Praise for *Jewish Revival Inside Out*

"In the light of the radical focus on Central European Jewish identity with the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, where a Jewish president was falsely accused of being at the helm of a Nazi state, a comprehensive study of how Jewish identity has been transformed in our global world was needed; the present volume with its reach from Israel to Germany to (indeed) Ukraine, more than fulfills the bill. This is an important addition to our understanding of the debates about the intersection of religious, ethic, and political images of the Jew in the modern world."

—Sander Gilman, coauthor of *Cosmopolitanisms and the Jew*

"A bold and global approach to today's complex Jewish experiences. Looking beyond the two demographic centers of Jewish life, it includes foci on Europe, where communal continuity was devastated, and Asian-inspired hybrid spiritualities emerging in North America or encountered by young Israelis traveling eastward. Recommended for those willing to rethink assumptions about the contemporary meaning of the adjective 'Jewish.'"

—Harvey Goldberg, emeritus professor, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

"The rhizome of ethoses and practices of Jewishness unraveled in *Jewish Revival Inside Out* transcends cultural and national boundaries to suggest an evergreen dynamic of thriving Jewish identities in a post-Holocaust era. The mélange of embodiments of Jewish affiliations and associations vibrantly depicted in the book testifies to the diasporic decentralization of all manner of Jewishly inspired living among various circles and communities. The authors of this volume, while addressing different manifestations of this move, daringly and originally argue that through reclaiming and remaking Jewishness, an excitingly budding cultural turn emerges. It heralds new ways of surviving a self-contradictory, yet hybridized world, compounding secularization, fundamentalism, globalization, and nationalism."

—Haim Hazan, professor emeritus of social anthropology, Tel Aviv University

"What a feast this is, drawn from an eclectic and refreshingly global menu of contemporary cultural performances of Jewish revival. For those who take pleasure in accounts of Jewish innovations, both enduring and ephemeral, here are the inside stories, thoughtfully parsed, with an abundance of judicious, yet still juicy detail."

—Vanessa Ochs, professor of religious studies, University of Virginia

Jewish Revival Inside Out

Raphael Patai Series in Jewish Folklore and Anthropology

General Editor

Dan Ben-Amos

University of Pennsylvania

JEWISH REVIVAL INSIDE OUT

Remaking Jewishness in a Transnational Age

Edited by Daniel Monterescu and Rachel Werczberger

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
DETROIT

Copyright © 2022 by Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 48201. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced without formal permission.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2022944876

ISBN 978-0-8143-4917-5 (paperback)
ISBN 978-0-8143-4918-2 (case)
ISBN 978-0-8143-4949-6 (e-book)

Published with support from the fund for the Raphael Patai Series in Jewish Folklore and Anthropology.

Cover design by Mindy Basinger Hill.

Wayne State University Press rests on Waawiyaataanong, also referred to as Detroit, the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Three Fires Confederacy. These sovereign lands were granted by the Ojibwe, Odawa, Potawatomi, and Wyandot Nations, in 1807, through the Treaty of Detroit. Wayne State University Press affirms Indigenous sovereignty and honors all tribes with a connection to Detroit. With our Native neighbors, the press works to advance educational equity and promote a better future for the earth and all people.

Wayne State University Press
Leonard N. Simons Building
4809 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48201-1309

Visit us online at wsupress.wayne.edu.

*In memory of Régine Azria (1948–2016) and for the futures of our own intimate Jewlennials—
Hillel, Gaia, Adam, Naomi and Ella*

The Jews are not a historical people
and not even an archeological people—the Jews
are a geological people with rifts
and cave-ins and strata and fiery lava.
Their history must be measured
on a different scale.

Yehuda Amichai, *The Jews* (1994)
Translated by Rick Black, *The Amichai Windows*,
Turtle Light Press (2017)

Contents

Acknowledgments xiii

Introduction: Riding the Jewish Renaissance: Survival, Revival, and Renewal 1
Rachel Werczberger and Daniel Monterescu

PART I.
Concepts

1. Revival as Imperative: Reflections on the Normativity of Jewish Renaissance 23
Asher Biemann

2. From Kiruv to Continuity: Survivalism and Renewal as Competing Categories in Judaism 43
Shaul Magid

3. Jewish. Jewish? "Jewish" Jewish! New Authenticities amid Post-Holocaust, Postcommunist Europe's Jewish Revival 65
Ruth Ellen Gruber

PART II.
Contexts

4. "Is You a Jew?" The Jewish Revival Scene in Budapest 85
Daniel Monterescu and Sara Zorandy

5. Poland's Jewish Turn: Memory, Materiality, and Performance 105
Geneviève Zubrzycki

6. Has There Been a "Jewish Revival" in Russia and Ukraine after Communism? 127
Zvi Gitelman

7. Between Boundary Making and Philo-Semitic Yearnings in Contemporary Germany 147
Hannah Tzuberi

8. Ultra-Orthodox Judaism, Place Making, and Urban Boundaries in Paris 169
Lucine Endelstein

9. Breslov Hasidic Social Renewal and the Mizrahi Haredi *Teshuva* Movement 183
Nissim Leon

PART III.
Bodies

10. Healing the Self, Renewing Tradition: The Hybrid Discourse of Authenticity of New Age Judaism in Israel 203
Rachel Werczberger

11. "We Also Study in a Yeshiva": Ethnography in a Secular Yeshiva in Tel Aviv 221
Shlomo Guzmen-Carmeli

12. On the Altar of *Shekhina*: The Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute and the Gendered Politics of Jewish Renewal 245
Cara Rock-Singer

PART IV.
Retrospects

13. "High Liability Judaism": A Countercultural Autobiography of Havurat Shalom 271
Michael Paley

14. After-Word, On-Word, Back-Word 301
Jonathan Boyarin

Contributors 313
Index 319

Acknowledgments

This book started on two rooftops 3,000 miles away from each other—one in Dharamsala, India, and the other in Budapest, Hungary. During a backpacking trip in India, Rachel took part in an ad hoc Rosh Hashanah prayer service conducted at a rooftop restaurant that included a neo-Hasidic rabbi, a group of Israeli backpackers, half a dozen young American Jews, and a Jewish-Buddhist monk from a nearby monastery. In this exceptional moment, spirituality of different kinds—Jewish and non-Jewish—was seamlessly integrated. In Budapest, on another rooftop, Daniel marveled at the liberty young Hungarian Jews take in reformulating the Sukkot ritual in an improvised sukkah overlooking the infamous Jewish ghetto wall. Guided by his co-author and native Budapestan, Sara Zorandy, he witnessed the rise of a young millennial generation juggling Jewish form and content in unorthodox ways.

Such experiences, complemented by the insights of actors and critics across the globe, turned our attention to the manifold Jewish landscapes and lifestyles as they evolve before our eyes. We pondered the global transformations of contemporary Jewishness, which give renewed meaning to identity, tradition, and politics in our postsecular world. In the process, everyday Jewish subjectivities and official doctrines seem to diverge and intersect in profound ways.

Our respective observations soon evolved into intellectual synergy exercised in a productive academic workshop that took place in Florence, Italy, in June 2013. Under the Tuscan sun and the generous auspices of the Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute, sixteen scholars convened to present, debate, and further develop their work on Jewish revival, an event that enhanced our collective endeavor considerably and eventually facilitated the publication of this volume.

We wish to thank all participants who contributed to these significant gatherings for their unrelenting enthusiasm and commitment to the project throughout the process. Special thanks are due to the ReligioWest ERC project run by Olivier Roy and Nadia Marzouki for making this event possible. We are grateful to Sophie Zimmer, Magdalena Waligórska, Erica Lehrer, Lewis R. Gordon, Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, Sally Berkovic, Michael Miller, and Isabel Frey for their insightful and illuminating input. In Florence, Régine Azria made a substantial contribution to our thinking by distinguishing between Jewish revival and renewal and their respective temporalities. Her untimely passing in 2016, before the volume came into fruition, arrived as a shock to us all. We thus dedicate this volume to her groundbreaking work.

Like most edited volumes, this project took a long time to materialize. We are indebted to our authors for their enduring patience during the process of revision and production. Daniel Monterescu acknowledges with thanks the financial support of the Central European University and the helpful comments of the faculty and students in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. At Wayne State University Press we were fortunate to work with an experienced, committed, and highly professional team. We wish to thank Marie Sweetman, the acquisitions editor, as well as Kristin Harpster, the project editor and EDP manager, Carrie Teefey, the senior production editor, and copyeditor Mimi Braverman for their excellent work and dedication and for making the process so smooth, efficient, and enjoyable.

Introduction

Riding the Jewish Renaissance: Survival, Revival, and Renewal

Rachel Werczberger and Daniel Monterescu

If we are part of a movement then this movement has a lot of power right now. . . . This movement has a huge task in front of her: to rebrand God!

Yitz Jordan (in *Punk Jews*, 2012)

Jewish Present, Continuous and Progressive

A dazzling array of cultural initiatives, institutional modalities, and individual practices, grouped together under the labels "Jewish revival" and "Jewish renewal," emerged at the end of the second millennium. From Chabad's global tactics of outreach into new social spaces, through alternative cultural projects that are often dubbed Jewish spirituality, to local, community-based educational activities, these enterprises are realigning the contours of Jewish identity, engagement, and affiliations across the three geographic centers of contemporary Jewish life. Centered largely in Europe, North America, and Israel, projects of revival have also recently extended to uncharted territories in Asia and Latin America.[1] Indeed, the trope of a Jewish renaissance

1. The world's core Jewish population was estimated at 14,707,400 in 2019. In Europe, out of a population of 827 million, Jews numbered 1,340,000, or 0.16% of the total population (Dashefsky and I. Sheskin 2020). Two countries, the United States (39% of the world total) and Israel (45%), including the West Bank (2%), account for 84% of those recognized as Jews or of sufficient Jewish ancestry to be eligible for citizenship in Israel under its Law of Return. Nine percent lived in Europe (predominantly in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Hungary), 5% in other North American and Latin American countries (Canada, Argentina, and Brazil), and 2% in the former Soviet Union and other continents (DellaPergola 2020).

has become both a *descriptive category* of an increasingly popular public and scholarly discourse across the globe and a *prescriptive model* for social action. The urgent call to revive Judaism has engulfed all realms of Jewish culture, education, and modes of devotion, replacing older categories of practice with the promise of innovation, authenticity, and relevance.

Against the gloomy forecast of "the vanishing Diaspora" (Wasserstein 1996), which prophesied the dissolution of European Jewry in the wake of World War II, since the 1990s the Jewish revival discourse has posited an alternative future beyond the flourishing communities in Israel and the United States. In her internationally debated policy paper, *A New Jewish Identity for Post-1989 Europe*, historian Diana Pinto claimed that post–cold war Europe could be turned "into the third pillar of a world Jewish identity at the crossroads of a newly interpreted past, and a pluralist and democratic future" (Pinto 1996, 15). Reflecting Pinto's call to animate a "Jewish space," in the 1990s Jewish NGOs and philanthropic organizations, the Orthodox *teshuva* (return to the fold) movement and its well-known emissary, Chabad-Lubavitch Hasidism, and alternative cultural initiatives that promoted what can be termed "lifestyle Judaism" (Monterescu and Zorandy, this volume) or "identity à la carte" (Kovacs et al. 2011) attempted various forms of communal and religious revival. This spectrum between institutionalized revival movements and ephemeral event-driven projects circumscribes a diverse space of creative agency and calls out for a bottom-up empirical analysis of cultural creativity and the reinvention of Jewish tradition worldwide. To address this loose assemblage of social movements and cultural initiatives, in this volume our contributors provide a more comprehensive portrait of what is now a full-fledged transnational field.

Projects of revival offer different articulations of the temporal and affective relations with the Jewish past and history and project them into the Jewish future. On one end of the spectrum, Orthodox forms of Jewish revival devise new ways to promote what they deem historically authentic Judaism and call for the revival of age-old traditions. For instance, in a lecture titled "Rethinking What We Know About the Universe," Chabad rabbi Levi Teldon proposed a "revolutionary" mode of existential reflection: "Drawing on the wisdom of Chassidic teaching, the most basic building blocks of existence are reexamined from the bottom up, revolutionizing our understanding of life, reality, and our place in the world."[2] On the other

2. See https://www.chabadsa.com/templates/articlecco_cdo/aid/4013109/jewish/What-Is.htm (accessed February 25, 2021).

end of the spectrum, alternative cultural actors, such as the "unorthodox Orthodox" artists documented in the film *Punk Jews* in New York City and Marom and Moishe House in Budapest, creatively define postdenominational religious and cultural modalities: secularized but not assimilated, liberal yet adhering to "tradition" as they understand it. By reconfiguring the concepts of tradition, culture, and religion, they remake new ways of "being Jewish." Likewise, espousing the New Age credo of "embodied, earth-based transformative Jewish ritual," the Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute announces, "We create ritual as a transformative force in Jewish and human life. We practice spiritual leadership as an act of holding sacred space, time and soul."[3]

Defined here as the practices of transmission, social adaptation, and cultural innovation of religion *qua* "discursive tradition" (cf. Asad 1993), the terms *Jewish revival* and *Jewish renewal* should be first critically recognized as emic and normative concepts, often used by political and religious actors. Despite their differences, contemporary revival and renewal movements are driven by similar states of dissatisfaction with the present reality, be it the collective survival of the Jewish people, the safety of Jews in the Diaspora, or the solvency of Judaism (Magid, this volume). These diverse, often hybrid efforts have emerged in response to the synchronic challenge of global modernity and the diachronic plurality of Jewish life.

However, as analytic concepts, the terms *Jewish revival* and *Jewish renewal* remain vague. To make sense of this wide basis of social action, we propose the following tripartite definition of Jewish revival in temporal, ritual, textual, and communal terms:[4]

1. The attempt to answer the call for urgent adaptation and reformulation of Jewish practice in temporal terms from the perspective of the communal present continuous.
2. The framing of social action in terms of Jewish memory and tradition through textual or ritual reinterpretation.
3. The effort to seek new social and communal frameworks for Jewish life.

3. See Rock-Singer (this volume) and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HRovbSp4BM (accessed July 2, 2020).
4. For the sake of simplicity, we use the term *Jewish revival* as an umbrella concept for a range of projects, including those defined as Jewish renewal or renaissance by their actors.

Jewish Revival Inside Out seeks to reframe the interdisciplinary scholarship about the emergent transnational social field of Jewish revival from a global perspective. Transcending the standard demarcations between center and periphery, Orthodox and Liberal Judaism, Ashkenazic and Sephardic (Mizrahi) movements, we offer a broad outlook on the plurality of Jewish revivals in terms of time and space, text and context, body and ritual. More specifically, we unpack the dialectic notions of Jewish survival, revival, and renewal and ask how the attempts at a physical and concrete revival of Jewish life relate to projects of cultural renewal and the calls for a spiritual revival. Ultimately, what can be learned from these essays about the conceptualization of Jewish temporality by different social actors and about the different outlooks of Orthodox, traditional, liberal, and secular Jews regarding the Jewish past, present, and future?

In the following section we explore the history of Jewish revival as a dynamic discursive frame whose meanings changed over the course of the twentieth century. We then examine the modalities of revival as a communal practice: its temporalities, spatialities, subjectivities, and degrees of institutionalization.

The Newness of Oldness: Historicizing Revival

The concept of Jewish revival has had a checkered history in Europe, Israel, and the United States. As an analytic starting point, we conceptualize the distinctions between revival, renewal, and survival based on the different perspectives on Jewish temporality invoked by each one of these terms. It should be stressed that these categories are ideal types and can be mixed in practice, as demonstrated in Nila Ginger Hofman's ethnography of Jewish Croatia (Hofman 2006).[5] We propose the following tripartite definition:

> *Survival* addresses a state of emergency, always in the traumatic present, that calls for the physical survival of the Jewish people and the communal salvage of Jewish heritage and material culture

5. Nila Ginger Hofman subtly argues that "the 'disappearance thesis' is belied by the experiences of many Croatian Jews, who continue to derive meaning from Jewish community life, notwithstanding their lack of religious commitment and cultural hybridization" (Hofman, 2006, 6).

(e.g., the reconstruction of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues in extinct European communities).

Revival refers to a commitment to tradition and continuity, predicated on a past-oriented temporality (e.g., the Chabad and Breslov Orthodox revival movements).

Renewal emphasizes present- and future-oriented temporality, where the past provides an adaptable inspiration source prone to radical creative alterations without the shadow of hegemonic tradition (e.g., New Age movements, secular yeshivas, urban individualistic initiatives).

Against the ideology of survival and a preoccupation with continuity, blood, and kinship, the categories of revival and renewal manifest the Janus face of Jewish life between past and future. "For many generations," write Amos Oz and his daughter Fania Oz-Salzberg, "Jews stood in the river of time with their faces to the past and their back to the future, until the modern age arrived, shook them and turned them to the opposite direction. Oftentimes it was the condition for their survival" (Oz and Oz-Salzberg 2012, 148). Indeed, such a sweeping assertion "naturalizes a highly contingent linear temporality" (Boyarin, this volume). Yet the historicization of Jewish revival in relation to modernity also shows that past, present, and future orientations are always mutually implicated in such projects.

Throughout Jewish modernity (Traverso 2016) the idea of a Jewish revival shaped, motivated, and gave meaning to disparate calls for the reawakening of Jewish culture, faith, nationhood, community, and identity. For modern Judaism the idea(s) of revival, renewal, and renaissance have fired powerful and enduring imaginations—"fantasies," however, "that cannot be reduced to nostalgia or the naïve longing" for a "golden past," but should be viewed as a "moral task" (Biemann, this volume). Historically, a systematic reflection on Jewish revival was first introduced by the German philosopher Martin Buber in his 1901 essay "Jüdische Renaissance." According to Biemann, the notion called for Jewish revival, which Buber saw as more than a mere call for national reawakening. It called for a comprehensive self-transformation of Jewish culture and existence firmly rooted in romanticist, modernist, and thoroughly aestheticizing sensibilities. It was aimed at "restoring a positive and unified sense of Jewishness *outside* the traditional tenets of Judaism" (Biemann 2001, 60). What Buber expected for the

new renaissance of Judaism was akin to what he believed the "old" Renaissance had mastered for its own age: A "return" that spelled radical innovation; spontaneous "rebirth" to a "new life" that promised freedom from decline and inward decay. In this respect, the Jewish renaissance echoed and expanded the call for *techiya* (rebirth) that had come from the Hebrew renaissance in Eastern Europe; and it echoed no less the development of cultural or spiritual Zionism, as whose cousin—and corrective—it often posed. But it also resonated with a broader longing for a "new renaissance" that was common among European intellectuals at the fin de siècle and during the three decades to follow (Biemann 2009, 2).

World War II, the Holocaust, and the near demise of European Jewry pushed many communities to the defensive mode of survival, and some have remained in such a state of existential emergency to this day (notably in Europe). The founding of the State of Israel in 1948 and the waves of emigration that followed left most of the residual Jewish communities in the Middle East and North Africa dwindling and vulnerable (Levy 2015; Baussant 2011). At the same time, the experience of displacement and trauma also endowed the concepts of rebirth and revival with new meanings: the actual physical rebuilding of Jewish life. Consequently, the idea of revival functioned as a powerful *figura* of thought to interpret an event as final and irreparably destructive as the Holocaust as both radical break and continuity—not mere and effortless continuance but *conscious* continuity. Jewish life after the Shoah did not just "go on," writes Biemann, it was "reborn," "restored," and made anew.

Concurrently, in the United States, Jewish discourse reflected an ongoing anxiety about the physical survival of the Jewish people, that is, a projected fear of annihilation through assimilation that resonated with the Holocaust, the plight of Soviet Jews, and the Six Day War. It heralded what Magid (this volume) calls Jewish survivalism, the so-called American Jewish obsession with demography and continuity. Survivalism has constituted a "culture of enumeration" that has become the ideology of American Jewish leadership (Kravel-Tovi and Dash Moor 2016). Yet, among many young American Jews in the 1960s and 1970s, a complementary move reformulated a renewed Jewish identity that was as much about renewing Judaism as it was about the survival of the Jewish people (Dollinger 2000; Staub 2020; Prell 1989). According to Magid (this volume), although Jewish revival in its survivalist sense is intent on the preservation of the *Jewish* people, Jewish

renewal in its non-Orthodox, liberal sense focuses on the transformation of *Judaism* from a state of atrophy to a state of vitality.

In the last few decades, new Jewish venues have embraced gender diversity, with synagogues and community centers opening their gates to LGBTQ members (Shokeid 2002).[6] The heated debate on race in America (Itzkovitz 2005) now calls to include Jews of color—a pan-ethnic term that is used to identify Jews whose family origins are in African, Asian, or Latin American countries—into Jewish communal space.[7] Together with the controversy on intermarriage (Sarna 2007) and the place of Mizrahi and Sephardic Jews in Jewish history, these debates animate the field of Jewish revival by bringing global Jewish trajectories, colonialism, and migration into the conversation.

In Israel the economic neoliberalization and deregulation of the 1980s and the concurrent decline of the hegemonic Zionist narrative and its social carriers—the veteran, socialist, secular, and Ashkenazic elites—gave rise to new identity politics, which triggered ethnic and religious revival movements (Ram 2013; Leon, this volume). In this new cultural regime, Shas (the Mizrahi ultra-Orthodox party that calls to "return the crown to its former glory") and non-Orthodox secularized Jewish renewal projects (such as the Alma College for Hebrew Culture and Beit Midrash Elul) reclaimed Jewish practice heretofore monopolized by the (Ashkenazic) rabbinic establishment (Lehmann and Siebzehner 2006; Werczberger and Azulay 2011). These claims for the return of Jewish life, however, are not immune to nationalist connotations, as demonstrated by the urban settler movement in Jaffa, Israel, operating under the banner of a "re-jew-venated Torani community." Featuring the figure of Rabbi Kook, one of the founders of religious Zionism and the rabbi of Jaffa in 1904–1916, the movement calls for ridding ethnically mixed towns of their Arab legacy and restoring Jewish dominance (Monterescu and Shmaryahu-Yeshurun 2021).

6. In *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question*, editors Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Itzkovitz, and Ann Pellegrini explain, "While there are no simple equations between Jewish and queer identities, Jewishness and queerness are bound up with one another in particularly resonant ways. This crossover also extends to the modern discourses of antisemitism and homophobia, with stereotypes of the Jew frequently underwriting pop cultural and scientific notions of the homosexual. And vice versa" (Boyarin et al., 2003, 1).

7. A recent politicized discourse that self-identifies as the BIJOCSM Network (Black Indigenous Jews of Color, Sephardim, Mizrahim) engages the question of Palestine through the lens of race and ethnicity. See https://act.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/a/2021-05-palestinian-liberation-black-lens (accessed January 17, 2021).

Modalities of Revival: Jews, Jewishness, Judaism

Today, the ideas of Jewish revival and renewal have come to denote multiple and often contradictory social-historical processes, meanings, and motivations: from the physical national revival of the Jewish people in the nation-state of Israel and the reconstruction of Jewish communal and cultural life in Eastern Europe, through the revival of Marrano identities in Portugal, to the philanthropy-based identity projects and individualized forms of Jewish spirituality in North America. These revival projects are predicated on four modular building blocks: temporality (past, present, future), subjectivity (the scope of the historical subject), institutionalization (the degree of organizational structure), and spatiality (local, national, regional, and global). The relational arrangement of these foundations produces a mosaic of modalities, movements, and initiatives and offers different frame alignments (Snow and Benford 1988) for Jewish action and social mobilization.

Temporality

As a cultural idiom, the term *revival* reflects a sense of crisis and discontent with the present state of Judaism (often deemed "stagnant") and a wish to rectify and transform it. It marks a turning point and rupture, "a symbolic template of collective self-recognition at the moment of turning between old and new" (Geertz 1973, 219). We identify two temporal articulations of the present with the past and the future: past-oriented and future-oriented. In terms of the past, movements of renewal use the past as "an infinite and plastic symbolic resource, wholly susceptible to contemporary purposes" (Appadurai 1981, 201). Thus, although some Orthodox revival tends to submit the past to strict discursive and ritual constraints, other strands of Orthodox traditionalism are New Age or messianic, hence future oriented. Similarly, some Reform and Reconstructionist trends of Judaism are very much oriented toward the past (Werczberger 2011).

For instance, in an article titled "What Is Chabad" (2012), the Hasidic global organization defines Jewish belonging through the connection between past and present.

> By means of a rare combination that blends traditional Judaism with modern day techniques, Chabad has found the formula to develop a

> rapport with the most alienated of Jews and to enhance their outlook. By arousing an intellectual and/or emotional interest in our faith, Chabad has become the catalyst to connect Jews with their Jewish roots and revive the sparks of Jewish consciousness in the hearts and minds of each Jew. . . . You do not have to be a member at Chabad, you do not even have to agree with everything Chabad says or does—you just have to be Jewish—and you automatically belong.[8]

Like other Orthodox revival projects, Chabad offers here a temporality that is primarily backward looking ("traditional Judaism") yet up-to-date. Fully committed to the traditions of the past, the present is understood as its direct continuation, through an instrumental use of "modern day techniques."

Conversely, the notion of renewal applied by the transdenominational North American Jewish Renewal movement or the Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute embraces a forward-looking perspective, one that is bent on transformation of the present for the sake of the future (Rock-Singer, this volume). Here the past is framed as an adaptable source of inspiration, prone to radical creative changes and modification without the constraints of hegemonic rabbinic tradition. Similarly, in postsocialist Europe at the turn of the twenty-first century, the "Judapest" initiative rebelled against the outmoded official institutions (Mazsihisz) and focused on the "here and now" of young liberal urbanites: "a wholly homegrown and grassroots online and offline community aiming to uncover the Stimulating, the Relevant and the Cool in the Hungarian Jewish experience" (Monterescu and Zorandy, this volume).

The Subjectivity of Revival

The scope of the historical subject defines the contours of projects of revival, ranging from the abstract to the concrete, from the collective to the individual, and from the plural to the singular. As Ruth Ellen Gruber (this volume) shows, the different inflections, punctuations, and permutations of Jewishness entail radically different intentionalities and ambitions. Although Orthodox projects of revival often claim to speak for Judaism or for Jewish

8. https://www.chabadni.com/templates/articlecco_cdo/aid/1545922/jewish/About-Us.htm/fbclid/IwAR1bRbkfJCKTIcVAj79FnV0-vaARpT0C7Q3LyrUbVBmULsEN5kkG3lQbJGQ (accessed January 17, 2021).

tradition, alternative movements opt for more inclusive plurality (Jews and Jewishness). Some stress the physical continuity of the collective (the Jewish people), as a national or ethnic imagined community, whereas others focus on an individualistic reframing of Jewish identity.

The scope of revival movements attests to varying degrees of cultural essentialism and competing claims for authenticity. Thus, in her ethnography of the Jewish scene in Krakow, Erica Lehrer uses the concept of "vicarious identity" to come to terms with Christian Poles who identify with or pass as Jewish: "The Jewish-identified Poles I met in Kazimierz do not identify themselves *as* Jewish in conventional terms. But they clearly identify *with* Jewishness in a variety of ways that deserve attention. . . . These Jewish-identified Poles, in the confusion and consternation they create (whether actively or passively), also function as a form of cultural education and cultural critique" (Lehrer 2007, 95). In this context, Jewish music and the klezmer revival of the 1970s open up a space of engagement that Waligórska (2013) describes as the "dynamics of encounter."

Questions of race and ethnicity also expand the field of revival. Although much of Jewish studies reproduces the divide between Ashkenazic and Sephardic cultures (Bilu and Mark 2012), movements of revival can be equally observed among Mizrahi and Sephardic communities in the United States, Europe, and Israel. Thus Breslov and Chabad, originally Ashkenazic factions, now turn to secular and Sephardic publics and position themselves as bottom-up popular movements (Leon, this volume; Baumgarten 2012). One strategy used by Chabad in public events is the use of Arabic and Mizrahi music remixed and rendered with Jewish content. Thus the hit "Hashem Melech" (God is King) by Gad Elbaz and Beni Elbaz draws on Algerian Cheb Khaled's blockbuster "C'est la Vie."[9] More recently, Gad Elbaz joined forces with African American Hasidic rapper Nissim Black, taking to the streets of New York City to perform a new rendition of "Hashem Melech." Likewise, Israel saw ongoing hybridization of what was traditionally deemed Mizrahi or Ashkenazic religiosity with movements such as Breslov Hasidism and Shas, crossing Litvak and Hasidic practices for Mizrahi practitioners (Bilu and Mark 2012).

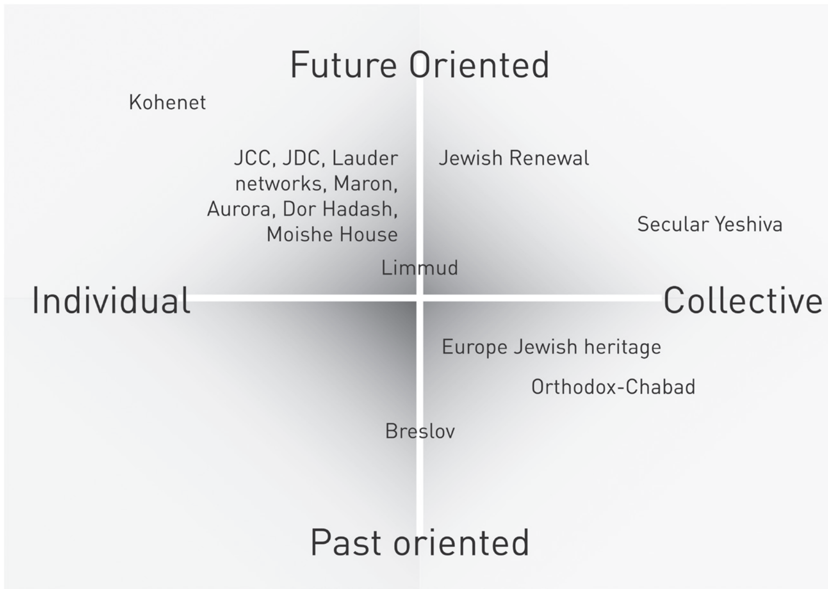
9. See the two versions at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dWeeUIZFgA&index=1&list=RDRvK19xgAxSU and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-Y_5brDUSM.

Institutionalization

Complicating their differences in temporal orientations and subject positions, initiatives of revival display variable scales of institutionalization, ranging from loose and improvised ad hoc local initiatives to highly structured state-sponsored or philanthropic projects on a regional or global scale. Grassroots bottom-up initiatives run by urban "ethnic entrepreneurs" (Gitelman et al. 2003) and "professional Jews" often reject defunct institutional structures and strive for diversity, relevance, and inclusiveness. The offline and online transnational exchanges of ideas and organizational models between activists from all walks of Jewish life are crucial for establishing a local Jewish scene and an active sense of Jewishness. For instance, Café Sirály (now Auróra), Budapest's "non-official Jewish urban space" and the Marom Masorti Jewish community center offer young urbanites a European sense of Jewishness—diasporic by choice, cosmopolitan yet endowed with a local grassroots agenda. Sensitive to the trends imported from Berlin, London, or New York, these loosely knit communities are built on the concept of cool-and-happens-to-be-Jewish. Such initiatives blend together a mission to "re-interpret Jewish cultural heritage" with liberal values such as multiculturalism, gender equality, and environmentalism.[10] These modes of action, like much of popular culture in late modernity, mobilize social media as part of what Campbell (2015) has termed digital Judaism. For Nathan Abrams and colleagues, "Social networking sites, such as Facebook, offer the ideal opportunity in twenty-first century Jewish life to explore and experiment with religious self-definition, meaning, congregation and even being itself, insofar as in Facebook one's being can be literally reinvented in way without 'stifling' religiosity by forcing it to conform" (Abrams et al. 2013, 143).

The figure on the next page visualizes heuristically some of the modes of Jewish revivals across a temporal and a social axis. A fuller understanding of the positionality of Jewish revival actors would also include further dimensions such as spatial and degree of institutionalization.

10. See https://marom.hu/. The 2015 "refugee crisis" in Europe forged new connections between Jewish activists and migrant support associations (Kallius et al. 2016).



The field of Jewish revival across temporal and social axes.

Spatiality

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, historian Diana Pinto put forth the term *Jewish space* to describe social and cultural sites of Jewish life in reviving post-1989 Europe: "There is now a new cultural and social phenomenon: the creation of a 'Jewish space' inside each European nation with a significant history of Jewish life. The first is the gradual integration of the Holocaust into each country's understanding of its national history and into twentieth-century history in general. And the second is the revival of 'positive Judaism'" (Pinto 1996, 6). Almost a decade later, Gruber (2002) showed how non-Jews "fill" Europe's so-called Jewish space. She coined the term *virtually Jewish* to describe how non-Jews adopt, enact, and transform elements of Jewish culture and how they use Jewish culture at times to create, fashion, or trace their own identities. Other scholars have extended Pinto and Gruber's conceptualizations to describe Jewish space as a spatial environment in which "things Jewish happen" and "Jewish activities are performed" (Brauch et al. 2008; Gantner and Oppenheim 2014).

Since the 1990s, Jewish spaces have multiplied exponentially, both in form and content, and are now if anything global. By crossing national

boundaries far beyond "the three poles of Judaism" (Pinto 1996), Jewish spaces bridge the conventional geographies in the Old and New World. Notably, Chabad houses emerged in India, China, and South America, catering to tourists and local Jews who want to rediscover their roots (Maoz and Beckerman 2010). At the same time local projects of revival operate on a microscale in many cities, reflecting different cultural, physical, communal, and religious concerns.

Thus, in postsocialist Europe, Monterescu and Zorandy (this volume) identify what they call the Jewish triangle—Budapest, Berlin, and Krakow—which displays three different modalities of revival: exogenous, endogenous, and virtual. Berlin was first, witnessing some of the fastest growth of Jewish demographics in Europe (from 10,000 in the 1970s to 30,000 today); next was Budapest, which remains the largest residential center of Jews in continental Europe (circa 100,000); and finally Krakow emerged, a city with no substantial Jewish community to speak of but that hosts one of the largest festivals of Jewish culture in the world (which some have described as a Jewish Woodstock). The community in Berlin after reunification consists mainly of ex-Soviet immigrants and, more recently, young Israeli migrants; Budapest draws on native Jewish Hungarians who recast their identity, and Krakow hosts a bustling scene of heritage tourism. These cities form a field of exchange and connectivity, as demonstrated by such projects as BBLU Salon (Budapestberlinsalon), which brought together Jewish activists in Budapest and Berlin to "display the multicoloured and diverse nature of the city." As one artist in the German fusion band Jewdyssee poignantly remarked, "Jew is the feeling of metropolitan people who come from everywhere."

The Book Outline

Jewish Revival Inside Out unravels the cultural tension inherent in projects of revival, renewal, and survival. The contributors explore the dialectic between continuity and change, dissolution and creative transformation, by offering a fresh outlook on the tribulations of Jewish life and its protean agency in the face of an uncertain future. They explore notable cases of Jewish revival grounded in concrete geographic, cultural, and material realities.

Part I frames the diverse theoretical ways of understanding Jewish revival movements. It provides the analytic vocabulary for the reader to

better grasp the specific cases that follow. This part consists of three essays that explore the notion of Jewish revival from a conceptual and historical perspective. Historian Asher Biemann draws from modern and contemporary thought to trace the ideas of revival, renewal, and renaissance as normative concepts in Jewish modernity. The call for a renaissance emerged as a response to crisis and self-alienation. As such, projects of Jewish renewal also constitute forms of collective introspection; their programs often resemble a call for cultural *teshuva*, a return or turning that is akin to collective repentance. Drawing on North American public discourse, Shaul Magid proposes an analytic distinction between the two categories of survival and renewal. Both are embedded in the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic traditions and emerged from different iterations given specific social and political contexts throughout Jewish history. Both survivalism and renewal frame the present as a state that threatens the health of the collective. Yet survivalism is more focused on Jews and the collective, whereas renewal stresses the individual and Judaism. In that sense they serve opposite ends; the first is physical continuity, and the second is spiritual flourishing. Ruth Ellen Gruber highlights the case of post-Soviet Europe and the new Jewish-style religious culture that has become part of the mainstream and branded Jewishness as a recognized and recognizable commercial commodity. Although heritage tourism and the creation of Jewish spaces produce new authenticities, Jews themselves are increasingly becoming stakeholders in the development of novel definitions of Jewishness.

Part II engages in the richness and resilience of Jewish life in radically different contexts. Projects of place making from Europe to Asia rescale the transnational field of Jewish revival from the individual experience to communal initiatives, national projects, and global scales of action. This part consists of six chapters that follow various instantiations of Orthodox and non-Orthodox revival across the three centers of Jewish life: North America, Europe (Eastern, Central, and Western), and Israel. Analyzing the strategies and practices by which different social movements, NGOs, informal groups, and individuals take the liberty to create and often improvise new communal frameworks, the contributors reveal the predicament of religious minorities and fears of assimilation alongside the intense desire to transform Judaism and enhance its spiritual relevance for contemporary Jews.

Daniel Monterescu and Sara Zorandy look at the emergence of a particular kind of Jewish civil society in Budapest since 1989. Home to the

largest surviving Jewish community in continental Europe after World War II, Budapest presents a case of indigenous revival, which draws on native Hungarians who recast their Jewish identity. Against a history of strategic invisibility of the Jews in Hungary, Monterescu and Zorandy investigate patterns of community formation and identity discourses, which produce unique cultural institutions, religious claims, and grassroots activities that are vastly different from traditional structures and assimilative ones alike. In calls to reinvent tradition, initiatives such as Judapest, Marom, and Moishe House distance themselves from Orthodox, Neolog, or Reform institutions and promote a cultural project of lifestyle Judaism. Geneviève Zubrzycki discusses the significant revival of Poland's small Jewish communities and institutions since the fall of communism, a process occurring in tandem with non-Jewish Poles' soul searching about their role in the Holocaust and the development of their interest in Jewish culture and in Poland's Jewish past. As part of Poland's Jewish turn, Zubrzycki shows how these multipronged phenomena are related to a broader secularization process of Polish national identity and the building of pluralism in contemporary Poland. Zvi Gitelman assesses the challenges to the creation of public Jewish life in the former Soviet Union. Attempts at revival were made possible by the removal of all restrictions against Jews and organized Jewish communities, a large infusion of funds and personnel dedicated to reestablishing Jewish life, and a manifest interest in doing so among significant numbers of self-identified Jews. However, this project has been vitiated by massive emigration, especially of the young, the absence of traditions of volunteerism and self-organization, and widespread ignorance of Judaism and any form of "thick" Jewish culture. As a result, despite the efforts of foreign Jewish "ethnic and religious entrepreneurs" who began their activities in the late 1980s, there has been no religious revival or great upsurge of Jewish secular culture. With the destigmatization of Jewishness, ethnicity is no longer a mark of shame, but neither is it a driving force in the lives of post-Soviet Jews. Hannah Tzuberi proposes a postsecular critique of revival politics in contemporary Germany caught between philo-Semitic desires and state policies. She argues that today it is primarily liberal Protestant conceptions of Jewishness that shape notions of "proper" morality and modernity. Focusing on the process of becoming Jewish (*giyur*), she shows that, paradoxically, after the attempted annihilation of Jews in Europe, the desire for a return or revival of Judaism works to delegitimize

and marginalize non-Protestant notions of Jewish distinction. Moving from Berlin to Paris, geographer Lucine Endelstein focuses on the spatial effects of the ultra-Orthodox revival in Jewish neighborhoods in Paris. The practice of *eruv* illustrates both the blurring of ethnic boundaries between Ashkenazim and Sephardim and the emergence of new boundaries inside the ultra-Orthodox world. Remaining in the ultra-Orthodox revival field, Nissim Leon focuses on the ethnic determinants of the Breslov Hasidic movement in Israel, highlighting the reasons for its unprecedented popularity among Mizrahi Jews. Drawing on long-term ethnographic research on the Haredi revival movement, Leon identifies a number of elements that have awarded Breslov its prominent place in the sphere of Haredi religious outreach. These include the enterprises headed by the charismatic rabbis Schick and Berland, the blurring of ethnic identity, and the strategic engagement with secular public space in all Israeli cities.

Part III explores the intersection of Jewish identity and renewal with the body and the self. This exciting front of Jewish performativity takes the reader on a tour of the creative cutting edge of Jewish renewal, from New Age Jewish spirituality to feminist forms of Jewish shamanism. Rachel Werczberger studies two Jewish New Age communities that were active in Israel at the turn of the millennium. Undergirded by their critique of mainstream Judaism, the two communities attempted to renew Jewish life through ritual creativity and religious eclecticism and by fusing various traditional elements, especially Kabbalah and Hasidism, with New Age practices. She shows how a hybrid discourse manipulates several claims of authenticity: descriptive-essentialist, prescriptive, and existential. These layers fuse the personal and highly subjective search for the authentic self with the quest for an authentic form of Jewish spirituality. Shlomo Guzmen-Carmeli presents an ethnography of the BINA secular yeshiva located in southern Tel Aviv. This yeshiva is one of the hubs of the Jewish Israeli renewal movement, working out varied and sometimes contradictory values: pluralism, Jewish studies, Zionism, secularization, and humanism. In the yeshiva the canonical Jewish texts are viewed as a cultural tool kit and students are encouraged to debate, deconstruct, and reassemble them in accordance with their liberal values. Thus the yeshiva seeks to cultivate a textually based reflexive and individualistic Jewish self. The students use their regained authority over the Jewish texts to subvert the traditional Orthodox interpretive framework. Cara Rock-Singer's ethnography explores a radical form of individualized

Jewish renewal in North America: the Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute. Combining elements of earth-based spirituality, neo-Hasidism, and feminist neopaganism, Kohenet's spiritual leadership training program crafts an authentic tradition that integrates traditional practice with new forms of textuality, prayer, and ritual. Focusing on the contentious use of an altar, conceived by Kohenet's members as a ritual technology, Rock-Singer suggests that the altar serves as a window into the gendered politics of Jewish authenticity and, by extension, to the gendered limits and possibilities of Jewish revivals.

The volume concludes with Part IV. In excerpts from a previously published interview with Rabbi Michael Paley, Paley details from personal experience the emergence and subsequent dissolution of Havurat Shalom. This *havurah* was the first countercultural Jewish community in the United States and set the precedent for the national *havurah* movement. Founded in 1968, it was also significant in the development of the Jewish Renewal movement and Jewish feminism. Jonathan Boyarin closes the volume with a critical epilogue and an overview of the stakes of Jewish revivals. Reviewing the individual contributions, Boyarin provides a lucid analysis of the ongoing challenges facing Jewish revival movements in the twenty-first century.

References

Abrams, Nathan, Sally Baker, and B. J. Brown. 2013. "Grassroots Religion: Facebook and Offline Post-Denominational Judaism." In *Social Media and Religious Change*, ed. Marie Gillespie, David Eric John Herbert, and Anita Greenhill, 143–63. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1981. "The Past as a Scarce Resource." *Man* 16(2): 201–19.

Asad, Talal. 1993. *Genealogies of Religion*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Baumgarten, Eliezer. 2012. "Between Uman and Morocco: Ethnic Identities in Bratslav Hasidism." *Pe'amim* 131: 147–78. [Hebrew]

Baussant, Michèle. 2011. "Heritage and Memory: The Example of an Egyptian Jewish Association." *International Social Science Journal* 62: 45–56.

Biemann, Asher D. 2001. "The Problem of Tradition and Reform in Jewish Renaissance and Renaissancism." *Jewish Social Studies* 8(1): 58–87.

Biemann, A. D. 2009. *Inventing New Beginnings: On the Idea of Renaissance in Modern Judaism*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bilu, Yoram, and Zvi Mark. 2012. "Between Tsaddiq and Messiah: A Comparative Analysis of Chabad and Breslav Hasidic Groups." In *After Spirituality: Studies in Mystical Traditions*, ed. Philp Wexler and Jonathan Garb, 47–78. New York: Peter Lang.

Boyarin, Daniel, Daniel Itzkovitz, and Ann Pellegrini, eds. 2003. "Strange Bedfellows: An Introduction." In *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question*, ed. Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Itzkovitz, and Ann Pellegrini, 1–18. New York: Columbia University Press.

Brauch, Julia, Anna Lipphardt, and Alexandra Nocke, eds. 2008. *Jewish Topographies*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate.

Buber, Martin. 1901. "Jüdische Renaissance." *Ost und West* 1(1): 1–10.

Campbell, Heidi A., ed. 2015. *Digital Judaism: Jewish Negotiations with Digital Media and Culture*, vol. 2. London: Routledge.

Dashefsky, A., and I. Sheskin, eds. 2020. *American Jewish Year Book 2019*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

DellaPergola, Sergio. 2020. "World Jewish Population, 2019." In *American Jewish Year Book 2019*, ed. A. Dashefsky and I. Sheskin. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 263–353.

Dollinger, Marc. 2000. *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gantner, Eszter, and Jay K. Oppenheim. 2014. "Jewish Space Reloaded." *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* 23(2): 1–10.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.

Gitelman, Zvi, Barry Kosmin, and Andras Kovacs, eds. 2003. *New Jewish Identities: Contemporary Europe and Beyond*. Budapest: Central European University Press.

Gruber, Ruth Ellen. 2002. *Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hofman, Nila Ginger. 2006. *Renewed Survival: Jewish Community Life in Croatia*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Itzkovitz, Daniel. 2005. "Race and Jews in America: An Introduction." *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 23(4): 1–8.

Kallius, Anastiina, Daniel Monterescu, and Rajaram Prem Kumar. 2016. "Immobilizing Mobility: Border Ethnography, Illiberal Democracy, and the Politics of the 'Refugee Crisis' in Hungary." *American Ethnologist* 43(1): 25–37.

Kovacs, Andras, Barna Ildiko, Sergio DellaPergola, and Barry Kosmin. 2011. *Identity à la Carte: Research on Jewish Identities, Participation, and Affiliation*

in Five Eastern European Countries. Oxford, UK: JDC International Centre for Community Development.

Kravel-Tovi, Michal, and Deborah Dash Moore, eds. 2016. *Taking Stock: Cultures of Enumeration in Contemporary Jewish Life*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Lehmann, David, and Batia B. Siebzehner. 2006. *Remaking Israeli Judaism: The Challenge of Shas*. London: Hurst.

Lehrer, Erica. 2007. "Bearing False Witness? Vicarious Jewish Identity and the Politics of Affinity." In *Imaginary Neighbors: Mediating Polish-Jewish Relations After the Holocaust*, ed. Dorota Glowacka and Joanna Zylinska, 84–109. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Levy, Andre. 2015. *Return to Casablanca*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Maoz, Dary, and Zvi Bekerman. 2010. "Searching for Jewish Answers in Indian Resorts: The Postmodern Traveler." *Annals of Tourism Research* 37(2): 423–39.

Monterescu, Daniel, and Yael Shmaryahu-Yeshurun. 2021. "The Hebronization of Jaffa." *Haaretz*, April 29.

Oz, Amos, and Oz-Salzberger, Fania. 2012. *Jews and Words*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Pinto, Diana. 1996. *A New Jewish Identity for Post-1989 Europe*. JPR Policy Paper no. 1. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research.

Prell, Riv-Ellen. 1989. *Prayer and Community: The Havurah in American Judaism*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Punk Jews. 2012. Documentary film directed by Jesse Zook Mann. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5c29lJ3U_A0&t=115s.

Ram, Uri. 2013. *The Globalization of Israel: McWorld in Tel Aviv, Jihad in Jerusalem*. London: Routledge.

Sarna, Jonathan B. 2007. "Intermarriage in America: The Jewish Experience in Historical Context." In *Ambivalent American Jew: Charles Liebman in memoriam*, ed. Stuart Cohen and Bernard Susser. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 125–33.

Shokeid, Moshe. 2002. *A Gay Synagogue in New York*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Snow, David A., and Robert D. Benford. 1988. "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization." *International Social Movement Research* 1(1): 197–217.

Staub, Michael E. 2020. "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a 'Jewish Continuity Crisis.'" *American Jewish History* 104(2): 229–33.

Traverso, Enzo. 2016. *The End of Jewish Modernity*. London: Pluto Press.

Waligórska, Magdalena. 2013. *Klezmer's Afterlife: An Ethnography of the Jewish Music Revival in Poland and Germany*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Wasserstein, Bernard. 1996. *The Vanishing Diaspora: The Jews in Europe Since 1945*. London: Penguin.

Werczberger, Rachel. 2011. "Memory, Land, and Identity: Visions of the Past and the Land in the Jewish Spiritual Renewal Movement in Israel." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 26(2): 269–89.

Werczberger, Rachel, and Na'ama Azulay. 2011. "The Jewish Renewal Movement in Israeli Secular Society." *Contemporary Jewry* 31(2): 107–28.

CONCEPTS

In the face of calamity and the threat of extinction, how do Jewish thinkers and ordinary community members define the Jewish condition and their own Jewishness? The contributors in Part I draw the contours of modern Jewish vitality by historicizing and theorizing the oscillations between survival, revival, and renewal throughout the twentieth century. Intellectual historian Asher Biemann traces the European emergence of the revival discourse to the early twentieth century and the writings of Martin Buber, who highlighted the specific temporality that marks the Jewish renaissance in relation to the early modern renaissance. As a form of reflexive introspection and critical break, the notion of revival redefines collective Jewish subjectivity and urges Jews to reclaim their cultural autonomy and historical accountability. By contrast, philosopher Shaul Magid focuses on post–World War II North American Jewry and highlights the spectrum between two complementary forces: survivalism, which seeks to ensure the physical continuity of the Jewish people; and renewal, which seeks the spiritual flourishing of Judaism. The tensions between individuals and the collective, Jews and Judaism, continue to nourish these concerns to this day.

Whereas the first two chapters focus on the historical temporality of Jewish revival, in the third chapter Ruth Ellen Gruber, writing from the perspective of an investigative journalist and a researcher, provides a grounded and critical observation of the cultural interstices of Jewish borders and boundaries after 1989. In postsocialist Europe and beyond, traditional essentialism transformed into virtuality and old authenticities gave way to new authenticities and Jewish-style commodification. The various inflections of Jewish subject positions mark the potentialities of revival and self-definition in an ever-globalizing world.