

**“I see a man of great wisdom... and in his hand is a nimble scribe’s pen.”**

**The Readers and Writers of *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman***

*by Phil Keisman*

## **Abstract**

*A Hebrew language periodical opposing the nascent Reform movement in Germany, Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman ran from 1846 through 1855. It was the first Hebrew-language, self-consciously Orthodox Jewish periodical. Formed by a small contingent of like-minded German rabbis, the periodical expanded the geographic scope of its contributors through its run. In an effort to win the ideological contest against the Reform movement, the periodical also featured forms of written content found in maskilic literature. This article begins by exploring the cultivation of a network of contributors and then examines how that content and the distribution model of a periodical cultivated a reading public similar to others found in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. It posits that the formation of a reading public should be understood among the techniques used in the early stages of modern Orthodoxy in order to retain power in the face of shifting structures of confessional authority.*

## **Introduction**

**“From Near and Far the Voices of the Faithful of Israel Extol Our Work”:  
*Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*’s Network of Contributors**

**“The Sages of the Nations Comfort Her and Bring Her Gifts; A Pleasant and Good Tasting *Melitzah*”:  
Marshalling the Power of *Melitzah* in the Battle against Reform**

## **Conclusion**

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## Introduction

Rabbi Ya'akov Halevi Sapir included a description of the citron fruit found in Palestine in a travelogue describing his 1854 journeys in the Levant. He wished for his European readers that they might “fulfill the commandment of (uttering the blessing while taking up as one of the Four Species) the citron fruit using the produce of the Holy Land.”<sup>1</sup> Sapir imagined his audience interested in travelling to Palestine, and living in accordance with *Halachah* [Jewish law]. His readers belonged to the growing network of rabbis in Central Europe engaged in contentious debate with reformers. This audience, an Orthodox reading public, was generated, cultivated, and spread through *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, the periodical in which Sapir's piece was published.

The question of “what is modern in Modern Orthodoxy” permeates historical scholarship, as writers look to identify novel aspects of German Jewish Orthodoxy amidst a movement ostensibly arguing in favor of conservation.<sup>2</sup> *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman's* cultivation of an informed public of readers through the writing, printing, and distribution of a periodical is among these features. We explore how *Shomer Tziyon Hane'man* borrowed from the Reform press to create an Orthodox reading public. The reading experience this public shared coalesced an Orthodox identity in the guise of an inherited tradition.

Analyzing *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* as cultivating a new reading public for the self-consciously Orthodox is a new departure in the historiography. For the study of the journal and Jacob Ettlinger, its founder, Judith Bleich's late 1970s and 1980s work remains authoritative.<sup>3</sup> Bleich notes that the periodical was “ideal for publicizing and popularizing religious innovation.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Yaakov Halevi Sapir, “*Sippurim MeEretz Nachalat Avoteinu*,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, June 9, 1854.

<sup>2</sup> Eva Lezzi, “Secularism and Neo-Orthodoxy: Conflicting Strategies in Modern Orthodox Fiction,” in *Secularism in Question: Jews and Judaism in Modern Times*, eds. Ari Joskowicz and Ethan B. Katz, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 209.

<sup>3</sup> In two recent pieces on Modern Orthodoxy, Bleich remains the sole citation on *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* and the Orthodox press in general. See Adam Ferziger, *Hierarchy and Exclusion*, (Philadelphia: University of Penn Press, 2005), 235; Jonathan M. Hess, “Fiction and the Making of Modern Orthodoxy, 1857 - 1890: Orthodoxy and the Quest for the German-Jewish Novel,” *Leo Baeck Year Book* 52/5 (2007): 50.

<sup>4</sup> Judith Bleich, “The Emergence of an Orthodox Press in Nineteenth-Century Germany,” *Jewish Social Studies* 42/3 (1980): 335-6.

*Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* appears in Adam Ferziger's work on Ettlinger, as well. Ferziger's *Hierarchy and Exclusion* narrates the genesis of Modern Orthodoxy's approach to Reform Jews. Four of the most important shapers of this approach were Ettlinger, Wolf Hamburg, Seligmann Bär Bamberger, and Esiel Hildesheimer. Each of these individuals wrote for *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, reflecting the way in which that periodical served the careers of the most prominent rabbis of the nascent movement.<sup>5</sup> Ferziger focuses on the legal tools in these rabbis' *responsa*. In his chapter on Ettlinger, Ferziger mentions that "through his periodicals, Ettlinger sought to create a unique sense of group identity that would distinguish the Orthodox from other Jews."<sup>6</sup> Here Ferziger is close to Bleich, citing the periodical as a contributing factor to Orthodoxy's growing self-definition. This article builds on Ferziger's and Bleich's important work by demonstrating how the literary forms used by STH created a unique reading public that was both Orthodox and attuned to modern genre conventions.

As early as 1973, Jacob Katz observed that the coalescence of a cadre of Orthodox writers led to the "unconscious adaptation" of new genres of literature. For Katz the use of these was instrumental: blunt objects wielded in the battle against the Reform.<sup>7</sup> But new textual forms bring with them new understandings and practices. Jonathan Hess' 2005 essay "Fictions of a German-Jewish Public" and his 2007 piece "Fiction and the Making of Modern Orthodoxy, 1857-1890" argue that the Orthodox press built an "imagined community" in the Andersonian sense.<sup>8</sup> Hess argues that the Orthodox "subgroup" of German Jewry was among the first to make fiction part of its representations of the German-Jewish lived reality.<sup>9</sup> Hess attends to early novels serialized in Hirsch's *Jeshurun*.<sup>10</sup> *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* did not publish narrative fiction in the form of *novellae*. It did, however update older Talmudic stories in line with genre conventions of the

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<sup>5</sup> Hildesheimer was earning his doctorate when the journal launched, and would become prominent in 1851, well into the journal's lifespan. His first article, however, appeared in November 1847, before he became a community rabbi. See Ferziger, *Hierarchy and Exclusion*, 153-8, and David Ellenson, *Rabbi Esiel Hildesheimer and the Creation of Modern Jewish Orthodoxy*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>7</sup> Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770-1870*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 152.

<sup>8</sup> Hess, "Fiction and the Making of Modern Orthodoxy," 59; Jonathan M. Hess, "Fictions of a German-Jewish Public: Ludwig Jacobowski's Werther the Jew and its Readers," *Jewish Social Studies*.2/2 (2005): 222.

<sup>9</sup> Hess, "Fiction and the Making of Modern Orthodoxy," 50.

<sup>10</sup> *Jeshurun* began publication in 1854 by Ettlinger's student, Samson Raphael Hirsch. Its connections in form and personnel to *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* are worthy of study in their own right.

day.<sup>11</sup> *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman's* mimicking of forms used by the reformers - which the reformers themselves appropriated from non-Jewish forms - reflects an early example of a German-Jewish subculture within Orthodoxy. This article follows Hess' approach in demonstrating that *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* created a community of readers imagining themselves to be part of a larger group.

What was read from *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* and how it was read are both important components of the periodical's contribution. While we examine polemic content, we follow Eva Lezzi in believing that "even highly partisan literature constitutes a polyvalent system that harbors many ambiguities and ambivalent moments."<sup>12</sup> Though the periodical's material is often overtly polemical, claiming as the periodical does to reflect continuity and tradition, the editors' use of a periodical format allowed writers to use forms that deployed their polemics in new ways. The publishing schedule and distribution model of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century periodical meant that writers imagined readers who would follow their words regularly, and readers imagined a base of writers with whom they could correspond. These imagined and real interactions ended up growing *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* from the work of a collection of a group of previously interconnected German rabbis into a transnational network.

### **"From Near and Far the Voices of the Faithful of Israel Extol Our Work": *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman's* Network of Contributors**

On March 26, 1846, Dr. Shmuel Enoch announced a new literary endeavor, a Hebrew-language "literature page" [*Literatur-Blatt*]. In a letter to the readers in the recently launched *Der Treue Zionswächter* [Zion's Faithful Guardian],

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<sup>11</sup>The treatment of these stories is ripe for investigation. The two Talmuds – the Palestinian and the Babylonian – are filled with fanciful stories with motifs borrowed from the Roman, early Christian, and Zoroastrian contexts. European Jews through the intervening centuries had a variety of attitudes towards these stories, which often do not match the theology, cosmology, or demonology of the Bible. Throughout the journal's run, many different writers adapted *aggadeta* from both Talmuds. Ettliger and Enoch included them in the *meshalim umelitzot* section. There is no consistent form in which the stories are presented. Some are put forward as short prose pieces with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Others have a clear moral written out before the story begins. Some are presented as long-form poetry. None are presented in their original form. Abandoned are Talmudic narrative trappings like mnemonic devices or shorthand for personal pronouns. None of the stories selected for the journal are among the more fantastical stories of the Talmuds. Considering that accusations of fantasy and superstition were part of the ideological battleground, inclusion of these stories would have been not without ideological content.

<sup>12</sup> Lezzi, "Secularism and Neo-Orthodoxy," 209.

Enoch wrote that the Hebrew periodical would allow readers to communicate across far greater distances and would “involve strict Jewish scholarship” which would go beyond his German-language periodical.<sup>13</sup> Enoch launched *Der Treue Zionswächter* in the years of political ferment leading up to 1848, when a wider variety of publications in German was reaching an ever more invested readership. In this more varied environment, Isaac Jost published *Zion* in 1840 as a Hebrew-language supplement to his *Israelitischen Annalen*, an organ for religious reform.<sup>14</sup> Enoch’s and Ettlinger’s *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* (a Hebrew translation of their periodical’s German title) began as a similar type of project, but for those resistant to the nascent reform movement. The Hebrew-language addition would eventually become a self-standing publication with an importance all its own.

The periodical’s bi-monthly publishing schedule allowed a real-time feel to the debates, while the distribution model allowed third parties to feel themselves part of the conversations. Edited by Enoch and Ettlinger, a luminary Halachist, the periodical would branch out from the initial network of German-Jewish Halachic scholars to include Galician rabbis and contributors from the Jewish settlement in Palestine.

The periodical targeted rabbis, who would then disseminate the knowledge in their role as communal leaders. Ettlinger wrote later in life that this had been his intention.<sup>15</sup> Enoch envisioned that the periodical could be distributed through the communal board (“*jüdischen religiösen Vorständen*”) or read privately. Listing the advance price as one Thaler, Enoch advised readers to contact the editors to arrange home delivery or to go to their local bookseller. One reader, writing to the editors in 1851, mentions that “Seventyfold does it please me when the letter carrier [*Breifträger*] comes to me and in his hands the love of my soul.”<sup>16</sup> The method of distribution of the periodical was an important determiner of how it would be read. So, too, was its language.

*Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*’s use of the Hebrew language was fundamental to its purpose: the creation of an Orthodox reading public to rival that of the

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<sup>13</sup> Shmuel Enoch, “To the Audience,” *Der treue Zions-Wächter*, March 24, 1846.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Kollatz, “Hebräische Zeitschriften in Deutschland (1750 - 1856),” in *Jüdische Sprachen in deutscher Umwelt: Hebräische und jiddische von die Aufklärung bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Michael Brenner, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2002), 45-6.

<sup>15</sup> Jacob Ettlinger, *Sefer Aruch L’ner al Masechet Sukkot*. (Jerusalem). Accessed at <http://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=14414&st=&pgnum=6&hilite=> accessed 15, January 2019.

<sup>16</sup> David Strasser, “*Melitzah*,” in *Shomer Tziyon Ha’ne’eman*, September 19, 1851. Note discussion in section IV.

reformers, one predicated upon literacy in rabbinic sources, and which would transcend national boundaries. While Hebrew-language periodical literature was a phenomenon over 150 years old, only with *Hame'asef* in 1783 had the regular publication of Hebrew-language journals come to Germany.<sup>17</sup> *Hame'asef* was an instrument of the *Haskalah*, seeking to expand the possibilities of the Hebrew language beyond rabbinic genres.<sup>18</sup> It included poetry and literary prose, philosophical treatises, biographies, and reports on recently published books, attempting to do in Hebrew what one would expect from a contemporary German-language journal.<sup>19</sup> Hebrew allowed the ideas of the German *Haskalah* to spread beyond the boundaries of the German-speaking world.<sup>20</sup> Whether in Hebrew or in German, the preponderance of the Jewish press in 1846 was preoccupied with advancing Reform Judaism. It was to meet this challenge that Ettlinger and Enoch launched *Der true Zionswächter* in July 1845.<sup>21</sup> They were now about to create a Hebrew-language supplement.

The supplement's primary function was polemical, aiming to undermine the growth of the Reform movement. Enoch described his goals as "preservation of godly religion, fixing its dogmas in the hearts of the *Volk*, strengthening Jewish consciousness, the arousal and further increase of religious sympathy."

Preservation would be a protective measure: "We fight all things unbelieving, deception and sham, (we) feature the activities of the so-called modernity in its perfect nakedness and vanity; daily heroes relentlessly strip it of its secure seeming-holiness."<sup>22</sup>

The debate with the Reform was central to the establishment of Orthodoxy as a discrete movement. The use of "Orthodoxy" as a term began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; it was a tag with which the *maskilim* gestured to Jews who resisted the

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<sup>17</sup> Judith Bleich, "The Emergence of an Orthodox Press in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *Jewish Social Studies*, 24/4: 324; cites Amsterdam's *Prei 'Etz Hayim* as the first Hebrew language periodical. Bitzan notes that the first papers with purchase among Jewish consumers were "Kurents," business bulletins published in the vernacular and utilized by overseas merchants.

<sup>18</sup> Katz, *Out of the Ghetto*, 125, and Walter Röll, "The Kassel 'Ha-Meassef' of 1799: An Unknown Contribution to the Haskalah," in *The Jewish Response to German Culture: From the Enlightenment to the Second World War*, eds. Jehuda Reinharz and Walter Schatzberg, (Hanover-London: Clark University-University Press of New England, 1985).

<sup>19</sup> Röll, "The Kassel 'Ha-Meassef' of 1799," in *The Jewish Response to German Culture*, 34.

<sup>20</sup> Katz, *Out of the Ghetto*, 72.

<sup>21</sup> Bleich, "The Emergence of an Orthodox Press Orthodox Press," 323.

<sup>22</sup> Enoch, "To the Audience."

Enlightenment.<sup>23</sup> In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as debates intensified and the Reform movement coalesced as viable, the meaning of the term shifted to denote those opposed to religious reform.<sup>24</sup> *Der Treue Zionswächter* described its writers as representatives of “*orthodoxen Judenthums*,” marking the first time a group used the term “Orthodox” to refer to itself.<sup>25</sup> Enoch’s work was part of a larger phenomenon of self-definition arising out of ideological conflict.

*Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* launched in July 1846.<sup>26</sup> With some 500 subscribers between *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* and *Zionswächter*, the two Orthodox periodicals reached only a sliver of the Jewish readership.<sup>27</sup> It should be noted, however, that a single copy of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century periodical reached multiple readers. In 1841, a single copy of a German-language paper would be read by an average of 25 people, an average that had dropped to 9 by 1850.<sup>28</sup> Thus, more than the 500 subscribers were reading the two Orthodox publications. The periodical ran until March 1856, with a year’s hiatus between July 5, 1850, and July 11, 1851, an unusually long run for a Jewish paper of the period.<sup>29</sup>

The periodical was published out of Altona, where Ettlinger served as chief rabbi and head of the *Beit Din*.<sup>30</sup> While nearby Hamburg placed caps on the number

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<sup>23</sup> Ferziger, *Hierarchy and Exclusion*, 1-3, and Jeffrey C. Blutinger, “‘So-called Orthodoxy’: The History of an Unwanted Label,” *Modern Judaism*. 27/3 (2007): 312.

<sup>24</sup> Blutinger, “‘So-called Orthodoxy,’” 320.

<sup>25</sup> Ferziger, *Hierarchy and Exclusion*, 96.

<sup>26</sup> Jacob Toury, *Turmoil and Confusion in the Revolution of 1848: The Anti-Jewish Riots in the “Year of Freedom” and Their Influence on Modern Anti-Semitism*, (Tel Aviv: Moresheet, 1968), 21.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin: 1900*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 52-3. We can thus assume more than 500 people read each issue of these Orthodox papers, it is prudent to avoid applying Fritzsche’s multipliers.

<sup>29</sup> Toury, *Turmoil and Confusion in the Revolution of 1848*, 18. The paper does not deal explicitly in the political upheavals of 1848, though examining how changing expectations around citizenship appeared in the ostensibly Halachic genres of *Shomer Tziyon Ha’ne’eman* would be fruitful for future work.

<sup>30</sup> Denmark’s sovereignty over Altona left its *Beit Din* as the last officially recognized *Beit Din* in German lands. In Prussia, however, legislation extending Jewish civil rights at the cost of *Gemeinde* privileges had been in force since 1847. Ettlinger would remain the last rabbi in German lands who retained judicial authority as late as July 1863. See Ellenson, *Rabbi Eshel Hildesheimer*, 8; Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, “Legal Status and Emancipation,” in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times: Emancipation and Acculturation*, ed. Michael A. Meyer, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 48. For the response of the rabbis of Altona to the Danish constitution, see Yechezkel Duckesz, *A Vision of a Community: Biographies of the Rabbis Who Sat atop the Throne of Rabbanut of the Three Communities of Altona, Hamburg, and Wandsbek*, (Krakow: Shaltiel Ayzek Grauber, 1903), 121.

of Jews allowed to live within its walls, Altona opened its gates in an effort to bolster the skilled labor sector.<sup>31</sup> In 1610, Altona had the region's only Jewish cemetery and a large Ashkenazi community. The Jews paid a special tax that gave them rights of settlement, work, and private religious practice as *Schutzjuden*, or Jews under state protection. This was their status in 1834, when the town first reached out to Ettlinger to become chief Rabbi of the city.<sup>32</sup> Neighboring Hamburg, which was part of the unique three-part *Gemeinde* of Altona-Hamburg and Wandsbek, had been home to the controversial prayer book reforms earlier in the century and had more recently been the site of conflict between members of the Reform movement and Ettlinger's teacher, Isaac Barneys.<sup>33</sup> Ettlinger himself had already been a player in ritual contests with the reformers, as was the case with his resistance to an 1841 Danish restriction on burial practices that were at odds with Jewish law. His resistance to the restriction earned him ridicule from the local Reform community.<sup>34</sup> Ettlinger's unique position as *Av Beit Din* and Altona's geographical proximity to loci of conflict with the Reform movement made it a particularly suitable place for the appearance of an overtly anti-Reform publication. Ettlinger's family and colleagues formed the initial cluster of writers for the periodical.

*Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman's* publication came at the end of a period in which reading practices in Europe underwent a significant shift. The proliferation of new and different types of reading materials, especially those targeting women, created an industry for journals, newsletters, and periodically published fiction.<sup>35</sup> Shifting literacy rates, increasing heterogeneity in religious preferences, and the growth of industrial modes of production provided the foundation for greater numbers of people reading individualized materials for pleasure in their private spaces.<sup>36</sup> These changes were opposed by "reactionary, conservative, and clerical

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<sup>31</sup> R. Po-Chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1150-1750*, (New York: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, 1990), 85.

<sup>32</sup> Rainer Liedtke, "Germany's Door to the World: A Haven for the Jews? Hamburg, 1590-1933," in *Port Jews: Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centers, 1550 - 1950*, ed. David Cesarani, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002), 80.

<sup>33</sup> Michael A. Meyer, "Jewish Self-Understanding," in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, 124 and 160.

<sup>34</sup> Judith Bleich, *Jacob Ettlinger, His Life and Works: The Emergence of Modern Orthodoxy in Germany*, (New York: University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 1974), 178.

<sup>35</sup> Reinhard Wittmann, "Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?," in *A History of Reading in the West*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), 285-6.

<sup>36</sup> Cavallo and Chartier, *A History of Reading in the West*, 20-21.



strata of society,” as there was a thought that reading would have an emancipatory outcome.<sup>37</sup>

From the 18<sup>th</sup> century and into the 19<sup>th</sup>, more Jews began reading for pleasure, doing so in the vernacular.<sup>38</sup> In the wake of changing reading practices during this period, Jews gained access to secular periodicals, and began publishing their own.<sup>39</sup> Prior to the appearance of Enoch’s work, these were all in the service of the *Haskalah* and religious reform. A doctrinally reactionary, Hebrew-language periodical was a new, hybrid cultural product.

Unlike other Hebrew-language periodicals, *Shomer Tziyon Ha-ne’eman* deployed the Hebrew language in order to publish Halachic scholarship. Its largest articles fit within rabbinic genres such as Halachic *responsa*, the exegetical essay, homilies, and conversations between imagined interlocutors about philosophy and theology. This material shared space in each issue with poems, stories, jokes, and riddles. The journal’s rabbinic writers also used this medium to print and disseminate previously unpublished works by European rabbis. This picked up in frequency after the year-long hiatus in the periodical’s publication. Beginning with issue 129 (June 11, 1852), the journal included a section containing “Hamburg’s treasures,” poetry and prayers taken from the communal archives.<sup>40</sup> This section was included in most issues through the end of the period when the journal was published.<sup>41</sup>

Halachic pieces treated issues of the day and of general interest, with some debates playing out over multiple issues. One well-known example came on September 1, 1846, when Ettliger published a *responsum* he had penned defending the practice of *Metzitzah b’peh* (oral suction of circumcision blood) in

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<sup>37</sup> Wittmann, “Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?,” in *A History of Reading in the West*, 284. On early Jewish pleasure reading, see Amos Bitzan, *The Problem of Pleasure: Disciplining the German Jewish Reading Revolution, 1770 – 1870*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California Berkeley, 2011), 23-30.

<sup>38</sup> On the Jewish difference see Robert Bonfil, “Reading in the Jewish Communities of Western Europe in the Middle Ages,” in *A History of Reading in the West*, 171.

<sup>39</sup> Röhl, “The Kassel ‘Ha-Meassef’ of 1799,” in *The Jewish Response to German Culture*, 32-33.

<sup>40</sup> These pieces all cite (in Latin characters) specific folios or codices, labeled alphanumerically.

<sup>41</sup> The journal’s masthead makes clear both the heterogeneity of the material and the importance of its mission: *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*: A letter to proclaim the foundation of Torah and to make it known, and to remove stumbling blocks from the path of faith. It has four parts: (Halachic) research, (Halachic) innovations and explanations, *responsa*, and parables and *melitzot*. Founded by a group of rabbis and men of science who stand against the rift.

the face of calls for an end to the practice.<sup>42</sup> After the ferocity of his argument intensified in the 12<sup>th</sup> issue (December 8 of the same year), responses from other rabbis and Ettlinger's defenses of his position became a regular feature of the journal; this continued for some six months.<sup>43</sup> In another piece, one reflecting the concerns of its time, Elazar Strasser composed a three-part *responsum* on riding a train on Shabbat.<sup>44</sup> Because the Hebrew language had not yet developed a word for "train," Strasser Hebraicized the German *Eisenbahn*. Only decades later would the Hebrew word *rakkevet* come into regular use.

The journal's network of contributors grew over time to 118 men. The core early contributors, however, had originally come from a small German Jewish network of rabbinic scholars. Prolific among these were Ettlinger's extended family: his brother Leib, his father Aharon, and his brother-in-law Ya'akov Koppel.<sup>45</sup> Ettlinger's teachers, classmates, and students featured in a number of articles. These included figures recognized as seminal in modern Orthodoxy, including his teacher Avraham Wolf Hamburg and his student Esiel Hildesheimer and Seligman Bär Bamberger.<sup>46</sup> This German core, clustered around Ettlinger, represented only a narrow cross-section of Jewish thought in Germany. However, from this cross-section would emerge the bulk of the institutional, literary, and religious leadership of modern Orthodoxy.

Debates drew in readers, some going on to become regular contributors to the journal. It was through the incorporation of these contributors that *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman* began growing beyond its initial cluster of German rabbis and into Central and Eastern Europe. In issue 20, the journal published a letter from Itzik Wegner of Urman, then in Austria-Hungary. Wegner addresses

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<sup>42</sup> The matter of circumcision in general and *metzitzah* in particular were sources of contention within the Jewish community and between some local communities and the state. See Robin Judd, "The Circumcision Question in German-Speaking Lands: 1843 - 1857," in *Contested Rituals: Circumcision, Kosher Butchering, and Jewish Political Life in Germany, 1843 - 1933*, (Cornell University Press, 2007); and my forthcoming work on Ettlinger's approach to public health.

<sup>43</sup> See: Jacob Ettlinger "On the Matter of *Metzitzah*," *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, September 1, 1846, and Ettlinger, "More on the Matter of *Metzitzah*," *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, December 8, 1846; Avraham Ulman, "Responsum on the Matter of *Metzitzah* with Use of a Sponge on Shabbat," *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, March 30, 1847 and April 13, 1847.

<sup>44</sup> Elezar Strasser, "A Great Announcement with Regard to Traveling by Train on Shabbat," *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, April 27, 1847, May 11, 1847, and May 25, 1847.

<sup>45</sup> "Dowry agreement for Rachel Ettlinger," *Jacob Koppel Collection. 1816-1829* 1/9.

<sup>46</sup> For Hamburg's relationship to Ettlinger, see Bleich, *Jacob Ettlinger*, 19. For Hildesheimer's relationship to Ettlinger, see Ellenson, *Rabbi Esiel Hildesheimer*, 15 -16, 26, 74, and 174; On Bamberger, see *The Jewish Encyclopedia* s.v. "Bamberger, Seligman Baer," Accessed at <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/2429-bamberger-seligman-baer> .

Ettlinger as the writer “of his beautiful book, *Bikkurei Yaakov*.”<sup>47</sup> While his career in the journal began as an appreciator of Ettlinger, by issue 26 Wegner was a regular contributor to the literary section. Wegner wrote poetry and homilies, including an extended piece on February 29, 1848, about the nature of legitimate and illegitimate biblical kingship.<sup>48</sup> Three months after Gavriel Adler Hacoen, one of the journal’s luminaries,– had authored a *responsum* (in issue 14) concerning the writing of a Torah scroll, the journal published a comment by Shmuel Yardevahn of Warsaw.<sup>49</sup> In issue 26, Yardevahn would go on to publish his own first piece composed for the journal, printing a section of a manuscript from the prayerbook of Yaakov Lorberbaum (of Lissa, Leszno in Poland today).<sup>50</sup> Wegner’s and Yardevahn’s involvement enabled the journal to access and publish manuscripts from places in Europe outside Germany. Unlike other pieces, labeled only by city, Yardevahn’s was identified by city and country. In this regard, Enoch’s proclamation that the use of the Hebrew language would draw in readers from far away proved prescient. Nothing makes this clearer than the journal’s tapping into the nascent Jewish settlements in Palestine. Early in the periodical’s run, the Sephardi community in Jerusalem used it to publicize the economic and ecological hardships it was experiencing in Palestine.<sup>51</sup> Significantly later, beginning in September 1852 Ashkenazi Jerusalemites – former residents of Central Europe or students of European rabbis – began contributing regularly, as well.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Itzik Wegner, “A Letter,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, March 30, 1847.

<sup>48</sup> Itzik Wegner, “Plastered Walls,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, June 22, 1847; Id., “An Explanation of *Midrash Rabbah Shmot*, Section One,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, February 29, 1848. The piece may be gesturing towards contemporary revolutions, exploring as it does the illegitimacy of hastily erected administrations.

<sup>49</sup> Gavriel Adler Hacoen, “A Question on the Matter of Writing of a Torah Scroll,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, January 5, 1847; Shmuel Yardevahn, “A Comment to *Shomer Tziyon Ha’ne’eman*,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, March 2, 1847.

<sup>50</sup> Shmuel Yardevahn, “Order of the Prayers of Israel by *Derech Hachaim*,” *Shomer Tziyon Ha’ne’eman*, June 22, 1847.

<sup>51</sup> “A Letter from The Rabbis of Jerusalem, the Holy City, May She Be Built up and Established Speedily in Our Time,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, November 10, 1846.

<sup>52</sup> Isaac Prague, Shimon Weitz, and Nachman Natan Cornel all wrote their first pieces in late 1852. Prague had been a disciple of Moses Sofer. In December of that year, regular contributor Matityahu Monek Hacoen submitted a manuscript by Yishayahu Horowitz, who had been in Safed at the time of his death. Hacoen’s publication of Horowitz’s manuscript may indicate that he had been to Palestine. See: Isaac Prague, “On the Laws of *Shlichut* (legal representation),” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, September 3, 1852; Shimon Weitz, “A Letter to *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, October 8, 1852; Nachman Natan Cornel, “More New Versions of Manuscripts of the Shas on Parchment,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, November 5, 1852; and Matityahu Monek Hacoen, “Writing by One (Yishaya Horowitz) Copied from an Older One That Had Been Copied,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, December 3, 1852.

In publishing *responsa* and then soliciting replies from their readers, the editors leveraged a level of engagement with their imagined public. Unlike an addressed letter, a periodical reached a general audience, some of whom were unknown to the editors. And unlike a correspondence between two rabbis, in which one might write a question and the other a *responsum* that would then be promulgated throughout a community, a periodical's publication schedule and distribution model enables third parties to offer their opinions in writing, as well, and even expect a follow-up that would be made available in a public manner. Writers could put out pieces that anticipated responses from an imagined public of third parties, as opposed to specific individuals. In addition, the individuals reading could imagine themselves as a part of a larger public, and compose their replies knowing they might see their names in print.

Periodical literature also enabled contributors to use forms hinging on reader interaction. Issue 24 (dated May 29, 1847) featured a short piece titled "I Pose for You Now a Riddle" by Isaac Berlin and a five-stanza "riddle" by Moshe Onnah. Each of these pieces asks its readers to guess the name of a biblical character based on a series of clues. The following issue (dated June 12), gave the answers. Each riddle's answer involved word play upon meanings that names could have in addition to their use as proper nouns.<sup>53</sup> Riddles like these, as well as those in issues 27-28 and 30-31, require readers to engage with the periodical over some time by regular purchase or subscription. They also require familiarity with biblical narrative and a plasticity of language use allowing for double entendres and puns.

Many of the contributors not connected to Ettlinger by blood or learning were former students of Rabbi Moses Sofer (1762-1839) of Central Europe. These included Hayim Yosef Pollack, Moshe Schick, Simon Deutsch, and Ya'akov Erlich.<sup>54</sup> We follow Bleich in seeing the periodical as "instrumental in forming links between members of the scholarly community in the Holy Land and their colleagues in Europe." However, examining contributions chronologically by

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<sup>53</sup> Isaac Berlin "I Pose for You Now a Riddle," and Moshe Onnah "Riddle," in *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, May 29, 1847. The answers to the riddles are "Ish-Boshet," which is a name made up of words with the meaning of "Man of Shame" and Avner ben Ner, also a proper noun, but composed of words meaning "Father of Candle son of Candle." The riddles hinge on such dual functioning of personal names.

<sup>54</sup>On Pollack, see Michael Miller, *Rabbis and Revolution: The Jews of Moravia in the Age of Emancipation*, (Stanford University Press, 2010), 89, 94. On Schick, see: Jacob Katz, *A House Divided: Orthodoxy and Schism in Nineteenth-Century Central European Jewry*, (Brandeis University Press, 1998), 131 -133. On Deutsch, see Bleich, "The Emergence of an Orthodox Press Orthodox Press," 335; On Erlich, see *Ibid.*, 342.

region reveals that it took time for the network to branch out from its German core.<sup>55</sup> Galician contributors had either studied in German schools or had their letters published by the journal before becoming regular contributors. Rabbis in Palestine – aside from the initial plea by the Sephardi rabbis – gradually joined the network, possibly encouraged by their contact with students of Moses Sofer such as Isaac Prague who had established a community in Palestine in 1830 upon the arrival a delegation of rabbis from Europe.

Expansion in the network of contributors came after the hiatus. The last issue before the hiatus featured a letter indicating how important Ettlinger and Enoch thought the cultivation of a network of rabbis involved with Halachic scholarship. While the work of putting the journal together was difficult, the editors describe the praise of their readers as nourishing “like cold water upon the weary soul.”<sup>56</sup> Ettlinger and Enoch saw their journal’s purpose as healing “the divisions that have been made in the tents of the righteous by the misfortunes of the day.” The public had responded positively to the journal’s content, and the response emboldened the creators. The genuine quality level of the journal’s scholarship was itself their weapon against the reformers. Recall Enoch’s emphasis on his intention for *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* to be involved in “serious scholarship.” Success required an international network of learned men to collaborate and advance rabbinic discourse.

In July 1851, upon the journal’s return, the editors addressed a paragraph “to the reader.”<sup>57</sup> The paragraph leveraged readership to widen the network of contributors. In it, the editors apologize for “having rested at their post” as guardians of Zion. Elaborating on the motif of warfare, the writers describe being roused by “the thunderous sounds of battle still heard in our land.” So, “for the love of Torah,” the writers plead with their readers to send them words of high quality “to be printed in this letter...<sup>58</sup> in order to put the house of Israel on the straight and true path and so that they may grow sick of the evil and the lies and choose the good and the true.” The editors implore readers not to see the absence of schism in their countries as reason to be complacent. They raise the specter of the ideological battle against the Reform movement spreading from Germany, and solicit help “from far and from near.” The editors see the Reform

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 335.

<sup>56</sup> “Conclusion to the Letter,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, July 5, 1850.

<sup>57</sup> “To the Reader,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, July 11, 1851.

<sup>58</sup> The periodical refers to itself as a *michtav* (today: “letter”); the modern Hebrew term *‘iton* had not yet been invented. See Akiva Zimmerman, “‘Loyal Guardian of Zion:’ An Orthodox Jewish Biweekly in Mid-Nineteenth Century German,” in *Keshet* 19 (1996): 131.

movement as an international threat, one which demands an international response.

This request for outside help had a quantitative and geographic impact. By the time issue 105 was being worked on, 75 individual writers had contributed pieces, three of them as entities seemingly unknown to the editors and which gained exposure only through the submission of responses. 52 new contributors published in issues 105-222 (the last issue to be published). The new contributors covered a much wider geographical range than had been engaged with before the hiatus. Recall the sense of novelty associated with the publication of material from Yardevahn of Warsaw in issue 26. In issue 72, still prior to the hiatus, the editors labeled a submission from Neustadt as being “from the land of Poland.”<sup>59</sup> After 1850, the journal – no longer labeling countries outside German-speaking Europe – saw first-time submissions from Krakow and growing numbers of submissions coming from Lemberg in Galicia.<sup>60</sup> Submissions came from Amsterdam and Copenhagen, and even included reprinted manuscripts attributed to findings in Oxford and Grenada.<sup>61</sup> All this appeared in addition to the ties cultivated with Ashkenazi rabbis in Jerusalem.

Ettinger saw the Hebrew language as instrumental in building networks of Orthodox rabbis. Reflecting, close to the end of his life, on the journal’s run, he reprised the militant language from the journal, recalling the need to “encircle and guard the daughter of Zion and to be a vigilant warrior.”<sup>62</sup> As one such warrior, he imagined using *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* “to wage the war of God against the deniers.” He goes on, “In this periodical a voice was raised, clashing with the sectarians.” Critical for our purposes, he describes the importance of enlisting the Hebrew language in this battle:

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<sup>59</sup> Yehoshua Cohen Nishkoni, “On the Law of Cooking on Shabbat,” *Shomer Tziyon Ha’ne’eman*, April 6, 1849.

<sup>60</sup> Investigating the question of influence – or lack thereof – of this early Orthodox press on Galician Jewry is a worthy endeavor. According to Rachel Manekin, self-consciously Orthodox papers in Hebrew begin appearing in Galicia only in the late 1870s, and only as part of political maneuvering of greater scope in the region. Further research could help explain this lag. See Rachel Manekin, “Die hebräische und jiddische Presse in Galizien,” *Die Habsburgermonarchie* 7/2 (2006), 2346–7; Id., *The Jews of Galicia and the Austrian Constitution: The Beginning of Modern Jewish Politics*, (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2015), 122.

<sup>61</sup> Krakow: Issue 150; Lemberg: Issue 200; Amsterdam: Issue 162; Copenhagen: Issue 157; Grenada: Issue 107; Oxford: Issue 145.

<sup>62</sup> Published without a date, Ben-Zion Ettlinger (Jacob’s son) included a riddle in his introduction to give the date of publication, indicating the Hebrew year 5634. Ettlinger, *Sefêr Aruch L’ner al Masechet Sukkot*.

The journal published in Hebrew allows scholars from distant lands to (use it) for a composition book<sup>63</sup> and to make known to each other new insights and interpretations, along with legal discussions and investigations of valuable matters. And [it makes it possible] to convey back and forth between them questions and answers and to clarify and elucidate *Halachot*.

Hebrew here serves two purposes. As the language of Halachic discourse, Hebrew allows Ettliger and his network to conduct discussions using the Halachic lexicon. This involves more than using the same vocabulary as earlier writers; it also allows Ettliger and his network to rely on concepts laden with centuries of meaning. Talmudic conversations utilized terms reflecting a particular legal reality. In a rabbinic document, a noun like “ox” or “donkey” can stand for a particular constellation of features within a legal reality.<sup>64</sup> By writing in Hebrew, *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* marshalled a vocabulary that carried both lexical and legal meaning. Doing so allowed its writers to share a shorthand for complex concepts, enriching their engagement with one another, enabling them to “convey ... questions and answers between them” across distances.

The expansion of the network of contributors influenced the journal’s content as well. Sapir’s travelogue of his journeys along “the length and breadth of our land,” was a product of this expansion. The network was a means by which European Jews could help poor Jews in Palestine. Palestinian Jews faced a drought in the summer of 1854. The rabbis of the community of Amsterdam solicited donations from the Jews of Europe to be delivered to the Land of Israel.<sup>65</sup> Immediately following the solicitation is the first installment of a two-poem contribution by Yitzchak Greenburger, entitled “The Beauty of the

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<sup>63</sup> Ettliger’s language here – להיות להחכמים ממדינות רחוקות לחברת – is somewhat unclear in its use of the last word - which is used to mean “notebook” in Hebrew today, but also contains the root for “joining” and “composition.” It is possible that he refers here to a “commonplace book,” used in the early modern period for copying verses and words of wisdom. The implication would be that Ettliger thought of *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* as a source from which entire communities could glean and copy particular phrases. Arthur Kiron’s work on the scrapbook of Sabato Morias demonstrates at least one instance of a nineteenth-century Jew over time transplanting text from ephemera to ledger. Kiron shows that Morias’ scrapbooking relied on newspapers as a source. Perhaps Ettliger envisioned scholars using copies of *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* for a similar purpose. See Arthur Kiron, “Cutting and Pasting: Interpreting the Victorian Scrapbook Practices of Sabato Morias,” in *For the Sake of Learning: Essays in Honor of Anthony Grafton*, eds. Ann Blair and Anja-Silva Goeing, (Boston: Brill, 2016), 652.

<sup>64</sup> Oren Soffer, “The Case of the Hebrew Press: From the Traditional Model of Discourse to the Modern Model,” in *Written Communication* 21/2 (2004), 150.

<sup>65</sup> Zalman Robenm, Ya’akov Meir Lehren, and Yitzhak Hacohen Laub, “To our brothers, all of the house of Israel!,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, August 4, 1854.

Hebraic Language.” The poem summons readers to study in Hebrew and study the Hebrew language itself; this, despite the “lovely and good of taste *melitza(ot)*” of the other nations. The visual placement of the poem alongside the call for donations is noteworthy. When these pieces are considered along with Sapir’s travelogue and an essay later in the run called “The Hebrew Language Speaks to the Heart,” an orientation toward the Levant and the Hebrew language together emerges.

*Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* ran until March 1856. It isn’t clear why it ended its run at this time. Bleich argues that Enoch’s move to the town of Fulda, away from Altona and Ettlinger, prompted the closing of the journal. She does not, however, cite any source for this.<sup>66</sup> Most enterprises of similar profile during this period were ethereal, lasting only a few months.<sup>67</sup> The span of the periodical and its unique nature make it a rich source for studying the history of modern Orthodoxy, yet all too often commenters on *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* attend to the Halachic material but not the periodical’s format or novel distribution model.

### **“The Sages of the Nations Comfort Her and Bring Her Gifts; A Pleasant and Good Tasting *Melitzah*”: Marshalling the Power of *Melitzah* in the Battle against Reform**

In May 1850, Ya’akov Erlich decried “the priests of *Ba’al* who.... stand in congregations, beard shaved and *pe’ah* destroyed.”<sup>68</sup> *Ba’al*, an image borrowed from the ancient Near Eastern pantheon, serves here as a stand-in for religious betrayal. Just as the priests of *Ba’al* attempted to sway the hearts of ancient Israel in the days of King Ahab, taking part in a contest against Elijah the Prophet to see whose supplication would lead to a manifestation of divine involvement (I Kings 18), so too do these men – stationed in synagogues – preach and demonstrate practices which would make Israel turn against God. For Erlich, among the distinguishing characteristics of these betrayers is the aesthetic beauty of their adopted mode of self-expression: form and usage associated with European literature. Erlich writes:

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<sup>66</sup> Bleich, “The Emergence of an Orthodox Press Orthodox Press,” 326.

<sup>67</sup> Toury, *Turmoil and Confusion in the Revolution of 1848*, 17.

<sup>68</sup> The beard and outgrown sidelocks (*pe’ot*) would seem for Erlich to mark one as obedient to Jewish law, and lack of these indicating an affinity for, or alliance with the reformers. However, these outward markers did not always indicate one’s position vis-a-vis *Halachah*. The *Hatam Sofer* argued against using facial hair or lack thereof as an indicator of Halachic observance. Ferziger, *Hierarchy and Exclusion*, 65.



their literature's... entire purpose is to show the power and glory of their own words, how wondrous are their poems; (the products of) their lips: How they make heard the sweetness of the pleasantness of their lips.<sup>69</sup>

Describing the self-serving poetry of the reformers, Erlich uses the term “*melitzot*.” It is striking, therefore, that Erlich’s piece itself appears under the heading *Meshalim umelitzot* (Parables and poetic turns of phrase). The *melitzot* of the reformers indicate their selfish turning away from God, yet Erlich’s screed is embedded in a publication that recognizes the importance of new forms of literature that will allow his cohort to “preach their lessons to the listener.”

The title of the *Meshalim umelitzot* section of the journal had a particular resonance in Jewish law. In Joseph Karo’s *Shulchan Aruch* “*mashal*” and “*melitzah*” were foremost in a list of the types of literature forbidden for Jews.<sup>70</sup> Moshe Isserles permitted the reading of these works, but only in “the Holy tongue,” i.e., Hebrew, and the category retained its connotation of “profane” and separate from “holy texts.”<sup>71</sup> “*Melitzah*” evolved to refer to texts that had no liturgical or ritual purpose, ones that were read for pleasure.<sup>72</sup>

For rabbinic authorities, reading for reasons other than fulfilling a Commandment stood apart from acceptable behavior.<sup>73</sup> Halachah commands the activities of *keri’ah* (vocalizing a text) and *limud* (study of a text). Reading aloud from a Torah scroll three times a week in a liturgical group setting and daily study of canonical biblical and rabbinic texts both served as pillars of male Jewish life, and both were encouraged (indeed commanded) by rabbinic elites. In order to fulfill their obligation, Jews taught their children to read, and Jewish literacy among males remained high relative to non-Jews through the pre-modern period.<sup>74</sup> Before the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a proliferation of private collections of books, when Jews read books in the vernacular, they did so in synagogues under rabbinic control and guidance.<sup>75</sup>

With the 18<sup>th</sup> century’s shifts in reading practices, it became difficult for rabbinic authorities to continue this supervision. In this period, German Jewish women

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<sup>69</sup> Ya’akov Erlich, “A Reproof of Love,” in *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, May 24, 1850.

<sup>70</sup> Bitzan, *The Problem of Pleasure*, 14-15.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 16.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 20–22.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, v.

<sup>75</sup> Bonfil, “Reading in the Jewish Communities,” in *A History of Reading in the West*, 163.

(and men shortly thereafter) began reading essays, poetry, and fiction in German, French, and English.<sup>76</sup> With the growth of pleasure reading at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Jewish publications such as *Hame'asef* began including *belles lettres* (fine writing) sections designed for private reading.<sup>77</sup> Unlike *Hame'asef*, *Shomer Tziyon Hane'man* claimed to be dedicated to preserving tradition, and the emergence of its *Meshalim umelitzot* section marks the first time a self-defined traditionalist publication included a section of this sort.<sup>78</sup>

The content of the *Meshalim umelitzot* section varied from issue to issue. At times less than a page long (or entirely missing) and sometimes running multiple pages, the section was the final one in each issue. Most issues' *belles lettres* sections featured at least a column and-a-half of material each. This would be a repository for anything outside the Halachic genre. This included readers' responses, liturgical and non-liturgical poems, retellings of stories from the Talmud, jokes and riddles, and material printed from older manuscripts. Despite the variety, all the material printed was based on adopting the periodical's mission: preserving "traditional" Judaism.

Enoch and Ettliger thought of two groups as, together, threatening Judaism. In their analysis, a small group of Reform rabbis led astray the majority of German Jews. Imagining that this majority could be swayed one way or another, they positioned their journal as a tool to reaffirm "principles of conservative, orthodox Judaism."<sup>79</sup> Appealing to the traditional rabbinic leaders in communities would enable them to sway the Jewish masses. This approach comes to the fore in Eliezer Lipman's five-part contribution in the first five issues of *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*.<sup>80</sup>

Lipman's piece, titled *Moda'ah Rabba Le'oraita*, lays out a plan for creating and cultivating an educated elite who would hold sway over the Jewish masses. Lipman singles out the "rebellious sect" which has coalesced in Brunswick and Frankfurt am-Main and "issued a call of iniquity."<sup>81</sup> Lipman refers to the

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<sup>76</sup> Bitzan, *The Problem of Pleasure*, 32.

<sup>77</sup> Röhl, "The Kassel 'Ha-Meassef' of 1799," in *The Jewish Response to German Culture*, 34.

<sup>78</sup> Hess, "German-Jewish Novel," 50.

<sup>79</sup> Enoch, "To the Audience." We should point out that neither "conservative" nor "orthodox" in this passage denotes a specific movement.

<sup>80</sup> Eliezer Lipman, "A Great Announcement to Torah," *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, July 7-September 1, 1846.

<sup>81</sup> In the piece, Lipman uses different expressions to refer to this majority of Jews. He seems to use them interchangeably. Most often he refers to "*dalei ha'am*," "the lowly of the nation." Once he uses "*am ha'aretz*," a Talmudic expression referring to the uneducated among the Jews.

Brunswick conference of the summer of 1844 and the Frankfurt conference the following year, significant steps for the emergence of Reform Judaism as a discrete movement. The conferences debated the acceptability of certain prayers with theological underpinnings difficult to square with reason, the use of the vernacular in the synagogue, and the legality of mixed marriages. The conferences also moved away from legal precedent.<sup>82</sup> Response from traditionally minded German rabbis came in the form of a letter entitled *Shelomei Emunei Yisrael* [Those Seeking the Well-Being of the Faithful of Israel] and repudiating the conferences' decisions. Some of the signatories of the letter would go on to publish in *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, and Ettlinger's activism may have been the impetus behind the project of composing the response they all signed.<sup>83</sup>

Lipman berates the rabbis who took part in the conferences, calling them “foxes in the vineyard of God” who use the appearance of authenticity to mislead the common Jew. He decries their tendency to select individual laws to follow, thus “uprooting” *Halachah* while convincing the “lowly of the nation” that they have God on their side. These rabbis, says Lipman, are maliciously misleading the Children of Israel.

Lipman echoes one of the principal issues laid out by Ettlinger and Enoch at the journal's inception. We have already seen that the editors thought of their publication of Halachic inquiry as protection against “modern” rabbis who would pick and choose decontextualized passages from the Talmud to lend support to their positions. Lipman promotes the use of literary forms, language and devices in the service of true Judaism.

In the second and third sections, Lipman takes up the issue of protection against “the rebellious household” among the Jews. He distinguishes between two tactics, either addressing the reformers directly or insulating the faithful among the Jews. Opting for the latter would require establishing a strong leadership capable of preventing Judaism's further erosion in public spaces,

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Occasionally he also refers to “*hamonam*,” “their masses.” In each case, he means an undifferentiated mass guided by leaders who instruct it as to ways of thinking.

<sup>82</sup> *The Jewish Encyclopedia* s.v. “Conferences, Rabbinical,” Accessed at <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/4592-conferences-rabbinical#anchor3>.

<sup>83</sup> Bleich, *Jacob Ettlinger*, 186-88; see also Ismar Schorch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism*, (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1994), 44, n. 36; and Katz, *A House Divided*, 16-18.

In the streets and the open areas using our holy Torah or divine philosophy to demonstrate to them that their mouths (speak) fallacy and their right hand is a hand of lies and to ruin all of their plans so that the common folk may see that all of their deeds are void and they are altogether vapid.

Lipman worries, however, that “the lowly of the masses are dammed and unable to distinguish and recognize between truth and lies.” To reach this “majority of the House of Israel who do not know and do not understand (who is of) the tribe of falsehood and the clan of traitors,” Lipman recommends strengthening the group rather than directly reaching out to the masses. He makes this point with an extended allegory and a series of metaphors. If the masses of Jews are not equipped to separate the truth offered by Halachic authorities from the lies advocated by the Reform rabbis, how then to reach them? Lipman opted to avoid dealing with the masses directly, and instead encouraging a shared scholastic culture among their leaders.

Lipman’s fourth and fifth installments lay out a program for cultivating an educated cohort of thinkers able to disseminate orthodox thinking more widely through publication. By publishing *melitzot* like his own article, *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* will equip local rabbis with language and ideas that they can use to sway the Jews of their communities.

Lipman remarks on the utility of *melitzah*, as he invites his readers to “take a bit of the balm of *melitzah*, a bit of the honey of (Halachic) investigation and sweeten the juice of tradition.” Lipman goes on to argue that when used together, “beautiful *melitzah* and the words of the living God” will “enlighten the masses,” and “open their eyes so that they see and know and understand that the sun of truth shines like a bright star.” Lipman ends by charging his readers to

Go! Go! Each man to his tent of Torah, and for the sake of heaven, and to each tent one should bring the tradition of wisdom and enlighten the ignorant with Torah, and lead them along the true path.

Lipman imagines his readers as thought leaders for their communities or families, bringing back a solidified sense of self enhanced by the reading practices they share with the readers of the rest of the periodical.

This strategy gives us a sense of how the periodical’s initial cohort of contributors envisioned the reading of what they wrote. Lipman’s repeated claims that direct appeal to the masses would not work, coupled with his frank

assessments of the masses of Jews as ignorant, indicates that he anticipated having a learned audience. This matches the stated intention of the periodical as laid out by Enoch and Ettlinger in their announcement of February 1846. What Lipman adds, however, is an understanding of the power of literature. While he imagines that only the most learned will read the *Meshalim umelitzot*, Lipman anticipates that this cohort will bring gleanings from this reading experience to their communities. This dovetails with Ettlinger and Enoch's expectations that the public would be most easily accessible through synagogue leaders.

Lipman addressed a community of like-minded elite thinkers who could, through a shared discourse, shape the behavior of the ignorant. Using a variety of genres to cultivate a readership united only by shared structures of language and belief matches the “imagined communities” that marked the second reading revolution throughout Europe. The fact that this language was rabbinically inflected lent this readership a particularly elitist element. The community of readers that the periodical sought to form had a particular prerequisite for entry – a classical rabbinic education.

Two letters to the journal – one before and one after the 1850 hiatus – give hints as to its readers' reactions. Joseph Heine wrote to the editors in the fall of 1847. The editors published his letter in issues 32-33.<sup>84</sup> Heine compares his discovery of the periodical to a lonely, hungry man finding food and drink. In the face of the “noise making” of the partisans, “I looked this way and that and found no man of words to confront them with a periodical narrating events of the moment<sup>85</sup> that would reveal their chains. Instead we all fell silent and put our hands to our mouths.” Now, however, “I see a man of wisdom, among those precious to the living God, and in his hand is a nimble scribe's pen, and his speech is pleasant and clear.” Now, Heine says, there are champions of a traditional way of life accessible to anyone who pays a subscription fee and has the ability to read rabbinic Hebrew. Heine is excited by the novelty of a public discourse based on protecting what he views as the traditional Jewish lifestyle. This understanding of its public is enabled by *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman's* periodical format; its ability to address “events of the moment” gives its contents an immediacy that involves it in the debates of the day.

A few months after the periodical relaunched in July 1851, it published a letter from “the youth from among the legions of Israel, David,” son of a Rabbi

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<sup>84</sup> Joseph Heine, “A *Melitzah* for *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*,” in *Shomer Tziyon Hane'eman*, September 14-28, 1847.

<sup>85</sup> “במכתב בקורות העיתים”

Strasser.<sup>86</sup> “Seventyfold does it please me when the letter carrier [*Breifträger*] comes to me and in his hands the love of my soul.”<sup>87</sup> As Heine did, so, too, David refers to the role of the periodical in bringing the battle against the reformers into the public sphere for the first time. “I had circulated in the markets and the streets to find a faithful man to fight the war for God and his Torah.” He had almost succumbed to despair before “I found the guardians circling the House of Israel to call in the name of God, to raise their voices like a trumpet to tell the House of Jacob their sins.” The public dissemination of the periodical and its ideas’ presence in “the streets and the markets” are indications that it had built a reading public among the rabbinically literate.

David expresses a strong sense of division from the reformers, promising never to “enter the congregations of the liars.” David’s letter to the editors not only makes it clear that there is a self-aware sense of identity connected to the struggle with the reformers; it also speaks to the role the written word had in coalescing that shared sense of identity.

David’s letter reveals an exposure to *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*’s polemical involvement, but his engagement is with the ideas expressed by its literature, not the minutiae of its Halachic discussions. Publishing *melitzot* to compete with reformers eventually generated an interconnected network of readers who saw themselves as on the same side in a larger fight and as part of a single group. This community, which in the later decades of the century would coalesce into Modern Orthodoxy, developed from a reading public with shared values. These shared values had particular resonance in an age of doctrinal conflict.

## Conclusion

*Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* was an attempt to exercise authority over the larger Jewish community in Europe. The writers could not coerce their co-religionists in the manner accepted in earlier centuries, and so needed to turn instead to constructs such as a community of readers in order to perpetuate their Judaism. Decades of state reform beginning in the early 1800s had gradually eased the restrictions on Jews as individuals and lessened the long-standing authority of local rabbis. This created the space for reformers to establish their own synagogues in while also prompting the inheritors of the earlier power structure

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<sup>86</sup> David Strasser, “*Melitzah*,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, September 19, 1851. David was most likely the son of Eleazar Strasser, who wrote the *responsum* about riding a train on the Sabbath.

<sup>87</sup> The published letter includes the Hebrew, “נושא המכתב,” followed by parentheses which enclose the German in Hebrew letters, “בריעפטראגער.”

to look for new ways to influence their communities. David Ellinson calls this a turn towards “influential authority.”<sup>88</sup> No longer could a rabbi write a *responsum* to his peer and expect adherence; neither rabbi had the state’s backing to exert the power to keep adherence normative. The turn towards new methods of influence necessitated shifts in discursive strategies. Jacob Katz sees these shifts as adaptations that the Orthodox faction used defensively.<sup>89</sup>

*Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*’s creation of a reading public is among these adaptations. In their attempts to stave off the Reform movement, Ettlinger and his cohort relied upon models of community that could exist without the imperative authority of the past. Thus a periodical tied to an interest group – and thus an effective choice for the nationalists, liberals, and Enlightenment thinkers seeking ways to cultivate a sense of belonging to a larger whole – became a tool with which the rabbis of Germany could build a shared sense of community in a world where the old ways of organizing were evaporating.

This community was linked together by a shared stake in the invention of a tradition, described by *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman* contributor Avraham Zutra by means of a contrast:

for some two thousand years when the Children of Israel were scattered and divided among all the other peoples from one end of the earth to the other, and among many nations who have since been uprooted from their land and forgotten. But Israel and the fire of its Law which emerges from (God’s) right hand stands as a flint rock through the ages.<sup>90</sup>

The fire of God’s Law, which Zutra depicts as unchanging, served a discursive purpose. It united and would preserve the new periodical’s readers. Invented tradition, which Shulamit Volkov calls a “complex of textual symbols,” responded to the needs of the present by using curated elements of the past.<sup>91</sup> The writers of the periodical used new methods to articulate a vision portrayed as classic, and unchanging; in doing so, they invented tradition as a source of influential authority.

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<sup>88</sup> Ellenson, *Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer*, 21.

<sup>89</sup> Katz, *Out of the Ghetto*, 152.

<sup>90</sup> Avraham Zutra, “A Responsum against the Renewers in the Synagogues,” *Shomer Tziyon Hane’eman*, December 14, 1855.

<sup>91</sup> Shulamit Volkov, *Germans, Jews, and Anti-Semites: Trials in Emancipation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 276.

*Shomer Tziyon Hane'man* cultivated an Orthodox identity by establishing a network of rabbis linked through their shared educational background. It cultivated readers who could see themselves as sharing doctrinal and ritual values with the writers and with each other. Its doing so is an important stage in the emergence of Modern Orthodoxy as a viable movement.

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