building can tell us, too, about the cultural references and recollections, and the aspirations, of a synagogue builder, or of a community.

Historic preservation is hardly a new endeavor—ancient Greeks and Romans restored and rebuilt venerated structures as ties to their past. Jews, too, have a long history of protection and restoration of cherished buildings—when allowed to do so. The very longing for the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple has created a paradox for settled Jews. On the one hand everything may be a temporary replacement until the coming of the Messiah; on the other hand, the urge to rebuild is constant. Historically, Jews did revere their synagogues and repaired and restored them when they could. In nineteenth century America, Jews often took the lead in the first American preservation projects. In 1822 Abraham Touro made a bequest of \$10,000 to the Rhode Island legislature “supporting the Jewish Synagogue in the State [in Newport].” The following year, in the General Assembly there is mention of “An Act to Secure and Appropriate the Touro Jewish Synagogue Fund.” Endowing the building, even when not in use, protected it. It was, in today’s terminology “mothballed,” until it would come into regular use again when Eastern European immigrants reconstituted the Newport Jewish community. Thus began a nearly two-century tradition of conserving the historic synagogue, which remains today the oldest standing synagogue building in North America. Continuing that tradition, a new visitors’ center will open in 2009. At about the same time Uriah Levy, Jewish Commodore of the United States Navy, set out to save Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello.

In modern times, where society and topography have undergone rapid change, the urge to hold on to things from the past has been especially strong, and often desperate. The destruction of Pennsylvania Station in the 1960s was a wake-up call to rally to save the past—or at least parts of it. New York Jews, too, saw the neglect and destruction of meaningful buildings. Leopold Eidlitz’s Temple Emanuel was demolished in 1927. Arnold Brunner’s Temple Beth El was torn down in 1946. What would be next? Despite the experience of Touro Synagogue (of which most were ignorant), and perhaps inured to a long history of expulsion, migration and destruction, Jews were relatively slow to act to protect this heritage.

In 1975, Gerard Wolfe first opened the door on Eldridge, but it was the publication of *The Synagogues of Lower Side*



Eldridge Street Synagogue balcony, pre-restoration

(with Jo Renee Fine) that allowed New Yorkers to face the extent of the neglect downtown. When the Eldridge Street Synagogue was inaugurated in 1887 there were many synagogues in Manhattan. When the Association of Friends of Eldridge Street began their daunting project to save the synagogue, only three older synagogue buildings—Rodeph Shalom, the Norfolk Street Synagogue, and Central Synagogue—survived in the city. Most synagogues built between 1887 and 1900 had also been demolished.

With the exception of the Association of Friends, the first response to Wolfe's Lower East Side revelations was more an *ad hoc* salvage operation than a coordinated sustained effort. Uptown, meanwhile, the first serious attempt to save a threatened synagogue did not occur until 1984, when preservationists failed to stop the demolition of Mount Neboh Synagogue on 57th Street. By that time, the Eldridge Street Project was struggling, but even so it provided a model and inspiration for similar grass roots preservation efforts in New York and across the country. The synagogue was listed as a City Landmark in 1979, paving the way for the recognition of hundreds of Jewish sites nationwide as local, state and national landmarks. It was soon clear that such recognition of synagogue architecture and history was (and remains) essential for protecting and saving important sites, and for raising funds. "Landmarking," coupled with intensive local history programs was an effective way to do this. Beginning in the 1980s, historic designation and preservation efforts for older synagogues were underway from Texas to Michigan, and Connecticut to California.

But as the Mount Neboh demolition demonstrated, it was easier to save a synagogue in a real estate backwater (as the Lower East Side then was) than to stop the juggernaut of Midtown development. And still today, preservationists choose where to invest time, money and political capital considering practical considerations of what can really be achieved, and at what cost. Grass roots organizers can fight City Hall, but usually cannot overcome big money. For this very reason there are far more projects today underway to salvage underused small town synagogues, even when it is hard to find a use for them, than to protect and preserve larger synagogue buildings and complexes on valuable urban or inner suburban real estate. A congregation can usually sell a synagogue parcel to a developer for far more than they can realize by selling to another religious congregation, or other buyers who would preserve the basic form of the building. On the bright side, changing demographics have encouraged more urban congregations to stay put—and not move, and this has led to more restorations of still-extant synagogues, including multi-million dollar projects by major congregations in New York City.

Preservationists learned too, that it is easier to rally public sympathy (if not always dollars) for projects that would not threaten the missions of more active congregations and institutions, than to save a synagogue that might still compete. Thus, support for Eldridge Street has always come more from uptown and suburban Jews than downtown Orthodox, who still maintain their own synagogues in the neighborhood (but some of those congregations, perhaps inspired by the popularity of Eldridge, have undertaken their own renovation work).

Across the country Jewish federations and other communal institutions were initially very slow to recognize the appeal and importance of historic preservation of even a few representative buildings. Only in a few cities like Baltimore and Hartford did they grudgingly give consent for such projects to move forward—but with restrictions on use and funding. More often, synagogue preservation projects went forward despite official apathy and outright opposition. Thus, from an early date the historic preservation movement in the United States was one of dissent within the Jewish community, part of the vanguard movement which has over the past two decades shifted Jewish institutional priorities more toward local concerns than international ones, and included a broader social and environment agenda.

Restored old synagogues are now cherished community assets. But it has taken two decades for Jewish preservationists to attain this level of acceptance for their work, and even now successful projects usually require a substantial portion of restoration and operating funds to come from non-Jewish sources. Government cultural, environmental and economic development grants are an important source of start-up funding for many projects, and offer needed validation, but government support of still-active synagogues remains rare for legal and other reasons.

At Eldridge Street, the first preservationists had to stop the deterioration, and to justify their choice, to make the building safe for others. Thus, they chose (for some, grudgingly) to make the building evocative in a different way and to restore some semblance of its former appearance, if not fully to its former use. By necessity, the process of restoration had to change much of the beauty that first roused preservationist awe, or the building would have been lost altogether. The goal of restoration was recognized early—in a vague sort of way—but the route to get there was uncharted. The struggle between modest conservation and total restoration mirrored an international debate amongst preservationists.

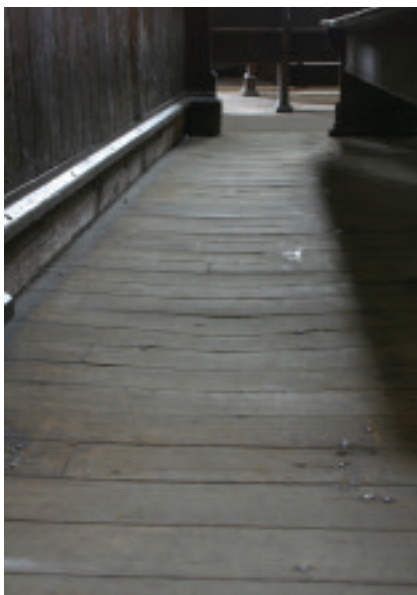
But preservationists, even more than historians, have to make choices about where time, money and political prestige should be invested. To invest in Eldridge and not make it beautiful, not functional, and not like a synagogue clearly would have been a big mistake. The achievement at Eldridge Street was that the path to those goals was

taken slowly and deliberately. Each decision—to conserve, to restore, to replace or to ignore—was made as part of a process in which integration of history, art, craft, material, function and effect was carefully considered. The result is a building that looks both old and new. The synagogue glistens with its original form and beauty, but it also wears its history well.

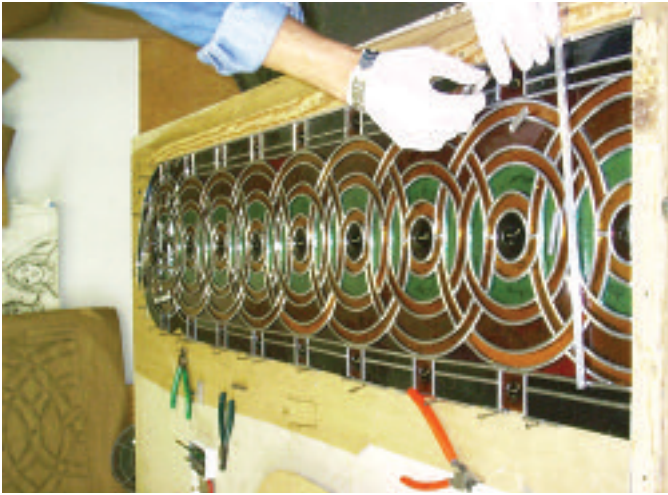
The thirty-year history of the restoration of the Eldridge Street Synagogue is testimony to the enormous difficulty in saving just one building (albeit a very big one). But as it has neared completion the Eldridge example has inspired new efforts at restoration at several other Lower East Side synagogues—Kehilah Kadosha Janina on Broome Street, the Stanton Street Shul, and for the past few years the great Beth Hamidrash Hagadol, a project embraced by the Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy, an organization that has taken the philosophy of Eldridge Street and begun to apply it on a neighborhood scale.

Ultimately, in most cases, the decision is made that allows full access and use of a building, and engenders a “practical preservation” approach that balances authenticity, aesthetics and functionality. This might involve conservation of original elements, restoration—and even some adaptation—of original structural and spatial form, and replacement of mechanical systems. In the end, we shouldn’t talk about a restored building, but a building renewed and transformed. In the end, every restored building is a new creation, a hybrid of past and present; something new, with a new purpose, a new context and a new audience that is rooted in the past, but functions in the presence. The next step is to point it to the future, too. What will the role of the Eldridge Street synagogue (or any historic building, for that matter?) be in the twenty-first century?

At Eldridge, over the course of many years, a methodology was established and an understanding evolved to tell the story of the building, its people and the restoration through the actual process of discovery, reinterpretation and implementation. For almost two decades the narrative history of the Eldridge Street Synagogue was intertwined with the narrative of the restoration itself. Today there is a different challenge. The restoration is finally complete, the building is beautiful, and yet we want to hold on to all of those stories and all of those lessons that were learned over that 30-year period. It is a big challenge, and one that the staff and membership and the larger community continues to play a part in and will play in a part in for many years.



The grooves on the sanctuary floor, created from the movement of immigrant feet in prayer, have been preserved, an example of how the building “wears its history well.”



The Museum at Eldridge Street prepared this exhibit of photos and artifacts to document the restoration process for today's visitors.



The restored Eldridge Street Synagogue. The restoration process involved fabricating finials for the roofline. The original finials had been removed in 1960.



SAVING AND PRAISING THE PAST

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We are gathered here today in a beautifully restored synagogue to celebrate its rebirth as the Museum at Eldridge Street. While it still has an active congregation, this synagogue will now provide visitors with the opportunity to revisit the past, to praise the memory of the numberless Jewish immigrants who landed on our shores and established a new home in what was for them, an alien land. This nation's promise embodied in the First Amendment to our Constitution, the separation of church and state, offered these newcomers the opportunity to openly erect a grand edifice in which they could carry out the tenets of their faith and create what became a distinctly American Jewish identity. But I would like to suggest that we are here to celebrate something perhaps more profound and certainly more elusive than the preservation of a building—it is the reclamation and preservation of memory. My remarks will focus on the important role places of worship play as repositories of memories—of history that is the foundation upon which the future is built. The great Yiddish and Hebrew poet, Isaac Leib Peretz, provides a *leitmotif*, a theme that underlies my remarks about the importance of preserving our nation's historic religious properties: "A people's memory is history, and as a man [and woman] without memory, so a people without a history cannot grow wiser, better."

Bill Moyers, in a speech entitled "In Remembrance is the Secret of Redemption," presented at the dinner celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Eldridge Street Synagogue, made a similar observation: "Every synagogue is a means of keeping alive the Jewish consciousness, but this one's mission of memory is unique in the world. Four-fifths of today's American Jews descends from that wave of eastern European refugees who came in that exodus (between 1881–1924). The Eldridge Street Synagogue connects these generations physically to one another."

A people's memory and thus its history are transmitted in different forms: stories repeated orally or written in texts; images created in a variety of media; and buildings. Yes, buildings have many stories to tell. As Bill Moyers remarked in his speech about the people who erected the Eldridge Street Synagogue: "They published in brick and mortar. Go there and read." Religious buildings often are the most verbal for they are capable of making a collective statement about the people who built and used them—about a community of like-minded people and their time and place in history.

Monumental religious architecture, whether the great temples built by the Greeks and Romans, or the Cathedrals of the Medieval Period, or more recently, St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, have always drawn the interest of scholars and tourists alike. Their histories, and that of their builders, have been carefully studied and documented. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about the worship spaces of ordinary folks with the not too surprising result that often their histories remain untold and unknown. Their houses of worship as they age bereft of scholars, tourists, and often worshippers, fall into decay and then disappear. This lacuna is not limited to the sacred spaces of the Jewish people; this omission is true with other faiths whose places of worship do not fit into the hallowed canon of architectural history either because the buildings are modest in size, lack aesthetic importance, or were erected by a minority ethnic or religious community. Also contributing to a lack of interest in preserving these buildings is the ethos expressed by many faith groups: "the church/synagogue is the people, not the building." Nevertheless, one of the first acts of an immigrant group once it is established is to erect a place of worship. A priest writing about a German immigrant community in rural Minnesota emphatically notes at the beginning of his study that "People, not buildings, make a parish."

But further on he observes, “No village would be complete without a church, no matter how poor they [the people] might have been and how modest their church.” He continues, “...as the parish prospered and its members’ dwellings became grander, so, too, did God’s house, because the church was the visible expression of God dwelling among them.”

In this nation where there is a separation between church and state and where there is a smorgasbord of religions and congregations to choose from, competition for members can become quite heated. One way to attract new members is to erect an impressive house of worship where people could escape the chaos of their crowded tenements and neighborhoods and find sanctuary in the beauty of God’s house. Furthermore, members were often needed to offset the expense of the land and construction of a building. That certainly was case for the Eldridge Street Synagogue; the building and land cost over \$91,000, and there were only 175 members to cover the costs; the sanctuary, however, optimistically sat 740. Or as one historian observed about the synagogue: “the attention garnered by an opulent new building might well serve to establish the prominence of the congregation and help the congregation reach out to newcomers.”

To fully understand what the preservation and restoration of the Eldridge Street Synagogue represents, it is important to look back on the history of the preservation movement in the United States. Until the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the nation’s preservation movement was dominated, according to one historian, “...by the white, female, upper-class and elite elements of society.” Or as these women were sarcastically described in the *New Yorker Magazine*, “blue-rinsed ladies in tennis shoes.” These women were members of organizations such as the National Society of the Colonial Dames and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Needless to say, their focus was on sites such as Mount Vernon, Williamsburg and Jamestown, and picturesque colonial churches on New England’s village greens. The National Park Service entered the picture in the 1930s and in 1935 Congress passed the Historic Sites Act and a survey of sites and buildings was begun, but once again the criteria were buildings of national historic significance, eliminating the vernacular buildings erected by the majority of the nation’s population. The National Trust for Historic Preservation was created in 1949, ironically at the time the nation was entering the prosperous post-war era, a period that has

been described as “...unashamed self-indulgence” when “...historic resources were under siege.” Urban renewal became popular, with the result that many historic neighborhoods were torn down to make room for housing developments and shopping malls surrounded by acres of asphalt. Flight to the suburbs resulted in the abandonment of many historic houses of worship erected by immigrants, and with their loss went their untold stories, stories that comprise an important part of our nation’s patrimony, its memory.

What finally alerted Americans to what they were losing was the effort underway in Europe to repair and rebuild its cities and towns following the ravages of World War II. Europe’s past was lost due to war; we were losing our past due to our own arrogance. In 1945, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established to provide an international forum in which views on preservation philosophy and practice could be discussed and disseminated; the United States was a founding member. The impact of UNESCO on American preservationists was enormous, but slow in developing; it didn’t take hold until twenty years later when the U.S. Conference of Mayors organized a Special Committee on Historic Preservation that produced a report under the title *With Heritage So Rich* that ultimately led to the passage in 1966 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The report’s introduction states: “We do not use bombs and powder kegs to destroy irreplaceable structures related to the story of America’s civilization. We use the corrosion of neglect or the thrust of bulldozers.” Its conclusion relates directly to the preservation of structures such as the Eldridge Street Synagogue: “In sum, if we wish to have a future with greater meaning, we must concern ourselves not only with the historic highlights, but we must be concerned with the total heritage of the nation and all that is worth preserving from our past as a living part of the present.” As a result of the report, the concept of significance for placement on the National Register of Historic Places was now broadened to include architecture and culture! The inclusion of these two categories provided a rationale for recognizing historic religious structures, such as The Eldridge Street Synagogue that now has Landmark status. Another synagogue I will discuss that benefited from this change and is on the National Register of Historic Places, is currently undergoing restoration. This modest structure is at the other end of the grandeur scale, B’nai Abraham Synagogue in Virginia, MN,

located on Minnesota's Iron Range. These two synagogues illustrate that large or small, plain or fancy, our nation's houses of worship are important cultural and historic artifacts—their brick and mortar embody memories of the immigrants who came to our nation's shores and found sanctuary in a crowded urban ghetto such as the one on New York's Lower East Side, or bravely ventured west to settle in a remote, isolated region of the Upper Midwest.

"Interest in early American synagogue architecture is still in its infancy," proclaimed *Preservation News* in July 1984. This was the situation nearly twenty years after the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. The question is why? Upwardly mobile Jews living in urban areas will often sell their synagogue buildings to new arrivals in their neighborhoods, often African Americans who transform them into churches. Perhaps the original congregants will take a stained glass window or other artifact from their old building to be incorporated in the new one built in a suburb, but generally the building is simply abandoned with no effort to document its appearance or to record its history. In small towns, the situation is often different. Rarely are these buildings reused by another faith; rather they are simply abandoned, remodeled for other use, or demolished. When I have met with congregants to discuss a possible appropriate reuse for their synagogue, I am met with resistance. This was the case with the B'nai Abraham Synagogue in Virginia, MN, erected in 1908 by early Jewish settlers on Minnesota's remote Iron Range.

A brief history of Jewish settlement on the Range will put this congregation and its synagogue into its historical context and make clear why this building is worthy of preservation and restoration. Iron ore was discovered in the region northwest of Duluth in the 1890s. Twenty years later the area was booming with over 65,000 inhabitants; 1,000 were Jewish. At this time, Minnesota's total population was two million; of that number 13,000 were Jewish with most residing in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. On the Range, the vast majority of the Jewish residents were merchants who had shops on the main streets of all of the Range's small communities, but tended to congregate in four of the larger towns: Chisholm, Eveleth, Hibbing (where Bob Zimmerman's family settled), and Virginia. Each of these towns had a synagogue, but Virginia's is the only one still extant. Virginia was the Range's market center and was nicknamed "Queen City" because of the wealthy mine



A 1908 view of Congregation B'nai Abraham, an example of vernacular religious architecture.

operators and owners who lived there. As the town prospered so too did its Jewish community who in 1910 numbered 121 residents out of a population of nearly 10,500. By 1908 they could afford to erect the Range's most elaborate synagogue. [Parenthetically, Hibbing and Eveleth's synagogues were former clapboard Gothic Revival churches, and Chisholm's was a modest frame structure demolished in the 1960s.] The red brick neo-Romanesque synagogue with its stained glass windows caused quite a sensation in Virginia. It was described in the local press at the time of its dedication as the "finest church [sic] on the Range", which it was as all of the contemporary local churches were simple clapboard structures with plain glass windows.

None of the congregations on the Range employed a full-time rabbi, but all considered themselves Orthodox. Each had a "learned" man who prepared the boys for their *b'nai mitzvoth*, and Chisholm even had a, a *shochet*, who provided kosher chickens. B'nai Abraham's women's auxiliary, THE SUNSHINE CLUB, was both a social and philanthropic organization, sponsoring card parties as well as providing care for its members in need. Although participating in their town's civic activities, including running for public office, the Jewish residents tended to socialize among themselves, participating in national Jewish organizations such as B'nai Brith and Hadassah. When the Depression hit in the 1930s, the need for iron ore diminished, and many Jewish merchants closed their shops and departed for larger urban areas. Those that remained prospered when a recovery of sorts occurred during and following World War II, but by that time many of their children had left the Range for jobs elsewhere. The synagogues continued to function, but by the 1980s all except B'nai Abraham were closed and either demolished or transformed into a residence. It was at this

time that I heard about the synagogue in Virginia and became concerned about its fate. The building was placed on the National Register in 1983, and although the handful of elderly members who remained expressed interest in the future of the building, they felt very strongly that if it could no longer be used as a synagogue, it should be demolished. They were literally praying for a miracle that would see a revival of Jewish life on the Range such as happened during the 1940s that would result in new members joining their synagogue. The chances of this occurring were remote, to say the very least. Today, the Jewish population on the Iron Range can literally be counted on two hands. Although the Virginia Area Historical Society expressed interest in using the structure as a museum and cultural center, the congregants remained adamant about their desire to see the building remain in use as a synagogue. What I was able to do in the 1980s was take students from the University of Minnesota up to the Range to thoroughly photograph and document the synagogues, including the closed ones, conduct archival research on the Jewish community, and interview members, past and present of the synagogues, as well as their non-Jewish neighbors. In this way I felt that if all the synagogues were lost and their members gone, at the very least the memory of the Range's once vibrant Jewish community would be documented.

It was at this time that I became aware of others who were trying to preserve historic synagogues in the USA, in particular Gerard R. Wolfe, a professor at NYU who was ahead of the preservation curve when it came to synagogues. In 1971 he was able to gain access to the Eldridge Street Synagogue's sanctuary that had not been in use since the mid-1950s and was overwhelmed by its beauty and alarmed at its condition. He formed the Friends of Eldridge Street Synagogue and successfully raised enough money to stabilize the structure. In the 1980s, at about the same time I was struggling to raise interest in preserving B'nai Abraham, Roberta Brandes Gratz, a preservationist and journalist, started the Eldridge Street Project and began the daunting task of raising millions of dollars to preserve and restore the historic synagogue. I believe we both recognized that one of the first tasks we had to undertake if we wanted to see these buildings preserved was to educate the public regarding their importance as repositories of memory and history. In collaboration with the University of Minnesota, where I was then teaching, and the National Conference of Christians

and Jews, Inc., I formed the Center for the Documentation and Preservation of Religious Architecture in 1987. In 1991 the Center was presented with the Award for a Model Initiative by Partners for Sacred Places, an off-shoot of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, for its efforts to document places of worship and its educational programs, including a conference at the University of Minnesota in 1989 that had the same title as this presentation: "Saving and Praising the Past." National experts, such as the historian and theologian Martin Marty from the University of Chicago, and international speakers, such as Bezalel Narkiss, founder of The Centre for Jewish Art at Hebrew University in Jerusalem that was overseeing the documentation of synagogue remains in Europe, shared with the public the importance of preserving religious properties. The Center and the conference did raise people's awareness of the historic religious sites in their midst and did result in concerted efforts to preserve a number of religious buildings, however, it had little impact on the Jewish community in Virginia. The synagogue remained in use, but was suffering from deferred maintenance. How long it would survive intact remained an issue.

In November of 1990, I was invited to speak at a conference at Hebrew Union College in New York entitled, "The Future of Jewish Monuments". It was here that I met Roberta Gratz and had an opportunity to visit the Eldridge Street Synagogue. To say I was overwhelmed with what I saw and the enormous task that Roberta had undertaken is an understatement. But her enthusiasm and optimism in face of what would appear to be insurmountable odds, gave me the encouragement to continue my attack on the windmills I faced in Virginia, MN. While the two buildings we were trying to preserve were dramatically different in scale and degree of decay, our tasks were similar—to raise awareness and then to raise restoration funds. Could it be done? Not long after this conference, the National Trust for Historic Preservation contacted me and asked if I would be interested in writing a book that would feature historic places of worship that reflected our nation's great ethnic and religious diversity. It was hoped that such a publication would make the public aware of how these buildings erected by our immigrant forbearers were part of our country's patrimony. I accepted the offer and in 1997, the Trust published my book *America's Religious Architecture: Sacred Places for Every Community*. Featured in that book are the Eldridge Street and B'nai Abraham Synagogues; obviously

I had my own agenda. One immediate result of the book's publication was that state historical societies and preservation organizations began to include sessions at their conferences that focused on preserving religious properties. I had the opportunity to speak at many of these and was pleased at the interest that was expressed in these too often ignored buildings. The public's education was advancing.

While the Eldridge Street Project progressed, slowly but steadily, B'nai Abraham's future remained uncertain. Periodically I would check on its condition, write an article for the local and national press in the increasingly forlorn hope that folks in the local Jewish community would come forward to save the building. I already had the support and interest of the state's preservation office, but as long as the building remained a functioning synagogue, there was little that could be done. It took a small disaster and a minor miracle in 2003, twenty years after my first effort to save the building, for this to finally happen. In the late 1990s, the congregation was down to two members: one was in a Virginia nursing home suffering from dementia, the other a retired 90 year old doctor who wanted to move to Minneapolis to be near his son. In 2003, he decided that he would try to sell the building, or have it demolished salvaging the stained glass windows for future sale. His son, seeking advice regarding its sale, contacted me, as I had spoken to his father on several occasions, as well as the director of the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest. A member of the Society's board was married to the son of one of the congregation's founders. It was the imminent threat of the building's sale and/or demolition that finally spurred him and other descendants of congregants to take action. A visit to the building was arranged; what we saw was heartbreaking. The good doctor had forgotten to turn the water off one winter and the pipes burst; the walls and floor were covered with mold; prayer books, *kipot*, and *tallit* found on the floor and shoved on shelves were in various stages of decay. There were even half-filled bottles of kosher wine aging in the kitchen where dishes were strewn around. The doctor also neglected to tell anyone that he had all the benches ripped out of the sanctuary and had given them to a small Orthodox synagogue in Minneapolis, including seats with the names of donors whose descendants were now concerned about the building's future. The little synagogue was rapidly going to ruin. As a result of the visit, former congregants, descendants of congregants, and other interested individuals

formed an advocacy organization to explore the feasibility of restoring the synagogue for use as a heritage center celebrating Jewish history and culture on the Range, and to serve as a venue for educational programs, retreats, and other community events. I was invited to serve on the board as its historical consultant, a position I gladly accepted. The group, called the Friends of B'nai Abraham Synagogue, incorporated as a 501(c) 3 organization in 2004, and succeeded in acquiring ownership of the building. A grant was received from the MN Historical Society to conduct a feasibility study to determine if the building could be preserved and adapted for reuse, and to interview community leaders in Virginia to see if there was interest in its reuse. The study's conclusion was that the building was basically sound and could be restored. The Virginia community enthusiastically supported the effort to the degree that the Virginia Area Historical Society agreed to administer the building and use it as a venue for exhibits and programs, and the Virginia Foundation pledged to commit funds towards its restoration. The Friends began to write grants and solicit donations and within two years raised nearly \$200,000, a considerable sum considering the size of the project and the funding pool they could draw upon. Like Eldridge Street, the Friends group plan to change the project's name; it will be known as the B'nai Abraham Cultural Center and Museum. The restoration of the building is nearly complete; all that remains to be done, when funds are available, is to remove the unsightly 1950s addition to the front façade and restore it to its original appearance. The building is now completely handicap accessible and will open this summer with a series of cultural programs, including Teachers' Seminars sponsored by the MN Humanities Commission, and a permanent exhibit documenting the history of Jewish settlement on the Range. But like the Eldridge Street Synagogue, it will continue to be a Jewish house of worship. In this way it will fulfill the dream of its last members who hoped to see their building continue to function as a synagogue. The *Aron ha Kodesh* and *bimah* remain in the sanctuary, and youth groups from Twin Cities synagogues and schools will make pilgrimages to the synagogue with their Torah Scrolls to conduct Sabbath services, and to be made aware of the Jewish immigrants who a century ago bravely set forth into the wilderness to establish a new life in the New World, and regardless of the challenges they faced, did not abandon their ancient traditions. The walls of this old building will echo once again

with the voices of young people; its bricks and mortar, like the bricks and mortar of the Eldridge Street Synagogue, will continue to connect generations. Yes, a people's memory is history, and without our history we cannot grow wiser, better. Buildings, like these two historic synagogues, resonate with memories, they do speak to us, their voices must continue to be heard so the memory of those who came before us is never lost. Let it be so.



These photos show Bnai Abraham's sanctuary before and after restoration.

WORKS ON WHICH THIS COMMENT DRAWS

Marilyn J. Chiat, *America's Religious Architecture: Sacred Places for Every Community*. 1997.

Antoinette J. Lee. "Discovering Old Cultures in the New World: The Role of Ethnicity," in *The American Mosaic: Preserving a Nation's Heritage*. 1987.

W. Brown Morton III, "What Do We Preserve and Why?" in *The American Mosaic*.

Bill Moyers. "In Remembrance is the Secret of Redemption," *Common Bond*, reprint, December 5, 1988.

United States Department of the Interior. National Park Service. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. Eldridge Street Synagogue. 1996.

Vincent Arthur Yzermans. *The Spirit in Central Minnesota: A Centennial Narrative of the Church of St. Cloud: 1889-1989*. 1990.

Research on Range Jewry was conducted by students enrolled in classes taught by the author at the University of Minnesota from 1983-1986. Research material is stored in the archives of the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest, Andersen Library, University of Minnesota.