Jewish Exile and Immigration: Re-Imagining Home on the North Dakota Prairie

Jason Zevenbergen

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JEWISH EXILE AND IMMIGRATION: RE-IMAGINING HOME ON THE NORTH DAKOTA PRAIRIE

by

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Bachelor of Arts, SUNY at Stony Brook, 1995

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This thesis meets the standards for appearance, conforms to the style and format requirements of the Graduate School of the University of North Dakota, and is hereby approved.

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To Andrea and Matthew
ABSTRACT

From the memoirs of several Jewish homesteaders in North Dakota, one observes a series of binaries between Diaspora and homeland and between Jewish Orthodoxy and more liberal forms of Jewishness. The writers of these memoirs generally produce these binaries through two methods. First, the content they introduce in their stories reflects opposing categories of Jewishness, such as Orthodox and Reform Judaism, that significantly frame the nature of their relationships to their families, local community, and country. Second, when the writers transfer stories from their past into the contemporary moment, they juxtapose a previous self with their present self at the time of writing. Often, this juxtaposition reveals an identification with a different form of Jewishness as an older adult than when the writer was a child or younger adult.

The chapters that follow examine the dialectic nature of binaries and the relationship of those binaries to the identities presented by the writers in their memoirs. By outlining a paradigm that describes the relationship of binaries to self as a "synthesis," my intention is to balance the postmodern desire to see identity as something fragmentary with the observance that individuals emphasize specific fragments of their experience as foundational for their identity. As Maier Calof's, Rachel Calof's, and Sophie Trupin's memoirs show, this foundation is not a constant state but rather is something that transforms within individuals as their environments and living conditions change over time.
Each writer's act of remembrance serves as a place of mediation among the multiple interpretations of homeland and diaspora presented in his or her memoir, allowing for a synthesis of binary categories in the self-identity he or she projects overall in the memoir. Neither side of the binary can be hierarchized, by either the writer or the reader, over the other side of the binary, since each side helps form and inform the characteristics of the other side. One can appreciate the flexibility of a Jewish identity that emphasizes life in the Diaspora, but that appreciation results largely from what it does not emphasize, namely aliyah (return to Israel). On the other hand, the writers each maintain clear alignments to specific categories of Jewishness, regardless of the fact that it is possible to accept each side of the binary equally. A writer's rootedness to the Orthodox tradition may, for example, cause him or her to perceive a liberal form of Judaism in a negative light.

The memoirs serve as a site of mediation because it is a place where the writer actively participates in a dialogue with the past he or she is attempting to remember and construct. This is not to say that the writer is attempting to reconcile the opposing nature of the binary categories. Instead, the writers attempt to understand categories of Jewishness with which they had previously aligned themselves when they were younger or that had been observed within other family members.
INTRODUCTION

From the memoirs of several Jewish homesteaders in North Dakota, one observes a series of binaries between Diaspora and homeland and between Jewish Orthodoxy and more liberal forms of Jewishness. The writers of these memoirs generally produce these binaries through two methods. First, the content they introduce in their stories reflects opposing categories of Jewishness, such as Orthodox and Reform Judaism, that significantly frame the nature of their relationships to their families, local community, and country. Second, when the writers transfer stories from their past into the contemporary moment, they juxtapose a previous self with their present self at the time of writing. Often, this juxtaposition reveals an identification with a different form of Jewishness as an older adult than when the writer was a child or younger adult.

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I discuss the relationship of homeland and diaspora in the context of the Galut, the historical exile of the Jews from Palestine. I focus on the Galut because it enables me to highlight several tensions among the various traditions of Judaism. Generally, Orthodoxy and Zionism interpret the Galut literally, believing that the founding of Israel necessitates aliyah (return) to Israel. Other groups within Judaism, like Reform or secular Jews, do not interpret the Galut in literal terms, arguing instead that life in the Diaspora has always been the traditional "home" of Jews. They feel no obligation to fulfill aliyah. It is likely that Maier Calof, Rachel Calof, and Sophie Trupin would have interpreted the Galut literally if asked, since all were Orthodox Jews when they first arrived. However, they may not have described their immigration to America as "exile," even though it is possible to describe the events leading to their immigration as resulting from the Galut.

Each writer's act of remembrance serves as a place of mediation among the multiple interpretations of homeland and diaspora presented in his or her memoir, allowing for a synthesis of binary categories in the self-identity he or she projects overall in the memoir. Neither side of the binary can be hierarchized, by either the writer or the reader, over the other side of the binary, since each side helps form and inform the characteristics of the other side. One can appreciate the flexibility of a Jewish identity that emphasizes life in the Diaspora, but that appreciation results largely from what it does not emphasize, namely aliyah (return to Israel). On the other hand, the writers each maintain clear alignments to specific categories of Jewishness, regardless of the fact that it is possible to accept each side of the binary equally. A writer's rootedness to the
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The memoirs serve as a site of mediation because it is a place where the writer actively participates in a dialogue with the past he or she is attempting to remember and construct. This is not to say that the writer is attempting to reconcile the opposing nature of the binary categories. Instead, the writers attempt to understand categories of Jewishness with which they had previously aligned themselves when they were younger or that had been observed within other family members. As I will detail in my thesis, this place of mediation allows for a "synthesis" of a binary in the overall self-identity presented by the writers in their memoirs. The relationship between the categories in the binary, and also the relationship of the binary to one's identity, is similar to a synthetic weave. With synthetic material, various types of threads are woven together to form a particular kind of material. Although one may prefer the cotton in the blend over the rayon, there is no ability on the part of the owner to separate out the cotton and still maintain the cohesion of the fabric. Similarly, a writer cannot simply remove his or her earlier experiences in Orthodoxy from his or her identity at the time of writing. Previous alignments continue to be woven into his or her present self, even if these are not alignments to which he or she continues to adhere.

My thesis focuses primarily on the memoirs written by Maier Calof, Rachel Calof, and Sophie Trupin. Maier Calof immigrated from Steblev, Ukraine, in 1885. He eventually homesteaded near Devils Lake, North Dakota, in 1887, where he lived for thirteen years. After a period of living in Canada, Maier moved to Los Angeles,
California, where he wrote his memoir between 1940 and 1944. Rachel Calof immigrated from an area south of Kiev, Ukraine, in 1894. She settled with her husband, Abraham Calof, near Maier Calof's homestead in 1894. Later, Rachel moved to Seattle, Washington, where she wrote her memoir in 1936. Sophie Trupin was originally from Russia. Her father, Harry Turnoy, left for America without his family in 1904, and established a homestead southwest of Bismarck, North Dakota. In 1908, Sophie immigrated with her mother, Gittel, to join her father on the homestead. Sophie recorded her family's experiences on the North Dakota homestead in 1976 in her home in New York.

These writers engage in dialectics with the "Old World" from which they came, as well as with individuals in their own generation, their conceptions of Jewishness, and the future readers of their story. This dialectic highlights questions concerning the centrality of either homeland or Diaspora for Jewish individual and collective identity, and also the permissible level of "flexibility" in one's expression of Jewishness in the Galut. Gabriel Josipovici and Daniel Boyarin argue that Diaspora should serve as the center for Jewish individual and collective identity, as an emphasis on homeland (i.e., Israel) occludes other expressions of Jewishness. An emphasis on Diaspora, they argue, is more responsive to the multitude of communities in which Jews live throughout the world since this enables Jews to modify their Jewishness to meet the demands of the new home. The writer's "politics of memory" (i.e., how and for what intentions he or she characterizes past events in relation to current circumstances) reflects to a certain extent the writer's responses to questions regarding the importance of homeland or Diaspora for Jewish identity. When
Maier Calof instructs his children to adhere to Orthodoxy, he does so because he fears a "flexible" Jewish identity will be destructive to Jewish identity collectively. On the other hand, Rachel Calof desires to differentiate her Jewishness from her mother-in-law's overly strict adherence to tradition because she sees her mother-in-law's Jewishness as being unresponsive to life on the North Dakota prairie.

In chapter 1, I begin to develop the complexities of the relationship between homeland and Diaspora in the context of remembrance and its importance for maintaining group identity in the Galut. The chapter contains sections that introduce the reader to the theological and philosophical discussion of Galut, as well as to a historical overview of East European and Russian Jewish immigration to homestead lands in North Dakota. Part 1 of the chapter situates the Jewish homesteaders' experiences in the context of Galut, the historic exile of the Jews from Palestine. Important issues emphasized in Part One are the theme of "wandering" in foreign lands, the maintenance of cultural identity, and the politics of remembering the past. Also of significance is the tension among the multiplicity of traditions within Judaism concerning how to interpret the Galut after the founding of Israel. In Part 2 of the chapter, I discuss the relationship of the Galut to the immigrant experience of Jews settling on homestead property in North Dakota between 1890 and 1920. The choices these Jewish immigrants make concerning their personal expression of Jewishness reflect metaphorically and literally the tensions among the several theological and philosophical discussions of the Galut.

In chapter 2, I examine the binary of homeland/Diaspora within the broader argument of whether or not one can maintain Israel as central to one's identity while also
participating fully in American culture. In the context of Martin Buber's existentialist philosophy and theology and Daniel Boyarin's postmodern paradigm for reading Jewish identity, I explore the nature of the personal alignments towards Orthodoxy, Zionism, and his American community that Maier Calof takes in his memoir. Chapter 3 focuses on Rachel Calof's dialogue with her past and how she balances the alienation she experienced as a child and young adult with her desire to individuate from other family members. The two conditions of forced alienation and chosen individuation are most present in Rachel's relationship with her mother-in-law. This relationship literally and allegorically represents the tensions between strict Orthodoxy and more liberal forms of Jewishness.

In chapter 4, I explore the series of opposing relationships created and reflected in Sophie Trupin's storytelling, especially those between Orthodoxy and a "flexible" form of Jewishness, and between homeland and Diaspora. I pay particular attention to the political significations within Sophie's reconstruction of her past and her attempts to distance herself from her parents' Orthodoxy. Sophie's narration evidences a shift in her rootedness as a child to her parents' Orthodoxy to an adult self more closely aligned with a malleable form of Jewishness in America.
CHAPTER ONE
JEWISH EXILE AND IMMIGRATION: RE-IMAGINING HOME ON THE NORTH DAKOTA PRAIRIE

I.

Throughout the period of the Galut (exile from Palestine), "home" for Jewish collective and individual identity has been an abstract concept rather than a literal place. However, with the founding of Israel in 1948, how Jews define "home" becomes problematic as many Jews do not accept Israel as the Promised Land to which they must return. The memoirs of the Jewish homesteaders who settled in North Dakota around the turn of the twentieth century reflect many of the tensions present among the various paradigms describing the significance of Israel as home for Jewish identity. These philosophical and theological variations in definitions of home are revealed in the memoir writers' attempts to differentiate themselves from an older generation's more conservative interpretation of Jewish tradition. These differences are also reflected in the writers' own shifting perspectives regarding home, as they may have more liberal interpretations of home at the time of writing than they did as children. Therefore, these writers engage in a dialectic with the past as well as the present, as their memoirs are meant to record a family history and to pass on to the next generation a specific form of Jewishness (e.g., Orthodoxy or Reform Judaism).

The "exile" experienced by each of the Jewish immigrants on which my study focuses differed significantly according to his or her reasons for having to leave Eastern
Europe and Russia. Rachel Calof's family demanded her exile to America\(^1\) where she homesteaded with Abraham Calof near Devils Lake, ND. Harry Turnoy's exile to America resulted from political and social unrest in Russia, leading him to homestead near Bismarck, ND, on property that he believed represented his political freedom.\(^2\) In his essay, "The Specular Border Intellectual," JanMohamed, a post-colonial theorist, suggests that, unlike the immigrant, the exile "emphasizes the absence of 'home'" (101). The immigrant, on the other hand, deliberately chooses a new home, implying "a voluntary desire to become a full-fledged subject of the new society" (101). What distinguishes the exilic experience of Jewish homesteaders from non-Jewish settlers who left the same countries is the historical exile (Galut) of the Jews from the Promised Land. Jews have historically maintained their Jewishness in foreign countries by emphasizing their "absence of home" through religious and cultural traditions.

The Galut\(^3\) describes those Jews living, voluntarily or involuntarily, outside of Palestine after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. The term, galut, is also frequently used as a metaphor to describe those Jews outside of Palestine before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE, and also those Jews who have disregarded traditional forms of expressing one's Jewishness. During the Rabbinic period immediately following the fall of Jerusalem, the Rabbis asserted the Torah as a "portable land" that could serve all Jews, anywhere in the world. Thus, the Torah could represent the center of Jewish individual and collective identity, a center previously signified by the second temple in Jerusalem. When Jewish immigrants came to North Dakota, the theology and customs they observed on the prairie
constituted this "center." To serve as a center or portable home for the Jewish homesteaders, the immigrants' Jewishness needed to be adaptable to their new community and environment. The center takes on two forms in this context: one is represented by the Torah and the interpretive practices of Judaism while the second center emerges in the method by which one integrates this "portable land" into one's daily and spiritual life.

Although it is beyond the scope of this study to address adequately all issues related to the Galut and the concept of "home," I do want to focus on two interrelated themes that emerge in the accounts given by Jewish immigrants. The first is a pattern of "wandering" or exodus before and after settling on the North Dakota prairie, a movement creating challenges to individual and collective identity and leading to varying levels of disenfranchisement. The second is the importance of "remembrance" for the maintenance of cultural and religious identity while meeting challenges, such as assimilation. Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin suggest that the Galut became "home" for Israel rather than the Promised Land. In their essay, "Diaspora: Generation and the Ground of Jewish Identity," the Boyarins de-emphasize aliyah (return to the Land) by arguing that Israel was not born in the territorial land that eventually became the nation state, but rather emerged outside of the Land when God made his covenant with Abraham. They write that the Jewish people had "to enter [their] own Land from without; there is a sense in which Israel was born in exile" (718).
The Jewish homesteaders' exilic experience parallels metaphorically that of biblical Abraham's. In Genesis, Abraham resides in what is currently Iraq when God makes His promise to him: "YHWH said to Avram: Go-you-forth from your land, from your kindred, from your father's house, to the land I will let you see. I will make a great nation of you and will give you blessing and will make your name great" (Gen. 12: 1-2). Even at this early stage in Jewish history, home is presented as something abstract, a promise for the future. In his book, Galut, Arnold Eisen points out in his discussion of Genesis that Abraham does not settle on the land that God has promised him, but rather wanders it (8). Abraham's residence in Canaan covers only a brief period of time, as he is forced to move to Egypt when a famine devastates his new home. It is important to note two important issues here. First, Abraham does not occupy, in any formal sense, the Promised Land, but is forced to roam it as he faces several challenges God has set for him (e.g., God's command that Abraham offer Isaac as a sacrifice). Second, Abraham demonstrates his chosenness through the interpretive activity of symbolic acts, such as circumcision and sacrifice, practices that represent his remembrance of his covenant with God.

The exiles experienced by the Jewish homesteaders in North Dakota reflect significantly these two patterns that are first established with Abraham's story and then repeated throughout the Torah. As with Abraham, they were born into an exilic state (e.g., the Galut, but also the Pale), before traveling to the "Promised Land" of America. Once in the United States, they did not "settle" on the land they sought in North Dakota,
but instead moved from one homestead claim to another, eventually leaving the land for the prosperity of the towns and cities. Similar to Abraham, they faced challenges to their collective and individual Jewish identity, which they attempted to overcome through the re-establishment of the traditions they brought with them from their native countries. Eisen suggests that God's promise, as it was revealed in the biblical stories, along with the traditional practices of Judaism, represents a notion of "home" grounded more in the imagination than geography (xiii). George Steiner, in "Our Homeland, the Text," argues that when the "text [i.e., the text, but also interpretation and traditional practices] is the homeland, even when it is rooted in the exact remembrance and seeking of a handful of wanderers, nomads of the world, it cannot be extinguished" (24). Thus, as Steiner describes it elsewhere, the "extraterritorial" aspect of Jewish identity enabled through the portability of the "text" made it possible for a collective Jewish identity to survive the challenges (e.g., assimilation, civil disempowerment) of the Galut. Benedict Anderson similarly describes an abstract rather than geographic or national concept of home, writing that "home as it emerged [in the Galut] was less experienced than imagined, and imagined through a complex of mediations and representations" (319).

This version of home in the Galut creates the possibility for conflicts between loyalty to the nation-home and loyalty to ethnic and cultural identity. When Jewish immigrants settled in North Dakota, they faced the difficult decision of how much to modify their Jewishness (i.e., their exilic home) in order to integrate into their new communities. Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster, the first rabbi in North Dakota, came to
America trained in the Orthodox tradition. Isadore Papermaster, his son, indicates in his memoirs that his father used the designation "Reverend" when he first came to Grand Forks: "My father, being anxious to go along with the congregation in the matter of Americanization, did not use the term or title of Rabbi but rather of Reverend, the term used extensively by Protestant ministers" (17). Although Benjamin Papermaster used the designation of Reverend for only a short period of time, his initial decision to change his title demonstrates the pressure he felt from even within his own community to be more "American." By abandoning his title as Rabbi permanently, he would have lost an aspect of his cultural identity, leading him to be in galut from both Zion and his Jewishness. Moreover, his decision would contribute to a further disconnection from tradition within his own family and in his congregation, as well.

In order for Jewish collective identity to be maintained in the Galut, this existential vision of home must have transgenerational as well as geographic portability. Martin Buber addresses this issue in his assertion of Jewishness as "common memory." In his essay, "Why We Should Study Jewish Sources," he writes, "A common memory has kept us together and enabled us to survive. This does not mean that we based our life on any particular past, even on the loftiest of pasts; it simply means that one generation passed on to the next a memory which gained in scope" (146). Clearly, how one remembers or what one means by a "common memory" has important implications for the concept of "home" described above. The "common memory" to which Buber refers encompasses not only the collective memory of present generations, but also the history,
commentary, and customs shared by Jews collectively. By suggesting that this "common memory" is not based on any particular past, he recognizes that Judaism must be open to change ("a memory which gained in scope") if it is to continue in the following generations. The memory he would like to pass down is the Zionist desire to resettle Palestine, in order to have a permanent home for the Jewish people. Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin also discuss the need for Judaism to be flexible to change. They believe that one's subjective Jewishness is framed largely through his or her generational connections, affording "the possibility of a flexible and non-hermetic critical Jewish identity" (710). They conclude with a further elaboration of this previous statement, arguing that it is not possible to categorize Jewish identity "because it is not national, not genealogical, not religious, but all of these in dialectical tension with one another" (721). The Boyarins' emphasis on "generational connections" centralizes its importance within their conception of Jewishness as the place of home, rather than the Zionist argument that home is in Israel. The tensions between Buber's argument for the centrality of Israel as home and the Boyarin's focus on galut as home are evident in the Jewish homesteader's narratives, as they attempt to balance their intentions to be "Americans" (i.e., Diaspora as home) with a desire to maintain their Jewish identity (i.e., Israel as home).

In her essay, "Reflections on Diasporic Identities," Pernima Mankekar discusses the importance of memory for diasporic identity formation. Although she discusses the narrative of a Sikh woman living in predominately Hindu New Delhi, there is a useful parallel between her study and my study of Jewish memoirs in North Dakota. In
reference to the Sikh woman's oral narratives, Mankeker writes, "These narratives reveal
the centrality of the politics of memory to the formation of identity; hence, oral histories
and studies of diasporic identities, which have as their goal the examination of
subjectivity, must place the politics of memory at the center of their analysis" (374).
Mankeker is especially concerned with diasporic individuals' recollections of their
displacement: "Her recasting of her [Mankeker's research subject] past reveals the extent
to which subjects' memories are mediated by their present sociopolitical location" (373).
Her conclusion is similar to the Boyarins' argument that the dialectical tensions among
one's genealogy, nation-identification, and religion produces one's expression of
Jewishness. The "dialectical tension" the Boyarins discuss is like Mankeker's "politics of
memory" in that both are mediations between individuals' present circumstances and past
social relations. Through their memoirs, Jewish homesteaders engage in a dialectic with
the "Old World" from where they came, individuals of their own generation, their own
conceptions of their Jewishness and Judaism, and the future generations who will read
their narratives.

Discussing Philip Roth's novel, Operation Shylock, Debra Shostak suggests that
"Jewish identity is inextricable from the Jew's nostalgic conception of the self in relation
to the lost home" (742). Shostak refers to the "politics of memory" I discussed above as a
form of nostalgia, implying a romanticized distance from the Galut. The practices and
customs of Jewish tradition, markers of Jewishness in the Galut, have become "nostalgic"
as a result of assimilation in the West and the settling of Israel. What is clear from her
characterization of Galut as "nostalgic" is that she believes traditional symbols of Judaism have acquired a different significance for Jews over time, while still, as Ben Halpern says in "The Jewishness of Secular Judaism," providing the "only formal framework . . . that can bring [Jews] (loosely) together" (226). At the end of her memoir, Sylvia Rosenberg, who settled with her parents near Wilton, ND, describes in detail Friday night Sabbath observances. In her account, she includes several references to both religious and cultural symbols that Shostak has labeled as "nostalgic." The Sabbath meal and ceremony she illustrates is a memory of a tradition she learned from her parents as a child. She writes:

My final remarks are my most cherished memories of our life on the farm. Picture in your mind a Friday. It is Erev Shabbos. The kitchen is filled with the aroma of fresh baked bread, chicken soup, carrot zimmis, gefilte fish, roast chicken and enticing smell of fresh baked pie.

The table is covered with a white linen cloth. The best dishes and silver adorn the table. At one end of the table is Father's Kiddish cup, the prayer book, the wine, and the Challah covered with a cloth of white. At the opposite end of the table, stand Mother's silver candle-sticks.

The men of the house have come in from the fields earlier than on other days. The chores are completed. Everyone has cleaned up and put on fresh clothes. Now all is ready for the Sabbath prayer, and then delicious food.

My mother places a beautiful embroidered shawl over her head and lights the Sabbath candles, softly chanting the prayer. Father fills the wine glasses for the older members around the table. (I remember my sister and I had 'something' in our glasses. I don't think it was wine.) Father raises his Kiddish cup and recites the prayer. Those of us, at the table, who know the prayer, sing along with him. The Challah is cut. Each receiving a slice for the "Moitza."

The prayers are over. The food is served. Contentment and peace reign in the home. In the heart of each, there is love of God and thankfulness for all His blessings, and for the privilege of living in the Land of Freedom--America. (Rosenberg 17-19)

Shostak's position that Jewish identity is inseparable from "the Jews' nostalgic conception of self in relation to a lost home" suggests that the symbols and rituals of tradition and their implementation into one's life (i.e., integral to one's "conception of self") reference a
home that is irretrievable. In the context of exile, Shostak takes a position similar to the Boyarins', defining a home that emphasizes galut rather than aliyah. Rosenberg's description of Erev Shabbos on her family's farm is nostalgic in that it creates a picture of this evening in very sentimental and generalized terms.

However, although her description of Erev Shabbos serves as a "home" in the sense referred to by Shostak, the first line of Rosenberg's vignette complicates Shostak's argument. Rosenberg begins by writing, "My final remarks are my most cherished memories of our life on the farm." There is an existential quality to her remarks. This observance was an important part of life on the farm and continued to be an important memory in adult life. The family's observance of a traditional Sabbath evening exemplifies a moment when the family emphasizes "the absence of home" (to return to JanMohamed's definition of exile) through the symbolic traditions signifying the family's Jewishness. The scene records the family's continuance of traditions once settled in North Dakota, while also serving as a "common memory" for Rosenberg as well as for future generations in her family. Shostak's claim implies that Jewish traditions and their relationship to Jewish identity must literally reference "the lost home," namely Israel. Rosenberg's memory indicates an existential relationship to these events specific to the farm; her memory does not have to be a moment of nostalgia for Israel as well, suggesting that Shostak's phrase "nostalgic conception of self" is problematic when tied only to the Promised Land.
Rosenberg's recasting of this Sabbath celebration occurs in 1976, nearly sixty years after her life on the North Dakota farm. She indicates in her memoir that her family left farming in 1918, whereupon she moved first to Washburn, ND, then to Grand Forks, ND, before finally settling in Portland, OR, where she wrote this account. It is important to note that she was very young when she experienced these celebrations on her parents' farm. Her memory of one particular Erev Shabbos has been generalized to all Fridays, and does not reflect the difficult life the family endured upon first arriving in North Dakota. The items presented at the meal indicate a prosperous and well-settled home, the memories most likely to be prominent when she was a young adult. In light of this, I want to return, briefly, to Mankeker's claim that diasporic individuals mediate past recollections according to their current sociopolitical location. Clearly, the sentimental nature of Rosenberg's remembrance suggests that she reflects upon this event positively, it being her "most cherished memor[y] of [her] life on the farm." It is a memory she has carried nostalgically through her period of "wandering," retelling it for reflection by future generations. It also indicates her earlier acknowledgment that she does not fully recall the difficulties of the family's situation: "I was much too young to fully realize and appreciate the many sacrifices they made for their children" (17). The memory, on one level, is a romanticized version of the meal, recorded, as she indicates in her memoir, in the financial and social stability of her older adult life.

I am not so much interested in the exactness of her retelling, but more the transgenerational connection enacted by her remembrance of this tradition, creating a
"common memory" for her family. Whether or not she attaches or her grandchildren attach the same religious or cultural significance to the symbolic framework presented at the Sabbath observance, her remembrance imaginatively creates a home that is not bound to a particular time or place. As Eisen writes, "It is this taste of home which the exiles carry as each leaves behind his particular point of origin. Home is a place, as yet only glimpsed from afar, toward which they are going, far more than a place from which they have come" (15). To see home in the context Eisen presents here is to see it in terms of aliyah. Rosenberg only "glimpse[s] it from afar," because the traditions she describes symbolically recall her lost home (i.e., Israel). Eisen's claim suggests that Rosenberg or her family observe these traditions with the intention of some day returning to Israel. However, Eisen's perspective privileges a Zionist reading of Rosenberg's and her family's Jewishness.

The Boyarins' and Shostak's "centralizing" of galut as the formative aspect of Jewish identity rather than aliyah has an important signification for the American context. If observing a traditional form of Judaism serves as an imaginative place of home, what type of home does it create if there is no intention on the part of the individual to return to the Promised Land? Rosenberg ends her memoir with the following: "In the heart of each, there is love of God and thankfulness for all his blessings, and for the privilege in the Land of Freedom--America" (19). While Rosenberg illustrates a spiritual form of Judaism in this passage, she also introduces "the privilege of [living] in the Land of Freedom" as a competing element to her Jewish identity. Living in the United States has
caused her family to make choices concerning what form of Judaism it will continue to follow. This ability to choose highlights the conflict surrounding the centrality of aliyah in American Judaism. The Boyarins emphasize exile as integral to Jewish identity formation rather than aliyah because it enables a flexible expression of one's Jewishness (i.e., one's "home") regardless of where or under what circumstances he or she lives. The Boyarins' argument, however, does not adequately address the consequences of a "flexible" Jewishness for group cohesion beyond the borders of the United States, nor does it address the existing tensions between American Jewry and Israeli Jewry. Many Israeli Jews believe much of American Judaism to be "inauthentic" as a large percentage of American Jews and Jewish congregations do not use Hebrew to express their Jewishness, do not believe in the concept of aliyah, and have only a superficial understanding of Israel.

II.

When Jewish immigrants settled on homestead property in North Dakota, their "willingness" to be flexible with their expression of Jewishness was often a result of economic stressors, their isolation from other Jewish communities, and their desire to be "American." The remainder of this chapter will explore the challenges Jewish homesteaders faced in maintaining their Jewishness in North Dakota, and how those challenges caused a redefinition of their Jewishness as "home" in the Galut. The choices they make (e.g., working in the field instead of observing the Sabbath) raise questions concerning the meaning intended by the traditions they followed. In other words, do they
maintain their collective cultural and religious identity for that purpose only (i.e., to construct a cultural distinctiveness), or do they continue a modified form of their Jewishness with the intention of one day returning to Israel (i.e., a political or religious form of Zionism)?

Several historians, such as J. Sanford Rikoon and Louis Schwartz, have argued that Jewish farmers remigrated from North Dakota primarily because they failed to sustain their farms financially. Issues of cultural and religious isolation are often given as examples of secondary stressors contributing to many Jews' decisions to leave. Rikoon indicates that historians commonly suggest the following reasons for Jewish immigrants ending their farming operations: inadequate agricultural training or experience, unsuitable or poor land for contemporary farming methods, and low personal capital outside of the money and loans received from organizations and philanthropies (125-26). Many Jewish immigrants in North Dakota who became farmers received 160 acres of free land through the National Homestead Act. The land they received from the government was often of poor quality; it would often take several years for many farmers to cultivate successfully a portion large enough to make a profit. Having only a small amount of land on which to produce a crop made Jewish and non-Jewish farmers alike especially vulnerable to financial destitution if natural disasters, such as prairie fire, hail storm, and wind damage, occurred. Often, family members had to work on other farms, the railroad, or coal mines to supplement the money the family made farming. Ethel Overby indicated that her father, Noah, worked several different jobs his first summer in North Dakota: "He
shoveled grain into bags at a granary where farmers dumped their wagon loads onto the warehouse floor. At a farm he helped build a barn. Meyer Mackoff... recruited Jewish immigrants for a crew to build a road crossing on the Milwaukee railroad near Manango" (6). These economic stressors frequently caused farmers to choose between observing a religious function or working to make money.

The economic decisions they made could potentially lead to a second galut from their own Jewishness. However, the Boyarins would suggest that this inevitable transformation in Jewishness is exactly the reason to argue for a flexible and nonhermetic form of Jewishness in the Galut, suggesting that these changes should be viewed as a productive aspect of the Galut. Although many Jewish immigrants did not achieve financial stability, it is important to point out that the percentage of Jewish immigrants leaving farming was not significantly more than the percentage of non-Jewish immigrants leaving farming. Between 1910 and 1930, many Jewish immigrants in North Dakota, including both successful and unsuccessful farmers, small and large town residents alike, left the state in substantial numbers for larger cities like St. Paul (Rikoon 125-26). Jewish immigrants who were successful farmers or businessmen were as likely to leave the state within one generation as those who were not able to make a living at farming. Most rural Jewish homestead communities lasted less than 15 years, preventing the establishment of any firm structure of Judaism.

The challenges parents faced in trying to maintain their cultural identity caused many of these parents to consider the future impact on their children's Jewishness if they
remained in rural North Dakota. Bessie Schwartz, who homesteaded by Bowman, ND, reflected this sentiment in her and her husband's decision to move back to Minneapolis: "The time came when we took inventory of ourselves and found we owed it to the children, even if it meant sacrificing our income, to return to our home city. We returned in June 1924; the older children were confirmed and the boys had bar mitzvahs" (134). Louis Schwartz suggests that parents "were concerned about educating their children in the Jewish tradition and having them actively carry out these ideas in everyday life" (231). Seeing few opportunities for their children to maintain their Jewish identity, many Jewish immigrant parents moved to urban areas where established Jewish communities existed.

German Jewish immigrants, who came to America between 1825 and 1880, had already undergone a long period of assimilation to German culture, which eventually resulted in Reform Judaism. Reform Jews believe that Judaism needs to reflect modern ideas and circumstances of its people. The German Jewish immigrants practiced a liberal form of Judaism and viewed assimilation to German and American culture positively. It was this form of Judaism that most strongly influenced American Judaism when immigrants from Eastern Europe began arriving in the United States around 1880. On economic, cultural, and theological terms, American German Jews had little in common with these new immigrants. Although American German Jews lent significant financial help to the new immigrants, they accepted them reservedly, perceiving a threat to their established middle-class positions. American German Jews also worried that the
"strange" customs of the Eastern European Jews would encourage the growth of anti-Semitism in America.

Consequently, American Jews encouraged the assimilation of Eastern European Jews into American culture, by lending financial assistance through organizations like the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Society. This group provided loans to individuals, like Noah Schlasinger, in order to help establish them on homestead property. Judah Wechsler, rabbi of the Mount Zion Hebrew Synagogue in St. Paul, arranged for financial assistance to immigrants settling near Bismarck. Fearing the impact of over 200 new and generally very poor immigrants on the small St. Paul congregation of 50, Wechsler developed plans to form what became the "Wechsler Painted Woods" colony. Wechsler embodied many attributes of Reformed Judaism at this time. As was typical in the Reform tradition, he went by the designation of "reverend" rather than "rabbi" to symbolize a level of assimilation to mainstream American culture. Wechsler indicates both his reservations and hopes concerning the immigrants to which he lent financial support in a letter to the Washburn Times: "The Russian Jew is far inferior to the Jews of other countries so far as culture and refinement are concerned, owing largely to the fact that they have not enjoyed the benefits of a good education. . . . With all their faults and shortcomings they are law-abiding, industrious and frugal, and all will become good citizens of this blessed land of freedom."

Jewish homesteaders' attempts to maintain traditional components of their Jewishness exemplified a Conservative transition in American Judaism, culturally and
theologically. In his book, *American Judaism*, Nathan Glazer indicates that a general shift towards a Conservative form of Judaism was initiated by East European Jews who "wanted to move away from an Orthodoxy barely responsive to a new environment but who also found the services of the Reform synagogue cold and too distant from anything they knew as Jewish" (92). Although the new environment to which Glazer refers is an urban one, environmental factors facing the homesteaders similarly resulted in a less Orthodox version of their Jewishness. Moreover, many Eastern European immigrants in the United States modified the rigidity of their native traditions in an attempt to keep their children from moving to the Reform movement or away from Judaism altogether. The traditional practices they followed signified their difference from their Christian neighbors, leading many immigrant children to move to less conservative expressions of Jewishness in order to assimilate more quickly. However, as the number of immigrants increased from East Europe (over two million by 1924), there was less pressure to transform dramatically the traditions they brought to America (i.e., to assimilate). The history behind the name of the Grand Forks synagogue provides an example of this growing Conservatism in American Judaism during the early 1900s. The congregation originally adopted "The Congregation of the Church of Israel" as the name for its synagogue. Isadore Papermaster reflects that the "cumbersome name chosen for the Congregation always indicated to [him] the anxiety with which the community then wanted to acclimate itself to the American way of life" (17). When the next generation built a new synagogue in 1935, they renamed it "B'nai Israel" (The Children of Israel).
Upon arriving in North Dakota, Jewish immigrants were tasked with the need to reconstruct the social and religious structures (i.e., a collective home in the Galut) they left behind in Eastern Europe. Distance from established Jewish communities and institutions, economic hardships, and harsh weather created formidable barriers for these Jews to overcome. Although religious services were often available from synagogues and rabbis in larger cities in North Dakota, these cities were often too great a distance from homestead properties to provide consistent support for religious needs. For animals to be prepared according to Jewish dietary laws, briths (ritual circumcision) to be performed, or marriages conducted, Jewish homesteaders either had to pay for a rabbi to come to their farms or become trained as a shochet (ritual slaughterer) or mohel (performer of circumcision) in order to conduct these services themselves. Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster of Grand Forks served the Jews who settled in North Dakota, Northwest Minnesota, and Eastern Montana. He had studied at the Slobodker Yeshiva, an ultra-Orthodox yeshiva, in Kovno, Lithuania. Isadore Papermaster, Benjamin Papermaster’s son, indicates in his memoirs that his father decided to study *shechitah* (ritual slaughtering) and *milah* (circumcision) in Lithuania in order to improve the financial situation of his family, which was very poor due to his low income as a religious teacher. His qualifications as shochet and mohel later proved valuable for the assistance he provided Jewish pioneers in North Dakota and the surrounding area. Rabbi Papermaster's training as a shochet and mohel was not something easily attainable for immigrants in North Dakota.
To arrange for Rabbi Papermaster to travel to their farm, families would pay for his train fare and pay him a fee for his services. Isadore Papermaster records that Rabbi Papermaster "spent several weeks [in Devils Lake] as each one of the colonists wanted to put in his supply of kosher meat and fowl for the winter. He made regular trips there each fall and spring beside the occasional bris or wedding" (22). If a significant number of Jews settled in an area, national Jewish organizations and large synagogues in St. Paul and Minneapolis financed many of their religious and business needs. For example, through the Jewish Colonization Association, the communities of Ashley and Wishek (southeast of Bismarck) were able to secure Rabbi Julius Hess in 1914 and Rabbi Ostrowski in 1916 as permanent rabbis for their communities. Rabbis Hess and Ostrowski provided these colonists with traditional services and also instructed the children of the area in Hebrew and Jewish tradition (Sherman 395).

In order for a community to form a synagogue, it needed to be flexible as to when and how people came together as a congregation. When a settlement had only a few members and was also far from the religious services available in cities like Grand Forks, many Jewish farmers had to fulfill the roles of the rabbi themselves. In these cases, a settler, often one who had previous rabbinical training, took the role of shochet and mohel and also led religious services on the Sabbath or on the holidays. Charles Losk, who lived in the Williston area, wrote in his memoirs, "And the fall of 1908 we had our first community church gathering for our holidays with Max Sher and Mr. [Nathan] Papermaster from White Earth, ND, conducting our services. We got together with the
Greengards and bought a Torah. And every fall we got together to rent a hall and hold our church services there" (105). Losk indicates here that his community only came together for major religious observances, reflecting a choice to prioritize living in a certain environment (i.e., the plains, rural area) over living in an area where it could attend frequently traditional services (e.g., going to synagogue on Friday and Saturday for the Sabbath).

Following the laws of Kashrut (the dietary laws) demonstrates in daily activity one's relationship to God, while also serving symbolically as a marker of the Galut. Keeping a kosher home on the prairie was difficult. There were no stores in these rural areas which prepared and sold meat according to the Jewish dietary laws. To acquire meat that was kosher, the family would have to send for a rabbi or shochet to prepare the animals. They could also have kosher meat shipped to them from Minneapolis or St. Paul, if they lived near a railroad depot. However, this method was unreliable due to the lack of refrigeration systems on trains. Blanche Goldberg, who lived in Hebron, ND, recalled the stationmaster announcing to her father that his shipment of meat had arrived from Minneapolis. Her father answered, "I know, Pete. Dump it. It smells over here already" (97). Isadore Papermaster indicates in his memoirs that Rabbi Papermaster, his father, successfully petitioned the local slaughterhouse to have a special department that would produce kosher meat (36-37). This provided Jewish residents in Grand Forks and nearby rural areas with a more ready source than was previously available.
Often, a family would ask a shochet or rabbi to come to its farm to butcher one of its animals. Besides the cost for the animal, the family would also have to pay for the shochet or rabbi to prepare the animal. Most families could not afford the expense of obtaining kosher meat and became vegetarians rather than break the prohibition against eating meat that was not properly prepared. In her memoir, Rachel Calof, who homesteaded near Devils Lake, explained that it was not until her son's bris that they decided to pay for a shochet to come and prepare an ox so they would have meat at the celebration. She writes, "During the three years we had all been in North Dakota, none of us had tasted meat and everyone agreed that this would be a fine time to butcher an ox" (72). Isadore Papermaster explained that his father often performed services on credit, understanding the economic hardships that these families faced. He writes, "While most such families were everlastingly grateful and eventually made up for such expenses, it did occur that some did forget their indebtedness (sic). But his [father's] service had to continue nevertheless" (25). A homesteader's ability to observe Kashrut was often compromised by the lack of a framework (i.e., a ready source of kosher food) for these services, or was made prohibitive as a result of economic instability. In either case, how "flexible" an individual was with this ritual was often beyond his or her control. The difficulty in continuing a kosher home contributed to many children of Jewish homesteaders forgoing this tradition.

In order for their Jewishness to serve as a "common memory" that would enable them to keep their distinctive culture in the Galut, parents needed to teach and model the
traditions they observed to their children. Pre-immigration fathers played an important role in the religious education of their sons. However, their decision to move to an isolated, non-Jewish area and the demands of farming often compromised fathers' abilities to raise their sons within the Jewish tradition. Sons would not be able to learn Hebrew or study the Torah at a synagogue, as their fathers had in their native country. Sylvia Rosenberg recalls her father's worry that his sons were not being properly educated: "Our father was very concerned that my brothers Isadore and Al were not getting a Hebrew education. After discussing the problem with the neighbors who had children of school age, it was decided that a 'Malamid,' a Hebrew teacher, be imported from New York" (7).

Records suggest that opportunities for fathers to teach their sons Hebrew and Jewish law varied. Setting aside even one day in which the father did not work was often difficult. Sophie Trupin's father seems to have been successful enough at farming to reserve the Sabbath for study. Sophie Trupin observed that her "father and brothers devoted themselves to the study of the Holy Writ. There was no synagogue or minyan of ten men, but no matter. Each morning, tefillin was wound about the arm, and the forehead was adorned with a small black box containing the ancient prayer offered up to God as it had been for centuries" (92). Harry Turnoy, Trupin's father, taught his sons the traditional way of observing the Sabbath, teaching them how to pray and also instructing them in the study of the Torah and the Hebrew language. Without instruction by their
father in Hebrew and Jewish law, sons were unlikely to receive the intensive religious training that their fathers or siblings had experienced in Eastern Europe.

As with the education of their sons, the men's duties as farmers frequently required them to prioritize working in the fields over observing the Sabbath. Thus, these farmers were not able to serve as role models for their sons in the same way their fathers had been for them. Sophie Trupin, whose family homesteaded near Wilton, ND, writes in her memoirs, "There was just so many days for sowing and reaping and harvesting before the first frost took over. Most of the Jewish farmers asked God's indulgence and continued working feverishly seven days a week" (92). Many farmers began their operations with little or no capital, needing the year's crop to ensure they would have enough money to buy supplies for the winter and to start again in the spring.

Consequently, many Jewish farmers did not observe the Sabbath or the daily prayers. However, most observed the important Jewish holidays. Sophie Trupin describes a High Holiday celebration in her memoir: "The scene that night in the improvised synagogue is still with me. . . . As soon as the men had put up their horses and unloaded provisions, they went upstairs, draped themselves in prayer shawls, and commenced to pray" (93). Sophie Trupin's description suggests that the pioneers' celebrations, even though limited to significant holidays, continued the traditional structure followed in Eastern Europe.

The bris ceremony is especially important in Judaism as it signifies God's covenant with Abraham and Israel. As with obtaining kosher meat, paying for a mohel or rabbi to perform the circumcision often had a significant economic impact on the family.
A family would need to use money allotted for farm supplies or other necessities in order to ensure the ceremony would be performed. Traditionally, a bris is performed with a minyan of ten men. Distance, weather, or field work made it extremely difficult for many Jewish homesteaders to bring together the required ten men for the minyan. Sophie Trupin reflected this difficulty when she discussed the bris for her brother Abraham: "There is supposed to be a minyan of ten male adults to say the blessing, but I suppose there is a dispensation if it is not possible to have the prescribed number" (54). Severe cold and unpredictable blizzards frequently made travel hazardous for those who were to be part of the ceremony. In his reminiscence, Charles Losk related traveling eighteen miles to Williston in an open wagon when the temperature was 35 degrees below zero in order to participate in his nephew's bris. His feet were severely frostbitten by the time he reached his sister's house. Despite the many hardships that resulted from continuing this tradition, most Jewish homesteaders performed, as completely as was possible, a bris ceremony for their sons. Similar to keeping a kosher home, conducting bris ceremonies enabled them to maintain an important part of their Jewish identity.

Women played an important role in ensuring that the family observed traditional Jewish practices in the home. It was frequently upon the mother's insistence that the home observed the dietary laws of Judaism. She also prepared bread and lit candles for the Sabbath every Friday night. Within the memoirs of Rachel Calof, Sophie Trupin, Bessie Schwartz, and Sylvia Rosenberg, women are described as fulfilling a traditional form of Judaism, suggesting that mothers, perhaps more than fathers, were fairly
successful in maintaining, on a daily basis, many of the religious and cultural traditions they had observed in their native countries. The mothers often taught their daughters how to make challah and how to fulfill the other religious or cultural responsibilities expected of orthodox Jewish women. Sophie Trupin described learning how to make challah while preparing for the Sabbath with her mother: "While my mother braided the long ropes of dough into a huge oval, I would have a piece of dough to make a miniature challah. At first I could only manipulate three strands, braiding them into something like my own braided hair; but then, as I watched my mother working with four strands of dough, I practiced until I could do it too" (57).

In some cases, poor living conditions, financial instability, and severe weather were significant factors in hindering or preventing women from fulfilling their traditional religious responsibilities. Women normally fulfilled the mitzvot of lighting candles before sundown on Friday for the Sabbath. Sylvia Rosenberg remembers her mother preparing for Erev Shabbos: "My mother places a beautiful embroidered shawl over her head and lights the Sabbath candles, softly chanting the prayer" (28). Many families did not have the financial resources to buy candles on a regular basis. Some families did not bring candle holders with them when they immigrated and could not afford to purchase them. Thus, many women made their own candles and candle holders in order to fulfill this mitzvot. In her memoir, Rachel Calof explained how she made candles in order to mark the beginning of the Sabbath: "I went outside to see what materials nature might provide for my project, and soon found some partly dried mud which I molded into a
narrow container. I shaped a wick out of a rag, smeared it with butter, placed it in the mud cup, and lit it... and there was light" (31). Sophie Trupin also recalled her mother making candles: "I remember seeing my mother make Chanukah candles. I don't know what she used to make them, but they were orange" (56). Both of the narratives suggest that Jewish women had to be very resourceful if they were to continue fulfilling this mitsvot.

Immersion in a ritual bath posed even greater challenges for women. Many homesteads were not near any body of water nor was there any heated water easily available for the bath. Unlike many homesteaders, Sophie Trupin's father was able to build a heated miqweh for his wife so that she could fulfill the laws of purity. She writes, "There was a circular enclosure of cement, in the middle of which stood a potbellied stove which heated water for the bath. The windmill would pump water through a pipe which extended through the wall of the bathhouse into this round enclosure" (64). The resources required to construct the miqweh that Harry Turnoy built for his wife were often far beyond the financial means of most homesteaders. Trupin gives the only detailed description of a miqweh, although a few were used communally in other areas of North Dakota. Sherman indicates that Jewish settlers in the Devils Lake area built a miqweh on the shore of Little Lake. Williams also suggests that the Jews who settled in Washburn County outside of Bismarck built a miqweh on Yanktoney Creek, but like Sherman, he provides no details as to its construction (392-93). However, due to financial constraints and the difficulty of obtaining heated water in the winter, it is likely
that most homesteaders were not able to construct and use a miqweh. Many homesteaders like Rachel Calof heated their homes only during a short portion of the day in order to conserve enough fuel for the entire winter. Heating enough water for a miqweh would consume a large amount of fuel, making it likely that homesteaders who were still establishing themselves would dispense with this religious practice for economic reasons.

Many Jewish homesteaders were concerned that their children would not be able to marry other Jews, an aspect important to their Jewishness in Eastern Europe. The isolation of Jewish families in rural areas made it difficult for single Jews to meet other prospective mates. Many farm settlements were composed of extended families and were far from other Jewish communities. In Russia and Eastern European countries, the parents arranged most of the marriages. Although this practice in America was less socially acceptable and rarely done, most Jewish immigrants to North Dakota actively encouraged their children to marry others of Jewish descent. In his memoirs, Charles Losk recalled how his friend, Joe Greengard, met the Jewish woman he would eventually marry: "He said . . . he heard of some nice Jewish settlement not far from Wilton, N.D. So he decided to take a little vacation" (122). Losk discussed how Greengard took a train to Wilton, ND, where he met with the Kremenetskys who had two daughters: "The evening was spent nicely and the next day the happy meeting was a success . . . . he stayed there another evening and Joe and Eva became engaged" (122). In many ways, Joe Greengard's engagement to Eva Kremenetsky is very similar to the arranged
marriages in Russia and Eastern Europe. She likely had no say in the arrangement made between her father and Greengard. Joe's sole purpose it seems in going to Wilton was to find a wife who too was Jewish. The narrative exemplifies the difficult circumstances facing a Jewish homesteader who was single and wished to marry another Jew. Not surprisingly, Jewish parents on homestead farms were concerned that their children would not be able marry other Jews, as marriage to non-Jews would risk a discontinuation of Judaism in the family's next generation.

The Jewishness the homesteaders brought to North Dakota proved to be very malleable. Their desire to be "Americans" often took equal or greater priority than maintaining a distinctive cultural and religious identity. Steiner's argument does not reflect these competing aspects to the "text" as home. Certainly, the symbolic meaning of the Jewish homesteader's interpretive practices reflects a different sense of how their Jewishness serves as a "home" in America. When the Grand Forks synagogue changed its name from the "Congregation of the Church of Israel" to "B'nai Israel" (The Children of Israel), they asserted a more traditional name but also demonstrated the ability to institute any name it believed most represented its community. Thus, the "malleability" of their Jewishness raises questions concerning the centrality of Israel for those Jews living in the Diaspora. Does being "The Children of Israel" necessitate their fulfilling aliyah or their observance of a traditional form of Judaism? In chapter two, I explore Maier Calof's paradoxical desire to maintain an existential bond with Israel while at the same time participating fully in American culture.
Maier Calof's memoir raises questions concerning the centrality of Israel in discussions of Jewish identity formation. Maier's desire to live in the United States and participate in its culture competes with his hope that Israel will serve as a spiritual and protective center for Jews around the world. Martin Buber, who argues for a nonpolitical form of Zionism, discusses one's relationship to Israel (as center) in terms of reciprocality. When one enacts in daily life the teachings of the Torah or the Tenak, a spiritual bond is formed that is productive for both the individual and Israel (geographically, theologically, and culturally). Although Buber argues for an existential connection to Israel, he does not suggest that all Jews must settle there. Daniel Boyarin, on the other hand, believes that emphasizing Israel as center occludes other (non-Jewish) elements of one's identity that are equally important. Boyarin decenters Jewishness as a foundational category in order to provide a flexible model of identity formation that is sensitive to differences. Maier's narrative combines and extends these two arguments made by Buber and Boyarin by suggesting that one can form a "reciprocal" bond to both nation and Israel that is not dependent on discussions of aliyah (return to Palestine). It is this bond that becomes the "center" of his relationship with his country and his Jewishness.
In his essay, "Teaching and Deed" (hereafter TD), Martin Buber posits that the "teachings" of Judaism must assume "the form of a human link, awakening and activating a common bond" with God (145). Buber's supposition that the teachings (e.g., the Torah, Tenak, ritual) must assume the "form of a human link" suggests that it is the application of these texts within one's life and not the texts themselves that forms a link to God. In his essay, "Why We Should Study Jewish Sources," Buber similarly describes the "bond with 'Israel' [Israel geographically and also as a collective reference to Jews worldwide]" as "organic," something that grows only when "Israel" serves as a central presence in one's life. Without this "organic bond," he argues, the Diaspora "will disintegrate" (148). This "organic bond," then, becomes the place of home for the Jews in the Galut and for those who have returned to Israel.

Maier's memoir exemplifies a version of Buber's existentialism. He structures his memoir loosely along the chronology of his movements from Steblev, Ukraine, to, eventually, Los Angeles. In 1885, Maier immigrates from the Ukraine and travels to his father's homestead in the "Painted Woods" settlement near Bismarck. Finding his father in extremely impoverished conditions, Maier decides to leave for work at a labor camp in Montana, before moving to St. Paul around 1886. However, in 1887, a Jewish homesteader from the Devils Lake region convinces Maier to travel alone to North Dakota to begin his own farm. He lives here for thirteen years before attempting several businesses in Winkler, MB, and Winnipeg, MB. He finally settles in Los Angeles where he writes his memoir between 1940 and 1944. As Maier narrates these events, he
attempts to demonstrate for his children how his Jewishness has served as an "organic bond," in Buber's sense, to God, who protects and guides him on his ventures.

When Maier walks from the Devils Lake train station to his homestead property, he initially hesitates: "Perhaps I might get lost, but when I heard the singing of the birds I felt that He was with me and unaware of myself, I sang too" (18). The birds signify for Maier a representation of God's creation, a reference that is a textual form of "the teachings," forming a "human link" with God when he sings. Upon hearing the birds' songs, Maier records that he "felt" the presence of God, indicating that this "link" is more than a knowledge of a certain doctrine. The link takes the more experienced form of a spiritual link (i.e., it awakens and activates a common bond) to God. Maier also demonstrates the organic nature of this bond when he writes, "unaware of myself, I sang too." Maier's unconscious reaction results in an experience that activates a link between the birds' songs and God. In the context of Buber's argument, this spiritual existentialism is important because it transcends both geography and specific Jewish practices. Therefore, the organic bond with God presented by Maier in this scene also forms a "common bond" with Israel, creating for him a home in the Galut.

In order to prevent the disintegration of the Diaspora, as Buber says, the organic bond he describes must form a consistently present connection between man and God. Earlier in TD, Buber writes, "It is true that simple souls can live the true life without learning, provided they are linked to God. But this is possible only because the teachings which represent just such a link to God have, although they are unaware of it, become the
very foundation of their existence" (145). Regardless of an individual's Jewish education, he or she can maintain a common bond (i.e., the "true life") to God through a relationship with His presence. Therefore, in the scene from Maier's memoir, the birds can signify creation without one having any formal knowledge of Hebrew or the Torah. Although Buber refers to the teachings as "awakening and activating" a common bond with God, the event he defines does not occur at a precise moment, but rather becomes over time "the foundation of [one's] existence."

The scene from Maier's memoir also complicates Buber's notion that the teachings form a solid foundation in the construction of one's self. When Maier begins his walk to Devils Lake, he begins by writing: "At first I hesitated, perhaps I might get lost" (18). Maier does not begin his trip relying on this common bond with God, but must be reminded of it. He initially evaluates the situation according to his ability to complete the trip alone, without any external assistance. At other points in his narrative, Maier indicates, as he does in the scene above, that the bond he has developed with God does not consistently govern his actions. After relating a failed business venture in Winnipeg, he makes the following directive to his children: "Hang on to the little success and happiness that God grants you and enjoy it, and move forward by degrees. I, myself, could not see this at that time and rushed and chased for more and more earthly treasure" (58). In this scene, the teachings do not "activate," for the period of time that he ran his business, an organic bond between Maier and God. He perceives a necessity for this common bond only in hindsight, as he reflects on his personal history. As with the
singing of the birds, an event (i.e., the composition of his memoir) awakens in Maier the "organic" connection to God described by Buber. However, the awakening occurs only at the point of introspection (e.g., "I . . . could not see this at the time"), several years (ca. 30 years) after the failure of his company. Although the bond Maier indicates here is organic in that it causes him to produce a history for future generations, it is also a constructed one, built from a desire to leave a specific message to his audience. Its organic nature in his text becomes semi-artificial (i.e., not necessarily constructed from personal experience) as he imposes his motives for writing and his current Jewish identity on his past history. The bond is not one that he experiences in the context of these two scenes, but one that he creates imaginatively later through the writing of his memoir.

In his book, A Radical Jew (hereafter ARJ), Daniel Boyarin describes a relationship to his Jewishness (and by extension to Israel and God) in terms much different from Buber. Unlike Buber who argues that a spiritual form of Judaism serves as a foundation to one's existence, Boyarin suggests that his Jewishness shares a space with other components of his identity: "The truth of my being Jewish is not compromised by the fact that I am also American, very profoundly so, that in the morning I may go to the synagogue and in the evening to hear Emmy Lou Harris, and both practices are of very great importance to me" (243-44). Boyarin believes participating in Jewish practice is comparable to participating in one's national culture. Both activities demonstrate one's multifaceted connections to his or her particular community. As components to his present identity, these two categories of culture (i.e., Jewish and American), Boyarin
writes, are a "concatenation of two equally particular identities in the same polysystem" (244). By envisioning the Jewish component of his identity as one link on a chain equal to other links (e.g., American culture), Boyarin decenters "Jewishness" and other identity categories as possible foundations for Jewish individual and collective identity.

Buber conceives of man as enacting the link itself, while the teachings provide only the materials from which the link is made. Boyarin, on the other hand, argues that Jewish ethnicity, tradition, and practice is the link itself united to other social and cultural systems (e.g., American culture, academia) in a polysystem. Although Buber and Boyarin center their Jewishness differently in their conceptions of self, there are significant similarities between their models as well. As a goal, they both attempt to define the possibility of peaceful and egalitarian relationships between disparate groups. Buber urges group solidarity in the Galut and in Israel, while simultaneously arguing for "I-Thou" relationships between Israel and other nation-states and cultures. In an I-Thou relationship, a genuine dialogue between two parties occurs, in which each participant respects the other's difference and uniqueness. As with Buber, Boyarin attempts to formulate a philosophy that tolerates difference within conceptions of individual and group identity: "When liberal Arabs and some Jews claim that the Jews of the Middle East are Arab Jews, I concur with them and think that Zionist ideology occludes something very significant when it seeks to obscure this point" (ARJ, 244). What becomes occluded in the Zionist ideology is the possibility that Arab Jews enjoy participating in aspects of their Arab culture. Refusing to name this group of Jews as
"Arab Jews," argues Boyarin, encourages factions and conflict between these two sides on a national scale. Similarly, in the context of Maier's narrative, Maier's conclusion that he "rushed and chased for more earthly treasure" exemplifies the dialogic tension between his desire to fulfill the obligations of his tradition and his desire to be a successful member of his new community. In Boyarin's terms, Maier's evaluation of this event in his life demonstrates how he must mediate these two links' concatenate positions on the same chain of identity categories.

A clear objective in Boyarin's posing a postmodern version of identity formation is to oppose the notion of "Israel" as a center in discussions of Jewish identity. Although Buber opposes a political form of Zionism as does Boyarin, he adamantly believes that Palestine is the center (i.e., home) for Jews collectively wherever they live. In his memoir, Maier does not create an image of his self that can be easily categorized into either Buber's or Boyarin's arguments. Instead, the image he constructs of himself overlaps both Buber's and Boyarin's philosophies while extending them in an alternate direction as well (i.e., towards a political form of Zionism). The overlap includes Maier's existential presentation of his relationship between his self and Judaism, and also his strong desire to be a successful member of his new community. Moreover, the overlap is further complicated by the events of the 1940s when he writes his memoir and the dialectic between his present self and his past history. Maier's recording of his arrival to Philadelphia from the Ukraine presents an example. He writes, "I wouldn't even attempt to relate the misery we had to live through [on the ship] until we reached the shores of the
country where millions of people found their paradise, a country to which we are thankful each day for the asylum she offered us" (10). The passage records two moments in Maier's life: his arrival to America and his evaluation of that arrival 55 years later. Clearly, the "we" in "we had to live" and "we reached" references his family immigrating with him to the United States. However, when he writes, "we are thankful," he refers not only to himself and his family, but also to Jews collectively as an immigrant group in America during the 1940s.

Maier's choosing to characterize America as a "paradise" suggests that he views it as a place that is compatible with his Jewishness. This view conflicts with one he held as a young man in Steblev, Ukraine. He remembers that he did not initially believe his father had made a wise decision to leave the shtetl: "America to every Jew, was a land where God was forgotten, where no synagogues existed, where the dietary law (Kashruth) was not observed" (7). Maier's positive evaluation of America later in life transforms this earlier viewpoint centralizing his Jewishness in identity construction. His use of the word "paradise" suggests a belief that his "Americanness" can be linked to his Jewish identity within the terms described by Boyarin above.

These two passages also trouble Boyarin's argument above by ultimately maintaining Jewishness as foundational for individual and collective identity in the Galut. Although Maier perceives America to be a paradise, he also indicates that it is a place that offers him and other Jewish immigrants asylum. Maier did not leave Steblev, Ukraine, to escape pogroms or other forms of oppression; he came to America to meet his father, who
had left a few years earlier. Therefore, given the time period in which Maier writes his memoir, he references two contexts with his use of the term "asylum": the historical Galut of the Jews and the events in Europe during World War Two. When Maier expresses that he and his community in Steblev fear that his father will not be able to face the challenges of assimilation in America, he provides another instance when he situates himself and his community in the Galut. In each context, Maier maintains a "bond with Israel" that is central to his core identity, as Buber argues is necessary for preventing the disintegration of Israel outside of Palestine.

Maier's memoir raises the question whether one can maintain a common bond to Israel while also participating fully in American culture, as Boyarin suggests is possible. Boyarin argues that Diaspora and not national self-determination (i.e., Zionism) should serve as a historical and theoretical model for reading Jewish individual and collective identity. He makes the qualification, however, that the Diaspora he references is "an idealized Diaspora generalized from those situations in Jewish history when Jews were relatively free from persecution and yet constituted a strong Jewish identity" (ARJ, 249). Significantly, Boyarin's idealized Diaspora does not account for past histories of persecution brought with immigrants from their native homes. His model assumes (as an idealization) that destructive events, like pogroms and the Shoah, do not significantly influence an immigrant's present circumstances or the "strong Jewish identity" that is reflected.
Upon his arrival in America, Maier lives in such an idealized Diasporic community as described by Boyarin. Maier's narrative consistently reveals that he balances a desire to assert his Jewishness wherever he lives with a strong alignment to life in the United States (e.g., "I thank the Lord that we and our children are in the blessed land of America" [53]). At the same time, Maier records the impact of World War Two on Steblev, the town where he was raised: "Now our town is wiped out and the Jews are there no more" (75). He follows this historical commentary about his former town with the following declaration: "We should continue to pray that Palestine will become the true land of Israel with recognition from all peoples" (75). The "we" to which Maier refers is the same "we" in Boyarin's idealized Diaspora. However, the destruction of his hometown in the Ukraine causes him to argue for aliyah (return to Palestine) in terms counter to Boyarin's argument. Although Boyarin does not suggest that Jews should not settle in Israel, he rejects a nationalizing of a Jewish state, something implied by Maier's comment above.

In his memoir, Maier includes directly quoted texts from Jewish and American cultural sources. Maier's method of integrating these texts into his own helps describe his stance towards the centrality of his Jewishness as a foundational aspect of his identity in America. Clearly, attempting to define his Jewishness in terms of centrality opposes Boyarin's dehierarchization of identity categories. Boyarin only indicates an "aesthetic" dimension to identity formation when he writes, "Jewishness disrupts the very categories of identity, because it is not national, not genealogical, not religious, but all of these, in
dialectical tension with one another" (ARJ, 244). It is not clear, however, exactly what this "dialectical tension" produces in one's identity, beyond an equalization of categories. Boyarin's conclusion does not address the alignments individuals take towards these categories, alignments that are unlikely to be equal or universal on the individual or group level. Maier chooses to include texts in his memoir in order to participate in and remember a particular aspect of his culture, but also to exemplify an "organic" bond to Israel as described earlier by Buber. While the bond Maier creates with these texts is often inconsistent on the surface (i.e., the content of a particular poem may or may not be thematically related to the context in which it is placed), it reflects on a deeper level a form of the I-Thou relationship presented by Buber (i.e., the relationship of the self to an other). Maier's I-Thou relationship to these texts emphasizes an alignment towards nationalistic goals, which preclude the possibility of category equalization.

Near the beginning of his memoir, Maier explains how he was almost sent to prison while he still lived in the Ukraine. He concludes afterwards that the "only way of being on the safe side in the future, and avoid similar retributions, was to turn to the teachings of God" (8). On one level, the transformation in Maier's belief system parallels Boyarin's argument that this religious category is in dialogue with other identity categories. That Maier chooses to focus on the "teachings of God" does not mean his theology serves as a center or a foundation for his younger self. Maier's narrative comment at the end of the paragraph complicates Boyarin's model: "Now, in my own way, I wish to explain what the feeling is like when one lives in observance of the Ten
Commandments . . . [Maier's ellipsis]" (8). The ellipsis is immediately followed by a list of commandments from Deuteronomy 5: 6-12, which completes the paragraph. Maier does not articulate what that "feeling is like" when he observes these dictates. Instead, he represents that feeling with ellipsis, because the feeling is unrepresentable, unlike the Commandments themselves.

The unpresentability of Maier's bond to the Commandments is what complicates Boyarin's model. When Boyarin describes his model, he provides a personal example in order to illustrate it: "When I have the prayer for the sick said in synagogue, this is not because my skeptical self believes in the efficacy of prayer, but because this is the way that Jews express solidarity with sick people" (ARJ, 244). He goes on to write that this cultural practice is equal to, for example, his going to see Emmy Lou Harris in concert. In both instances, his examples direct attention to what is presentable, the practices and the actions. What Maier's narrative does in the passage quoted above is focus on what cannot be presented, as it is more a state of being (i.e., I-Thou) than the condition of participation. Maier's representation of his self's relationship to the text he quotes parallels Buber's description, in TD, of the link existing among the teachings, man, and God: "To do the right thing in the right way, the deed must spring from the bond with Him who commands us. Our link with Him is the beginning, and the function of the teachings is to make us aware of our bond and make it fruitful" (145). Maier's method of explaining "what the feeling is like" when one observes the Ten Commandments is to define it with ellipsis. This ellipsis represents Maier's "bond with Him." As does Maier
in this instance, the bond to which Buber refers implies more than participation in a particular Jewish religious or cultural activity. The bond implies a meaningful dialogue (i.e., an I-Thou relationship) elicited by the teachings between self and God. It is this dialogue that makes the bond "fruitful," enabling, for example, Maier to "avoid similar retributions" (8) in the future. Unlike Boyarin's model which provides a method for describing the relationships among identity categories, Buber's model defines a way of being among those categories that has as its beginning this link with God (and by extension, Israel).

Buber indicates that when one's deeds originate from the bond with God, one is able to "do the right thing in the right way." By establishing a binary of right/wrong, Buber frames the direction in which the bond with God can be made "fruitful." In his essay, "The Meaning of Zion," Buber develops one strand of what he intends by "fruitful" in the context of the Jews returning to Israel: "It is the productive strength of a community directed towards the realization of a real community" (182). The "real" community of which Buber speaks is a nation-state of Israel that is founded on the principle of I-Thou relationships between Jews and non-Jews in the region. For Buber, these two stipulations must together be met if Jews are to "do the right thing in the right way" when they establish Israel as a national homeland. It should be noted that Buber writes this essay in 1946, two years before the founding of Israel. Buber, however, does not address in this formulation the possible existing loyalties of Jews to the nations in which they reside, or the ability of Jews, individually and collectively, to engage in such
relationships after the Shoah. In 1941, Maier expresses this nationalistic sentiment when he writes the following lines in his memoir: "The Second World War is in full flame. I thank the Lord that we and our children are in the blessed land of America, the United States" (53). In this passage, Maier expresses that he sees America as a place of protection from tragedies occurring in other parts of the world. The existential bond he presents to America is one based on national (i.e., political) alignments rather than on I-Thou relationships as Buber argues one should, either in Israel or in the Galut. Although the theological is present in his adjective "blessed" and in the structure of the poem below, it is not an "active" presence in the I-Thou bond Maier forms to America.

The poem below presents a bond parallel in structure to the one defined by Maier's inclusion of a citation from the Ten Commandments earlier. Similar to his method of quoting from Deuteronomy as discussed above, Maier does not formally integrate this poem into his text. The poem elicits through its content the bond between his self and his home country in the same way that a bond between self and God is presented in the earlier example. Maier writes that he is reminded of a request "which [he] wish[es] to record at this point:

I have a request of you, dear Uncle Sam,
Free all lands enslaved by Nazi-Fascist clan,
Show to the world that a true uncle you are,
Your needy brothers and cousins help from afar,
Send them food, planes all with open hand
Preserve thereby, liberty in this our dear land.
Drive the two robbers from land and sea
This, dear Uncle Sam, is my request of thee" (53).
With this poem, Maier affirms his alignment with the United States on expressly secular-political terms (i.e., it is Uncle Sam and not God that will free all lands). Maier's strong national alignment is counterproductive to establishing a "real community" as defined by Buber. Attachment to national identity inhibits the formation of I-Thou relationships, by categorizing outside groups as "other" (i.e., I-It relationships). Although Maier presents a version of Buber's I-Thou relationship with his own country, this very relationship undermines the possibility of I-Thou relationships in other contexts, especially in reference to the concept of aliyah (return to Palestine) and the issue of assimilation. Thus, when Maier writes later in his memoir, "We should continue to pray that Palestine will become the true land of Israel with recognition of all peoples" (75), Maier already presents a challenge to Buber's concept of a "real community." Maier's desire that the "true land of Israel" (i.e., a Jewish state rather than a Jewish-Palestinian state) be recognized by all peoples emphasizes nationalism over dialogue.

Boyarin confronts the issue of nationalism by emphasizing the importance of genealogy over geography for Jewish collective identity. Boyarin suggests that genealogy "as a shared historical memory, most fully (but not exhaustively) represented in the actual, physical identity of one's parents is crucial to the maintenance of cultural identity" (ARJ, 245). Boyarin concludes that this common memory transcends space and time, forming the basis of Jewish identity throughout time without the need for a Jewish nation-state. Maier begins his memoir by addressing the issue of a "shared historical memory." He writes, "My wish and hope is that all my beloved may, in years to come,
read these lines, learn about their ancestors" (3). Maier uses his memoir, in many instances, as a didactic tool to teach his children about Jewish theology and culture. In remembrance of a spring Pesach celebration on the family's farm in North Dakota, Maier quotes a poem, as he says, "in reverence to Pesach" (31). At the end of the poem, Maier makes the following directive to his children: "These citations are very important. Very few know of them, and that is why I appeal to you, my beloved, not to ignore them" (31). Although Boyarin discusses genealogy as a shared history, he emphasizes a specific political perspective on that history (i.e., a non-Zionist one). However, Maier's ambiguous statement that "These citations are very important" can be read in a number of ways as a part of this shared history. It could mean, following Boyarin's argument, that remembering these lines will help Maier's children maintain their Jewishness in the Diaspora. Maier's directive can also imply that his children need to maintain their shared history in order to confront the challenges of the Galut while they wait for the possibility of aliyah.

In his essay, "Why We Should Study Jewish Sources," Buber also discusses the importance of memory for the maintenance of collective identity. In contrast to Boyarin, Buber frames his discussion within a Zionist perspective: "We Jews are a community based on memory. A common memory has kept us together and enabled us to survive. This does not mean that we based our life on a particular past . . .; it simply means that one generation passed on to the next a memory which gained in scope" (146). As Boyarin does to a certain extent above, Buber claims that the common memory to which
he refers is not one based on a particular past. Despite Buber's claim, however, the memory he intends to pass down does emphasize a particular past upon which Buber builds his Zionist argument (i.e., the memory "which gained in scope"). Similarly, Maier indicates later in his memoir that the history he records does present a particular past upon which his children should base their lives. He writes, "Our people are different today—they think they are intelligent and modern and deny their Jewish birth-right. We do not comprehend the ways of the Almighty and his pattern for the world" (75). Clearly, he does not want the memory that is passed down to his children to be significantly different from his memory. Maier's observation above suggests that the process of "sharing" and "passing down" a common memory is more complex than explored by both Boyarin and Buber.

Maier evidences throughout his memoir that he believes that the history he shares and passes down should be reflected in his descendants' lives. Although Maier acknowledges that one's Jewishness will change according to where one lives (e.g., Maier is uncritical of the Devils Lake settlement's "neglected mikvah" [25], even though his wife, Doba, "who would never violate any ritual," used the available water [30]), he does suggest that he perceives limits to the amount of "flexibility" he would find acceptable. Maier's observation above is in itself an indication that he worries future descendants will lose their distinctive Jewish identity, thus not surviving (culturally and ethnically) the Galut. In the context of his narrative, the problem of sharing memory, without significant changes resulting during the process, becomes a source of anxiety for Maier. Boyarin
casts such anxiety in a more positive light. Boyarin argues that his model for reading Jewishness "allows a formulation of Jewish identity not as a proud resting place, but as a perpetual, creative, diasporic tension" (ARJ, 260). Boyarin criticizes a formulation of Jewishness as a "resting place" (i.e., Israel as center), because he believes that territorialization of Jewishness transforms the meaning of Jewish cultural and religious practices as interpreted in the rabbinic tradition. Jewish theology and practice become tools of a political state, tools that are used to suppress and dominate minority groups within Israel. What for Boyarin is a subversive resting place is for Maier a place of comfort and certainty. For Maier, the "creative" element in Boyarin's conclusion has a destructive influence on Jewish collective identity in the Galut. It is not a nationalist movement that challenges Diasporic identity for Maier, but the influence of modernism on Jewish theology and practice: "We know that the sun rises every morning and sets each evening, but not all events can be so classified and analyzed" (75). Maier implies that modernism disintegrates the possibility of I-Thou relationships between self and Jewishness, and self and God, by over-analyzing and sanitizing the nature of this bond. The transformation of this bond into a primarily I-It relationship leads Maier to question his ability to "share" successfully with future generations a form of Jewishness that can meet the challenges to group identity in the Galut.

In his book On Zion, Buber argues that Palestine is the spiritual center for Jews living both in the land and worldwide. Buber describes the nature of this spiritual center in terms of I-Thou: "More than ever before the land claims everything of the people, in
order to give it everything. Once again the reciprocity comes into light in the form of a
decision-to begin not merely an 'independent' but a true life" (161). The reciprocity of
which Buber speaks refers to the mutual dialogue between man and God that has resulted
from Israel's decision to settle Palestine, ultimately leading to the "true life" if this
settlement is based on the traditions of Judaism. Buber recognizes, as Boyarin does, that
aliyah involves a "loss" for those returning to Israel. However, Buber perceives this loss
as a necessary part of maintaining Israel's bond with God.

In Maier's narrative, the land on which he homesteads near Devils Lake and his
relationship to that land metaphorically represents Buber's "Zion" above. As with Israel's
role in Zion, Maier must enter into a reciprocal relationship with the land and the animals
(i.e., an I-Thou relationship must exist) if there is to be unity and progress in his
endeavors. Shortly after establishing his farm, Maier remembers, "Gradually, like the
bulls, I became an integral part of the farm, working, managing, and above all suffering"
(20). To use Boyarin's term, as a polysystem, the farm's parts (e.g., Maier, the bulls, and
the land) are linked on a chain forming the whole of the farm, but the links are only as
strong as Maier's perseverance to work and manage the farm regardless of the hardships
involved. Maier must give something to the land if he is to get something back from it.
Maier's perseverance metaphorically represents Israel's faith that, in return for the
struggles involved in settling Palestine, it will be rewarded (according to Buber) the "true
life." Maier does not simply participate in the activities of the farm, but must fully
believe that his actions will lead to a productive farm. In other words, his actions enact and fulfill the bond between his self and the various parts of the farm.

Reading Maier's experience on his homestead as analogous to Buber's "Zion" presents a challenge to Buber's assertion that Israel must be the center of Jewish life. In both instances, the "center" is not founded on a geographic place, but rather in the abstractness of one's reciprocal bond to "space" (i.e., geography, history, tradition, ritual, and theology). Rachel Calof's memoir presents the complications in developing and maintaining this reciprocal bond to "space" that can serve as a "center" (i.e., a place of at-homeness) in one's life. In chapter three, I will explore Rachel's desire to individuate from authority figures while simultaneously trying to build a sense of belonging in her community. In Rachel's memoir, literal interpretation and distortion of tradition by others in her family frequently mark relational breaks between her self, her family, and home. As with Maier Calof, the Jewishness to which she forms a bond synthesizes the traditions of the "Old World" in the shtetl with the demands of living on the prairie in the "New World." The existential act of remembrance enables the synthesis of these opposing categories.
CHAPTER THREE

RACHEL CALOF AND HER SEARCH FOR "AT-HOMENESS" IN THE NORTH DAKOTA WILDERNESS

In her memoir, Rachel Calof creates a dialectic between her past experiences living on the North Dakota prairie and her current self at the time of her writing in 1936. This dialogue with her past balances the extreme alienation she experiences as a child and adult with her desire to individuate from other authority figures within her immediate family. These two thematic moves in her narrative allegorically and literally reflect tensions in American Judaism between a strictly Orthodox Judaism and other more liberal forms of Judaism, like Conservative and Reform Judaism. As with Sophie Trupin's and Maier Calof's memoirs, Rachel's story parallels in structure and theme the Exodus story from the Torah. I begin by relating Rachel's narrative to the Exodus story in order to make a wider connection between Rachel's story and traditional themes historically present in Judaism. The Exodus story provides one example where, to use Arnold Eisen's phrasing, the Torah preserves Rachel psychically in her period of exile, as it provides a cognitive framework in which to establish her "at-homeness" on the prairie.

As with Moses and Israel in Exodus, Rachel leaves a home from which she is alienated, only to be further tested in the wilderness while attempting to find the "Promised Land." Rachel's narrative is structured by her movement from one place of alienation to another as she searches for a sense of belonging and comfort. Under the abusive care of her stepmother when she was a child, Rachel believed herself to be like
one of Pharaoh's slaves, ordered to "do the heaviest kind of work which required the
effort beyond the capacity of small children" (2). In the passage above, Rachel, as with
the people of Israel in Exodus, is seen questioning her place in the world, despite her
indication later that God's "plan for [her] was quite complicated" (8). Her uncertainty is
not dissimilar from Israel's complaints to Moses and Aaron in the wilderness after leaving
Egypt: "You have brought us into this wilderness to bring death to this whole assembly
by starvation" (Exodus 16:3). Significantly, in both of these instances, the narratives are
marked by a sense of abandonment, of isolation and vulnerability. It is during these
moments of trial, in Exodus and in Rachel Calof's story, that a non-territorial version of
"home" emerges in the wilderness.

Rachel Calof, like Israel in Egypt, is born in exile, growing up in the Pale region
of Russia and Eastern Europe. When she is four years old, Rachel's mother dies,
rupturing Rachel's sense of "home." After this point in her narrative, she refers to herself
and her siblings as orphans who are eventually left to the care of extended family
members when their father immigrates alone to America. From the beginning of Rachel
Calof's narrative, "home" is a concept more symbolic for her than something realizable.
Significantly, it is within the context of her first experience of abandonment that she
compares herself to Israel's enslavement in Egypt. Her biblical reference marks the
beginning pattern in her memoir of connecting her exilic experiences to a theological
category. When Rachel expresses extreme feelings of isolation, abandonment, and
hopelessness, she appeals to God for help or for answers as to why she is in the situation
in which she finds herself. Rachel also continues to observe many of the theological and cultural practices of Judaism, like the Sabbath ceremony, upon arriving on the North Dakota prairie. These religious and cultural symbols exemplify her place in the Galut, while also serving to add stability to her life in the "wilderness."

The "wilderness" in both Exodus and in Rachel Calof's story is the place between their native home and the "promised land." In both cases, it is a literal place, largely uninhabited and lacking in sufficient substance. The "promised land" remains a "home" that one expects to find in the future. Therefore, the Torah story provides on the one hand a framework in which to imagine aspects of her own story, while it serves on the other hand as a symbol of her Jewishness. Furthermore, her desire to continue in many of the traditions she followed in the Ukraine, like observing Kashrut or arranging a bris for her son, enable her to, as Edward Said suggests in "The Mind of Winter" an exile must do, "cultivate a scrupulous subjectivity" (147). Said, however, does not elaborate on one's ability to "cultivate" a "scrupulous subjectivity" under severe circumstances, like those faced by Rachel. In Rachel's case, her environment and immediate family did not provide a foundation conducive to her assertion of an identity that could be said to be "scrupulous." The subjectivity that Rachel cultivates develops from her continued observance and belief in her Jewish cultural and theological traditions. The assertion of her subjectivity does not mean that others in her family accepted it or that it enabled her to overcome all of her trials in exile.
Rachel's nonacceptance by her husband's (Abraham Calof's) family complicates the subjectivity she is allowed to assert in the home. In his essay "A Place Called Home," Jonathan Rutherford argues that one's sense of home derives from a multiplicity of subject positions. This fragmentation of personal identity makes it more difficult to achieve a sense of "belonging" in the world, thus leading to a division between personal and collective identity. He writes, "Our struggles for identity and a sense of personal coherence and intelligibility are centered on this threshold between interior and exterior, between self and other" (24). Rachel's narrative is marked by her attempts to overcome the extreme alienation she finds between herself and her environment. She most often utilizes her belief in God and her Jewish traditions as a method for stepping across this "threshold between interior and exterior." When Rutherford posits that personal coherence and intelligibility are "centered" on the inside/outside boundary, he assumes that the individual must balance or mediate self-identity with the outside environment. In Rachel's memoir, her religious beliefs and practices conflict with her mother-in-law's, causing an intensification of the alienation she experiences on the prairie. This generational division necessitates that she assert her own subjectivity in opposition to her mother-in-law's. There is little evidence in Rachel's narrative to suggest that she internally accepted her frequent acquiescing to her mother-in-law's wishes and beliefs as part of her self-identity.

Rachel's "alienation" comes not only from a set of beliefs that are opposed to those of her family or community; it also results from a lifelong self-perception of her
"un-belonging" in her world. Her expressions of abandonment reflect a parallel theme in the Exodus story as she must trust in God's "plan" for her in order to find a sense of "at-homeness." On her second day in North Dakota, Rachel asks herself, "Who belongs to me and to whom do I belong?" (30). Her question is not simply in response to the events occurring during her first two days on her homestead; rather it expresses the abandonment and isolation she has described from the beginning of her story. Rachel characterizes herself and her siblings as "orphans," physically and mentally abused by their father and stepmother. When her father decides to emmigrate to America without them, Rachel writes that his "plan was to go as soon as he could get rid of us" (4). When Rachel is eighteen, her extended family also plans to "get rid of [her]" by arranging her marriage to Abraham Calof, who is already in America. In this case, the family is embarrassed by Rachel's attraction to a local butcher's son and her unmarried status at an age when the Torah suggests it is best to be married.

Rachel's explicit expressions of alienation follow an Exodus-like narrative structure in which God's "plan" for her entails both promise and trial. Beginning with the death of her mother, the narrative moves to a period of "enslavement," then to the events leading to her expulsion from the family, and finally to her path into the "wilderness" of North Dakota. These events parallel the story of Exodus in significant ways. Exodus begins with a reference to the prosperity during Joseph's generation, the enslavement of Israel by a new pharaoh, then moves into the wilderness after God's intervention on Israel's behalf. In his book, Galut, Arnold Eisen suggests that Israel's exile becomes a
repeated theme in the Torah: "The irony of the text is of course that exile is not left behind" (18). Exile becomes a way of existence for Israel outside of the Promised Land. In order to meet the changing conditions of exile, Jews must be open to a level of change in Jewish collective identity across generations and geography. Although these comparisons I have drawn between the two stories are somewhat general, several overlapping themes will enable me to illustrate Rachel's construction of "home" in the framework of the Galut.

In Exodus, chapter sixteen, Israel complains to Moses and Aaron that they are starving. They have left Egypt and are now wandering in the wilderness. Israel remembers God's covenant to lead them to the promised land, but they are now despairing and questioning their decision to leave Egypt where they at least had food. God hears Israel's complaints and provides food for them in the form of manna. On the sixth day, they are commanded by God to gather more than on other days: "Today is a Sabbath for YHWH, today you will not find [manna] in the field. For six days you are to glean, but on the seventh day is the Sabbath, there will not be any on it" (Exodus 16: 25-26). Israel's decision to follow God's plan to leave Egypt for the Promised Land results in a period of exile in which Israel undergoes tests by God. These tests challenge Israel's faith in God and their ability to follow His most basic commands. In this scene, God instructs Israel to gather enough food on the sixth day so that they may honor the Sabbath on the seventh day. Israel's observance of the Sabbath indicates their desire to follow God's instructions while also serving as a symbol of their collective identity
outside of the promised land. Significantly, God intervenes only after His people have endured a period of trial. Walter Brueggeman suggests in *The Land* that "He is seen in the wilderness, the sure and certain sign that he is with his people in their land of abandonment, with them in his inscrutable way to transform the situation" (41).

Brueggeman, however, does not elaborate on how well Israel actually "sees" God in the wilderness, as they continue to be uncooperative with God. This observation questions God's ability to be a "sure and certain sign" in the wilderness, especially in light of the fact that His level of presence always remains in question. Rachel, like Israel in the scene above, must meet challenges on the prairie that at times threaten her life and her mental stability. After arrangements have been made for Rachel to travel to America, she recalls the passport given to her was issued for someone else: "This was the passport sent to Chaya, and this was the document which I was expected to use for transport to New York and gain entry to the promised land" (12). By leaving with a passport that is not hers, she already anticipates that she will encounter trouble before she will be able to sail to America. Her passport, in one sense, is like God's covenant with Abraham, providing a path on which she must encounter several trials before arriving on the Land. As her narrative shows, the "promise" of this land, like the land promised by God to the Israelites, is far in her future and ultimately much different from her expectations before arriving. Moreover, as with God in the Exodus narrative, God in Rachel's story remains uncomfortably distant from the events surrounding her departure for and trip to America.
Before leaving for America, Rachel indicates that she believes her arranged marriage was part of God's plan for her. She reflects, "God finally understood that He had to do something in my behalf. His plan for me was quite complicated" (9). An important aspect of Rachel's exilic experience in her memoir is the trust she expresses for this plan, despite knowing that many uncertainties lay ahead. Rachel does not choose to go to the "Promised Land," but rather must trust the instructions of God. Rachel's trust in a monotheistic God de-emphasizes the importance of a literal place of home. Throughout her narrative, Rachel finds a "sense of order" and "orientation" in her life by seeing her life within a theological and cultural framework. However, as with her ironic use of the phrase "the promised land," her suggestion that "God finally understood" implies a level of impatience with her God, a sense that her expectations for God have not been fully met. In both instances, she presents the tensions historically apparent between the Jewish people and God's covenant with them.

For George Steiner, the tension between Israel and God evolves from questions concerning the centrality of either the Torah or Palestine for Jewish collective identity. In his essay, "Our Homeland, the Text," Steiner argues that the "dialectical relations between an un-housed at-homeness in the text, between dwelling-place of the script on the one hand . . . , and the territorial mystery of the native ground, of the promised strip of land on the other, divide Jewish consciousness" (5). Steiner's phrase "un-housed at-homeness in the text" refers to the act of commentary on Jewish texts and the participation in Jewish traditions. Rachel's sense of "at-homeness" in the plan God has
created for her and her underlying bitterness reflect the conflicts inherent in a dialectical relationship between an abstract notion of "home" and a more literal conception.

Steiner's claim above assumes that the "Promised Land" must be a literal rather than a metaphorical place, a claim many Diasporic Jews would challenge. Is what divides Jewish consciousness then the tension between these two polarities, or in the possibility of either place providing a sense of "at-homeness" when God's presence continuously remains distant, even in the course of disastrous events?

In Rachel's memoir, the text (e.g., the Torah or the interpretive practices of Judaism) provides for the possibility of "at-homeness" for Rachel, but it never fully achieves that state for her. After arriving in North Dakota, Rachel questions God as to why He arranged for her to go to a place of such extreme poverty and hardships, implying that this "home" is in many ways worse than the one she left behind. She remembers thinking that first night in North Dakota: "Dear God, I thought, whatever your reason, haven't I suffered enough in my nineteen years to pay for the rest of my life? The home I so desperately sought still eluded me. The people, the overwhelming prairie, America itself seemed strange and terrible. I had no place to turn" (29). Her exile to the North Dakota prairie creates a situation that she believes herself powerless to change. In the Ukraine, she had people she knew and a job with which she could provide for herself. Here, she experiences a greater sense of alienation from those around her and sees her existence as being "hardly above the level of an animal" (29).
In his essay, "Next Year in Jerusalem," Richard Shusterman observes that the Galut gives Jewish life spiritual direction by necessitating a reliance on the Torah and Jewish traditions for continued group cohesion. He observes, "Though already evident in early biblical times, the golah's role in defining Jewish life and giving it spiritual direction . . . became increasingly dominant in the two-thousand-year exile" (300).

Rachel's challenge to God above within the context of Shusterman's argument has two important implications for how she will define and direct her Jewish life. First, she learns that she must, as Said suggests, "cultivate a scrupulous subjectivity," if she is to establish a sense of "home" on the prairie. It is this conclusion at which she arrives soon after she challenges God's plan for her. She recalls, "Yet as always, a spark of resistance to my lot and a core of determination remained within me, and by morning I was prepared to continue toward my goal" (29). Second, she attempts, beginning the very next day, to establish order in her life by fulfilling the religious and cultural traditions she practiced in the Ukraine.

The traditions Rachel brings to her homestead enable her to establish continuity and stability in her daily routine. Three observances become central events in Rachel's narrative: Shabbat (the Sabbath), Kashrut (the dietary laws), and niddah (laws concerning cleanliness). Rachel indicates that on her second day in North Dakota she made several candles to prepare for the Sabbath ceremony: "Seeing that the old woman [her mother-in-law] had not even a bit of candle with which to greet and bless the Sabbath, I made a number of mud lamps which not only solved the ritual problem but also added to
the light in the room" (32). Rachel reveals that the Sabbath candles have a dual-purpose, providing day-to-day light for the evenings and the ritual light for the Friday night Sabbath ceremony. Her vignette also introduces a theme that evolves for the remainder of her narrative; besides helping her to define her Jewish identity, the rituals and customs become "tools" with which she can establish herself in the "wilderness." In Rachel's memoir, her observances of Jewish traditions help her to overcome partially the alienation she initially feels from her husband's family. Rachel reflects that her candles had an immediate effect on the Calofs: "Having now gained status in the household even though I was both young and only a woman, I sought to further improve the household conditions" (32).

Rachel's following of the mitzvoth (e.g., lighting the Sabbath candles) does not mean she has established a version of home that is free from the hardships of exile; the mitzvoth are only a step towards reaching one's home, regardless of the form that home ultimately takes. Similarly, in Exodus, God commands the Israelites to observe the Sabbath by setting aside enough manna on the sixth day of the week for the Sabbath, thus establishing a rule for living in the wilderness. This mitzvoth serves as a reminder of the Creation and God's deliverance of them from Egypt.

However, the symbolic act from the beginning creates a pattern of tension among the Israelites: "It was on the seventh day that some of the people went out to glean, and they did not find. YHWH said to Moshe: Until when will you refuse to keep my commandments and my instructions?" (Exodus 16: 27-28). In the incident above, the
Israelites followed God's instructions on the sixth day to gather food, but not all of them gathered food for the seventh day. In the next line, God asks Moses, "when will you refuse to keep my commandments?" referring to both Moses and the Israelites. Significantly, those who have transgressed the commandment have not been singled out for their disobedience. The passage emphasizes the requirement of exact obedience to God's instructions by all the Israelites. When one individual does not follow His instructions precisely, the whole nation suffers and not simply the one individual. The lesson is especially important for group cohesion and stability within the trials of the Galut.

In Rachel's memoir, this lesson is exemplified in her mother-in-law's misinterpretation of the mitzvoth to observe the Sabbath and the rules associated with niddah. In Orthodox tradition, niddah is when a woman must remain separate from her husband for seven to eighty days after giving birth. Although the mother-in-law's misapplication of these laws does not cause Rachel's mental illness, it does significantly heighten the paranoid features of her illness and inhibits her ability to recover quickly. Immediately after giving birth in midwinter, Rachel finds herself without any resources to care for the infant. Rachel recalls her mother-in-law returning with bread and milk, but "she refused to warm the milk for the baby because it was the Sabbath and lighting a fire was considered a prohibited labor. My husband was not allowed to visit us and ate his meals that day with his brothers away from me" (48). Her mother-in-law consistently misapplies the laws guiding both of these observances for the entirety of Rachel's mental
illness. As with the Israelites who did not follow God's instruction precisely, the
mother-in-law initially disregards Rachel's health, violating the law forgoing the
obligations of an observance when it risks the health of the mother or child. It is only
after Rachel "begged for a little heated water to wash the baby and again for warm milk
to feed [her baby]" does her mother-in-law consent to light a fire. Significantly, Rachel is
prevented by her mother-in-law from seeing Abraham, even though her health and that of
the baby is failing.

Abraham's mother's application of these two laws inconsistently and
inappropriately further disrupts Rachel's relationship with Abraham and the other
members of the Calof family by heightening her level of paranoia and increasing her
dependence on the mother-in-law. Rachel remembers her mother-in-law limiting her
level of contact with Abraham: "Part of his mother's instructions to me regarding my state
of 'uncleanliness' was that I must be cold and distant to my husband and discourage any
advances from him. Therefore, when Abe attempted to console me and attempted to kiss
me, I pushed him away" (54). The instructions given to Rachel by her mother-in-law
oppose the purpose of the rituals in the Galut: communion, remembrance, and protection.
Her mother-in-law, paradoxically, uses the mitsvat concerning niddah to argue that
Rachel must dissolve her marriage to Abraham because of her mental health. Rachel
recalls that Abraham's mother "remained long enough to warn me against revealing my
mental anguish to him and said that if I did so he would have no recourse but to divorce
me. Such was the religious law she told me. What irony" (53).
Rachel's conflict with her mother-in-law allegorically represents the differences between American Jewry and American Judaism as outlined by Nathan Glazer. In his essay, "American Jewry or American Judaism," Glazer discusses the tensions between "American Jewry," which he defines as "simply the body of American Jews and everything they do and are," and "American Judaism," by which he means to refer to Jewish theology (31). In his essay, Glazer explores questions concerning the nature of Jewish life in the United States and the form that Jewishness will take in the future. He observes that as Jews move further away from religion "it is not that their beliefs change; it is that their practices change. When the Orthodox criticize most Jews for straying from tradition, they refer to their practices, not their beliefs" [author's italics] (35). I would argue, however, that one's beliefs cannot be easily delineated from one's practices, as those practices are part of an individual's overall belief system. As an adult reflecting upon her experiences on the prairie, Rachel reveals a bias against her mother-in-law's way of applying tradition within the family's everyday life. Rachel constructs her narration to portray negatively her mother-in-law's unwavering adherence to certain practices, especially when she perceives they are harming her more than helping. Rachel's perception of these instances cannot be disconnected from her overall beliefs concerning her Jewishness since those beliefs provide a context for those practices, like observing the Sabbath, in her self-identity.

In his essay, "Identification and Identity," Nathan Rotenstreich discusses the relationship of one's identification with Jewish traditions to personal identity. He
suggests that a characteristic of Jewish identity in the twentieth century is "the internalization of identity or the ongoing erosion of the semi-objective components of that identity" (54). Rotenstreich perceives an individual's de-emphasis of traditional practices and theology, the semi-objective components of Jewishness, as a moving away from an identification with a Jewish collective identity. In her memoir, Rachel expresses a need to internalize her identification with her Jewish traditions for personal survival, whereas her mother-in-law identifies with tradition in order to maintain group cohesion regardless of the consequences for others. Even though the rituals are significantly the same (e.g., they both observe the Sabbath), their intention for observing cultural and religious traditions differs significantly in personal application.

Rachel exhibits this difference in application of tradition with her exclamation, "What irony" from above. Rachel's bitter comment summarizes how she views her mother-in-law's role in her mental health, while also reflecting a bitterness she carries towards her husband's mother throughout life. This division between her and her mother-in-law as a result of their different views concerning the application of ritual to daily life is reflected in other significant events in Rachel's life. When Rachel's first son is born, she hires a shochet to prepare an ox for her son's bris. Upon slaughtering the ox, the shochet declares the ox to be traif (not kosher), but instructs Rachel to eat the meat to help her recover from giving birth. Rachel's mother-in-law believes that the shochet has incorrectly fulfilled his ritual duties by ordering Rachel to eat meat that was not kosher. Rachel describes her mother-in-law's reaction in humorous terms: "My mother-in-law
became increasingly agitated. She insisted that the shochet had betrayed his office. As for me, she promised that she would not even drink water in my house which would now be considered polluted. What a wonderful bonus" (73). Rachel and several other family members eat the meat despite the objections being raised by Abraham's mother. It is important to make the point that Abraham's mother believes that rituals, like the one described above and her application of them earlier during Rachel's mental illness, have a role in her life that Rachel does not understand. Rachel describes her mother-in-law's beliefs as being "so rigid she could not afford to compromise" (73).

Although differences in religious practice exist between Rachel and her mother-in-law, the practices themselves serve as an integral component of the "home" each seeks to build on the homestead. George Steiner describes the observance of Jewish theology and traditions as "extraterritorial" because they are not dependent on a specific geographic nation or a particular nationalist movement to be meaningful. He suggests that "What is to Hegel an awesome pathology, a tragic, arrested stage in the advance of human consciousness towards a liberated homecoming from alienation, is, to others, the open secret of the Jewish . . . survival. The text is home; each commentary a return" (7). Steiner's conclusion implies that the text serves as a "home" whenever Jews assert individually and collectively aspects of their Jewishness. Significantly, he does not argue that "each commentary" must be from a specific perspective, like Zionist, Orthodox, or Reform. Regardless of how Rachel or her mother-in-law observe the theology and rituals of Judaism, their application of them in some form to their daily life creates a "home,"
for Jewish individual and collective identity formation. As a result of the dialectic between these two categories, Jewishness can be seen as something in continuous change rather than as a state that must be grounded in a specific tradition. The Boyarins believe genealogy to be especially important because it can act as an agent of change by preventing the privileging of a Zionist or Orthodox expression of Jewishness. A focus on genealogy de-emphasizes nationalistic attachments to land that are not conducive to a malleable conception of identity.

The tensions between Rachel and her mother-in-law allegorically represent the tension between genealogy and territorialism. In her memoir, Rachel consistently refuses to use her mother-in-law's proper name when she refers to her, even though she obviously knows that her mother-in-law's name is Charadh. Rachel's refusal to name Abraham's mother depersonalizes the mother-in-law for the reader in order to emphasize a more distant rather than personal connection to her mother-in-law. Although the term "mother-in-law" indicates Rachel's genealogical relationship to Abraham's mother, Rachel's avoidance of her proper name suggests that Rachel is using her language to disconnect her self from her mother-in-law's. Rachel's use of narrative to individuate herself from her mother-in-law is evident when Rachel records her reaction to the family's decision for Abraham to earn extra money by working on a distant farm. After leaving Abraham at the farm, Rachel writes, "Upon my return, Abraham's mother noted my tear-stained face and admonished me that to cry for personal reasons was a sin before God. With my new chutzpa (nerve) I responded that her disapproval of me was of little
importance" (31). Rachel uses the scene to build the sympathies of the reader towards her perspective rather than towards her mother-in-law's. The scene portrays her mother-in-law as unjustly reprimanding her for being upset after her separation from Abraham. Unaccepting of her mother-in-law's rationale that it is a sin to cry for personal reasons, Rachel attempts to establish a more equitable power relation between herself and Abraham's mother that permits a differentiation of her world view from Charadh's. As with genealogy and territorialism in the Boyarins' argument, the dialectical tension between Rachel and Charadh leads Rachel to establish her own sense of Jewishness and identity on the homestead that is flexible to the conditions of her environment.

Rachel discusses the antagonistic relationship between herself and Abraham's mother long after the events occurred, suggesting that the conflict between them was never resolved. Although the Boyarins suggest that the tensions between genealogy and territorialism allow for a "perpetual" and "creative" form of Jewishness, Rachel's narrative questions the value of a formulation of Jewishness that can lead to intense feelings of alienation and isolation, as well as threatening group cohesion. Rachel adapts to the alienation she expresses from her family and surroundings on the prairie through her own form of Jewishness, but her story ends without any reconciliation occurring or possible. Rachel writes a personal history for her family in order to record her experiences settling in North Dakota. In this act of remembrance, Rachel presents a version of "home" set in the past as well as in the present, a version that evidences how she modified her Jewishness in order to adapt to her new environment. In essence, she
creates a dialectic between her past experiences on the prairie and the contemporary moment when she writes her memoir, a dialogue which reveals a desire to distance herself from the "old world" traditions represented by her mother-in-law. In one sense, it is an effort by her to encourage future generations to build their versions of "home" in the Galut on the same religious and cultural traditions, but in a form significantly less conservative than signified by her mother-in-law.
CHAPTER FOUR
SOPHIE TRUPIN'S MEMOIR: FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

In her memoir, Sophie Trupin evidences a transformation in her level of "rootedness" to a traditional form of Judaism. Growing up on a homestead outside of Wing, ND, in the early 1900s, she followed the Orthodoxy practiced by her family in Russia and then in America. However, as an adult reflecting on these experiences, Sophie reveals in her narration that she now finds her parents' Orthodoxy prescriptive and undesirable. As a result, a series of opposing relationships between homeland and Diaspora and Orthodoxy and liberal forms of Judaism are created and reflected in her storytelling. The dialogic relationship created in Sophie's juxtaposition of these binaries in her memoir leads to a synthesis between binary categories; more importantly, the point of juxtaposition serves as a place to investigate the relationship of those binaries to Sophie's self-identity.

Sophie's memoir records two periods of history in her life: the time in which she is growing up and the moment when she composes her memoir. Sophie's method of reconstructing these events reveals her present attitude toward that history and her younger self-identity. In the context of personal memoir writing, Guy Widdershoven explores the relationship of remembrance to self in his essay, "Hermeneutic Perspectives on the Relationship between Narrative and Life History." Widdershoven defines what he terms a "narrative identity" as "the unity of a person's life as it is experienced and
articulated in stories that express this experience" (7). What is important for
Widdershoven is not so much the accuracy of the recorded memory, but rather the
choices in narration made by the writer as he or she records those events. These choices
reveal the implicit "unity of life" in an explicit story. In other words, the writer changes
the meaning of his or her past experiences or actions during the writing process by
presenting them in a new context. Widdershoven suggests that the process of this
"reconstruction" is not a return to the past: "It is a revival of the past in the context of the
present" (11). In the context of Sophie's memoir, I am especially interested in the
political significations that emerge from the "reconstruction" of her life on the North
Dakota prairie.

Pernima Mankeker discusses the "revival of the past" in personal narratives in
terms of a political act. In her essay, "Diasporic Identity and Political Bifocality,"
Mankeker proposes a theory of "political bifocality" for describing individual and
collective diasporic identity formation. Mankeker offers that her purpose in presenting a
theory of political bifocality is "not to restrict political engagement to the formation of
bi-focal (sic) alliances, that is, only between the homeland and the diaspora, but as a first
step out of the binary 'homeland' and 'diaspora'" (375). Mankeker's theory grows out of
her study of oral narratives of Sikh women living in New Delhi. From these narratives,
Mankeker concludes that "the constitution of subjectivities involves both the politics of
memory and shifting registers of identity" (373). Sophie's method of constructing her
reflections about life on the prairie evidences an identity that has shifted from a
rootedness in the shtetl and its traditions to one more solidly connected to America and a
less Conservative form of Judaism. As she narrates the events surrounding her arrival at
Ellis Island, Sophie relates that she remembers hearing the song, "Come Israel, come
home." Sophie is not sure why she remembers this particular song, because many songs
were sung that day. She then makes the following suggestion: "Perhaps even at six a
Jewish child knows instinctively the longing for home, and the ceaseless wanderings of
the homeless Jews" (27). Sophie's observation is intended to characterize an event that
occurred over seventy years earlier when she was a very young girl. She places herself
directly in the context of the Galut, but is it a context that she would use to describe
herself as an adult? Sophie's construction of this passage distances her adult
self in three important and interrelated ways from the characterization she makes about
her younger self. First, she begins her statement tentatively with the word "perhaps,"
implying a level of uncertainty as to whether or not this precept applies to herself. She
does not say something more committal and in the first person such as, "Even at six, I
knew instinctively the longing for Israel as home." Second, she refers to this "longing for
home" as knowledge that is "instinctively" present in a Jewish child's identity. As an
adult, however, this instinct does not lead to her enacting aliyah, further suggesting that a
literal connectedness between the passage and her present self is absent. It is a "longing"
framed more by myth than an actual intent for action. Third, it is already clear to the
reader at this point in her memoir that she has no intention of continuing the pattern of
"wandering," at least across national borders. In the context of a "memoir," these three
observations above are remarkably disparate from other autobiographical information she provides in the first person. When Sophie writes earlier, "I can understand how my father could never resign himself to such a life [in the shtetl]" (24), there is no ambiguity regarding the interconnectedness of the passage's content to her self at the time of the writing, even though she is also relating an event occurring far in the past.

Why Sophie remembers this song reflects the current "political" positioning of her adult self, rather than of a younger self that would have likely identified more strongly with the song's message. As Mankeker suggests, Sophie's political positioning as a child and later as an adult is framed significantly by the environment (i.e., the homestead where she grows up and New York where she writes her memoir) in which she resides. The "bifocal" nature of Sophie's memoir is founded in her attempts to understand her parents' self-identity on the homestead. Thus, her memoir attempts to build a bifocal alliance between her parents' expression of their Jewishness, which most influenced her as a child, and her own at the present time. This "alliance," however, does not imply acceptance. She clearly aligns her older self with a less Conservative form of American Judaism.

Mankeker argues that "bifocality" allows for a synthesis of cultural binaries in the immigrant's new homeland. She reflects this claim when she writes that a bifocal alliance is the first step "out of the binary between 'homeland' and 'diaspora'" (375). In Sophie's memoir, her "homeland" has multiple significations, a literal one in the shtetl and the homestead, and a metaphysical one in Israel. The homeland spaces of "shtetl" and "Israel" carry significations of authenticity and origin, references from which Sophie
distances herself in the narration of her story. Although Sophie was born in a Russian shtetl, the origins of her present identity are founded more on the North Dakota prairie where she was raised after the age of six. There is nothing "authentic" for her in her parents' strict observance of the traditions carried with them from the shtetl. If Sophie can be seen as taking a step outside of the homeland/diaspora binary, it would be in her rejection of her parents' Jewish Orthodoxy for only herself.

The bifocal alliance Sophie creates between her present reality and her past experiences on the homestead constructs a memory that permits her to move outside of the Diaspora/homeland binary. An alliance as such suggests solidarity over a particular issue, but it does not require that Sophie adopt the values or conditions of the other. Sophie reflects such an alliance when she describes hearing her first American song. She writes that her father was singing "'In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree.' Another song was 'Pretty Little Red Wing.' They were new to [her] and yet not so new, for everything he sang had a bit of the old Hebraic flavor of the endless liturgical intoning that he had known and loved since his boyhood days in the yeshiva" (19). Sophie's memory that her father's voice flavored these American songs with Hebrew intonation is an example of when her act of remembrance steps beyond the homeland (i.e., Israel)/Diaspora binary, as the Hebraic quality of her father's voice cannot be separated from the songs she hears. His voice also, to a certain extent, references symbolically his own political positioning in America (i.e., his refusal to acculturate his Jewishness), upholding his traditions in a
place where he is free from political oppression. Sophie accepts this political positioning as valid, even if it is one that is not present as an aspect of her own identity.

Widdershoven's and Mankeker's observations concerning memory reconstruction in personal narratives suggest that the act of recording memory can serve as a site in which two polarities can be synthesized into categories that coexist as one unit. Sophie's narration synthesizes the polarities of Orthodoxy/Conservative-Reform Judaism and Diaspora/homeland. These polarities represent to a certain extent the relationships of her present self to an earlier self when she was a child, as well as to her parents and their expression of Jewishness. By "synthesis" I do not mean to imply that she assumes equal alignments to both categories. I see "synthesis" more like a synthetic weave in which different types of threads are woven together to make a cloth. Each type of thread has a different purpose for the material as do the alignments Sophie develops towards different forms of Judaism. In the sections that follow, I explore the different tensions between these polarities identified above as a means to establishing how Sophie's "politics of memory" permit a synthesis of these categories.

Sophie's memoir follows the general structure of an exodus narrative, describing her family's escape from persecution in Russia to the "promised land" of America. Her memoir recounts how her family endured a number of pogroms in Russia before settling on a homestead near Bismarck, ND, in 1908. The homestead land becomes, from Sophie's perspective, a version of the Promised Land as it provides the family with political and religious freedoms previously unavailable to them. In his essay, "Going and
Resting," Gabriel Josipovici comments on the place of the Land in contemporary discussions on Jewish identity. He asks, "Is the emphasis in the Bible on going or on resting?" (312). "Going" in this context represents life in the Diaspora, whereas "resting" references Halakhah (Jewish law) and Zion or life in Palestine. The same question can be asked of Sophie's narrative. From Sophie's perspective, the homestead land signifies the possibility of a flexible Jewish identity in the Diaspora. The homestead land for her parents, however, represents something very different. Harry and Gittel do not see the land as a place to moderate the Jewish traditions they followed in Russia, thus presenting a form of Josipovici's trope "resting." However, Sophie's presentation of Harry resists the duality in Josipovici's model by also emphasizing an aspect of "going." Harry finds in the "wilderness" the opportunity for political freedom and respect from his non-Jewish neighbors. Although Josipovici's question stresses a disconnectedness of the Diaspora from Zion, Harry's search for political freedom and his continuation of a traditional form of Jewishness complicates Josipovici's either/or question.

Josipovici describes his own Jewishness using the tropes "going" and "resting" in order to de-emphasize the importance of exile in his discussion of contemporary Jewish identity: "I do not feel myself an exile, for an exile has a home to which he longs to return. (But then neither did Abraham consider himself an exile)" (314). Although Abraham settles (i.e., rests) on the Promised Land, he does not stay there permanently, leaving (i.e., going) for Egypt in a time of famine. As Josipovici suggests, Abraham does not consider himself an exile, but he does begin an exilic pattern that necessitates return
by his descendants to a specific geographic area. Josipovici's paradigm, however, focuses on the pattern of wandering, without the necessity of return, to articulate a Diasporic model of Jewish identity formation. Josipovici's description of his own identity in non-exilic terms, as well as in terms unreceptive to Halakhah and Zion, leads to the suggestion that his argument (and identity) are partially formed by the categories he seeks to avoid. "Diaspora" and life in the Diaspora are to a certain extent formed and informed by life in Israel. Josipovici refuses to label himself an "exile," but that very act itself is framed within the discussion of aliyah and what it means to be in the Galut.

In his essay, "Next Year in Jerusalem," Richard Shusterman discusses the relationship between his life in Israel and in the United States, arguing for a postmodern rather than an existential or modern formulation of Jewish identity. Shusterman first lived in the United States before emmigrating to Israel at the age of sixteen, then left again for America as an adult for professional reasons. He concludes that his Israeli self causes him to be more distant from his American experiences: "Aliyah has made it much more difficult to see myself as an American Jew and to relate to that Jewish community, since the American Jewish experience is inevitably perceived by my Israeli eyes as superficial, alienated, and inauthentic" (297). Earlier in his essay, Shusterman identifies the tension between his life in the American and Israeli Jewish communities, describing it as a painfully "divided consciousness of simultaneously living in two radically divergent self-defining narratives, because there is no way of knowing which is the true one" (296).
Shusterman does not privilege the "Israeli" narrative over the "American" narrative, recognizing that each is an equally valid component to his identity.

Shusterman argues, as I did with Josipovici's refusal to see himself as an exile, that the Galut and aliyah inform and form each other as narratives, suggesting that one narrative cannot be more true than the other if they are equally dependent on each other (304). However, Shusterman's personal reflection above challenges his own postmodern analysis of Jewish identity. He clearly indicates above and elsewhere (294, 295) that his Israeli Jewishness disconnects his self from the American Jewish experience, which he finds superficial, alien, and inauthentic. Even though he suggests there is no method for knowing the true narrative, Shusterman implies in his personal reflection that only the Israeli narrative now serves foundationally for his Jewishness in either Israel or America. Shusterman denies that he sees the Israeli narrative as the "true one," while at the same time evidencing a "rootedness" to that narrative in whatever community he resides. Moreover, his suggestion that one of these narratives is the "true" one (i.e., authentic for Jewish life) implies that he believes the other one (which he refuses to name) to be inauthentic.

Shusterman objectively defines two categorical opposites within his Jewish identity that are, in his line of argument, equivalent in terms of their formative influence on identity realization. He suggests that the Golah (i.e., Galut) "is essential to Jewish identity precisely because aliyah is, since golah is a precondition of the latter and gives it its special point" (304). His reasoning, however, does not address individuals' cognitive
alignments that are, even in his own essay, biased towards one element of the binary. In Sophie's memoir, two very different (and opposing) narratives of Jewishness (i.e., Orthodoxy and liberal forms of Jewishness) are present. Shusterman would argue that both are equally necessary for the Jewishness Sophie reflects in her writing, as Sophie's experience with a more 'traditional' form of Jewishness as a child allows for the freedom she finds in a less conservative form of Judaism later in life. Although this "Orthodox" narrative seems to have been formative for her when she lived on the homestead, it is not the narrative through which she realizes her Jewishness as an older adult when she writes her memoir. Sophie presents only her American Jewishness as a valid mode for her narration, an emphasis which challenges Shusterman's postmodern assertion of the "dissolution and fragmentation of the self or subject" (296). Dissolution and fragmentation of the self implies that categories cannot be synthesized or coexist within the same self-identity. This would also suggest that Sophie's privileging of her American liberal Jewishness is only a fragmented construct that cannot serve as a foundation for anything, even though Sophie clearly aligns herself with that category.

Sophie's alignment with a less conservative form of Judaism evolves from the level of "rootedness" she constructs to her parents' Jewish traditions. Sophie's "rootedness" to tradition is in memory only, as she distances her self at the moment of writing from this past experience. In his essay, "Structures of Personal Identity," Alan Montefiore comments on the relationship of one's "roots" (e.g., heritage, religion, national origin) to one's personal identity. In the context of discussions on Jewish
identity, questions of where a person's roots should lie (e.g., in Zion or Diaspora) and what the nature of those "roots" should be remain a controversial issue. Montefiore argues that while questions of identity and of roots "are no doubt strongly interconnected, they should nevertheless be distinguished as having potentially different bearing on one's relationship with oneself and with others" (215). I would qualify Montefiore's observation with the question as to whether or not the category of "roots" is something that can be precisely identified. One can read Sophie's narrative and determine that her "roots" begin in Russia, since so much of her family's history begins and is framed by their experiences there. However, one can also surmise that her "roots" begin in America on the homestead, as she is only six when she arrives in the US and she ultimately identifies most strongly in her memoir with the culture of this country.

There is an underlying tension in Sophie's memoir between her parents' need for her to adopt a strict adherence to their Jewish traditions and Sophie's desire to be more "American." Sophie indicates that her father emmigrated from Russia in order to live in a place in which he could find a sense of belonging that was not dependent on whether or not he was Jewish. She writes, "Here he was not only a Jew; he was a man, and could live in dignity" (35). Harry sought political freedom through the ownership of his homestead while at the same time refusing to be flexible with his or his family's expression of an Orthodox Jewish identity. He encourages his family to remain connected to the traditional form of Judaism they observed in the shtetl, therefore maintaining a rootedness to his traditions. The interconnectedness of his roots to his
identity is different for him than for Sophie, since he is an adult prioritizing his political aspirations over his desire to live in an established Jewish community. Sophie, on the other hand, does not present the same interconnectedness between her roots in the shtetl and her developing identity on the prairie. It is important to point out that this difference in connectedness to tradition occurs much later at the point of remembrance where Sophie emphasizes a form of Josipovici’s "going" rather than "resting."

When Sophie was a child, she more than likely expressed a stronger connection to the traditions from the shtetl than when she is an adult. Sophie evidences this change in her rootedness to tradition when the content of her history does not reflect her current positioning as a writer. Sophie reflects at several points in her memoir (75, 77, 118, 120) that she felt disconnected from less observant Jews in her community as well as from her non-Jewish peers. In a section titled "Separateness," Sophie remembers sitting quietly at her desk as the rest of the class sang Christmas songs: "We were outsiders, just on the fringe of the community. It was not easy, but as the saying goes, 'It is difficult to be a Jew.' There were two other little Jewish girls in our school and they sang along with the others. I disapproved of them at the time, and it made me sad that here was one more separation" (77). In this scene, Sophie's rootedness to her tradition as a child is evidenced by her refusal to sing the Christmas songs at her school, even when other Jewish children do sing with the class. This "rootedness" delineates a boundary between her and the rest of her community, inhibiting her ability and desire to become more "rooted" in America. It also reflects a different level of connection between her Jewishness and her identity
than expressed by her father, as she feels a loss arising from her attempts to emphasize her Jewishness over the American influence on her identity. She reflects this sentiment in an earlier scene when she writes, "Immigrant children-particularly, perhaps, Jewish immigrant children-seem to find it necessary, but very difficult to somehow find a balance between two worlds—the life in the home where the language, customs are so different, and the world of the school, the street, and the homes of their American peers" (76).

Sophie's observation implies a strong rootedness between self and each of these two worlds. Importantly, her process of remembering allows for a synthesis of these two worlds. This synthesis, however, does not mean that she finds her parents' Orthodoxy as a valid way of living in her adult life. Early in her memoir, Sophie describes the strictly observant life Jews lived in the shtetl from which her family came. Her following reflection presents a binary parallel to Josipovici's going/resting: "I can understand how my father could never resign himself to such a life. He could bow his head to God, but he believed in himself and in the dignity of man. When he left the Old Country, he was seeking a life which had value, meaning, and dignity on this earth" (24). Sophie's interpretation of her father's "wandering" implies that in the "Old World" Harry could not find a satisfactory level of value, meaning, and dignity in his life. In the "New World," their farm does carry the signification of a space providing these virtues, a space possible as a result of the political and religious freedoms in the United States. For Sophie the religious freedom she finds on the farm connotes both the freedom to be Jews without
government persecution and also the ability to relax the strictness of their religious observances. Clearly, Sophie's interpretation of this memory is intended to create a specific alignment within herself and the reader towards a liberal form of Judaism.

There is no indication in Sophie's memoir to suggest that her father would have interpreted his immigration with the same characterizations. When Sophie writes that she can "understand how [her] father could never resign himself to such a life," she imposes a version of Josipovici's "going" on her father's "resting" in the shtetl and on their farm. What remains a constant in Harry's life in both places is his strict adherence to Jewish tradition. By opposing "resting" (i.e., Halakhah, the shtetl) to "going" (i.e., immigration to the homestead), Sophie overlooks that her father's Jewishness may be informed by the place in which he lives but is not dependent upon it. Harry's immigration to America is not a final resting place for him as it is for Sophie. Therefore, the homestead signifies for Harry a place of "wandering" before his immigration to Israel, the literal Promised Land, in 1953. In Sophie's case, the farm and America references the Promised Land only metaphorically, since there is no intention on her part to complete aliyah with her parents. Moreover, she asserts an attitude towards America as "home" that has developed from living in the United States for more than seventy years. Within the telling of her story, Sophie reveals that as a child she "rested" in America like her father and mother. It is not until she records these events does she construct a version of Josipovici's "going."

Sophie exhibits in her memoir two conflicting Jewish narratives of self, an adult self centered on "going" (i.e., life in the Diaspora) and an younger one centered on
"resting" (i.e., Orthodoxy). As with Shusterman but from the opposite side of the binary, Sophie explicitly privileges the American category in her narration, while also being reluctant to distance herself completely from the Orthodox narrative. Under a section in her memoir titled "Heritage and Tradition," Sophie remarks upon the effect of the prairie on the new settlers' Jewishness: "In the Old Country they [may have] chafed at the narrow confines of being good and devout Jews. But here, in a vast new country, they threw off this yoke by virtue of the fact that there was no synagogue, no rabbi, no kosher butcher, and no cheder [religious school] for their children" (91). In her narration, Sophie makes a generalized observation of all the Jews immigrating to North Dakota. She characterizes the immigrants' Jewishness in the shtetl as something undesired and burdensome, a form of Judaism these settlers were only waiting to "throw off." Sophie emphasizes her own negative perspective as an adult concerning the strict observance of Jewish traditions, rather than the "close, intimate life" (39) she indicates her mother found in the shtetl. The alignment she takes in opposition to her "shtetl narrative" reflects significantly her own "rootedness" in an American Jewish perspective.

In the very next paragraph of the section, Sophie's narration reveals that her family did not in fact remove the "yoke" of tradition from their lives. She explains that her "family never worked on the Sabbath. There was nothing unusual about this in the Old World; any other mode of living was unthinkable. The Sabbath was considered even holier than any of the major holidays" (92). At other points in this section, Sophie indicates that her family continues to speak Yiddish and Hebrew at home, follow the laws
of Halakhah, study the Torah, and observe other Jewish rituals. Although Sophie avoids identifying with her parents' Orthodoxy from the shtetl, it becomes clear that this tradition had a formative influence on her identity as a child. In a later section of her memoir, Sophie evidences that as a youth the shtetl still influenced her responses to events on the prairie. She recalls her teacher explaining to the class that the school would be attending in a church the funeral of a classmate killed in a farm accident. As the class prepared to leave, Sophie remembers dreaming the following scene: "As my eyes traveled upwards, I saw the dreaded cross stretching towards the blue sky. We were clearly in the land of the enemy, and I was frightened" (120). Sophie indicates a few paragraphs later that she awoke as if from a dream to discover the church was "no fearsome, ominous structure of heavy stone" (120). In this scene, the narrative from the "Old World" marks her as an "outsider" within her peer group at school, who are for the most part Christian. The scene from her childhood suggests that her experiences with the strict traditions and anti-Semitism (e.g., the pogroms which begin her memoir) from the shtetl continued to inform her reactions to her non-Jewish American community in a way they did not for her as an adult.

To Widdershoven, a writer's reconstruction of an event does not imply a "reenactment" of that event for the reader. In other words, Sophie's vignette about the funeral is not a reenactment of Sophie's thoughts, even though she creates the scene as a dream sequence. Instead, the writer brings that past personal event into a new context as the scene is reconstructed from memory (i.e., the relationship of the scene to her adult
self). Widdershoven posits that the writer only transfers that experience "into a new web of relations" (15), thus "articulating[ing] the intertextuality of life" (19). Therefore, although the content of the scene from the funeral may have changed little from when she was a child, it has different implications for her self-identity as an adult than when she was younger (e.g., a sign of her "outsiderness"). The idea of intertextuality is important for the argument that Sophie's imaginative recreation of her past opens a space where binaries can be synthesized.

It is the transfer of a past text into the present and new context that creates the existence of these binaries. On the one hand, this transfer creates the opposition between Sophie's younger and adult selves. On the other hand, it would not be precise to describe a particular binary (e.g., going/resting in the context of Sophie's life) as being in opposition to Sophie's identity, as her relationship to the undesired category is not one of acceptance or rejection. Instead, her relationship to the undesired category is one of synthesis. Sophie does not reject the Orthodox life she led on the prairie; rather she remembers it nostalgically even if it is not a way of being she chooses for herself in the present. This is different from rejecting the category itself as being invalid or inauthentic for one's or another's choices in life.

Towards the end of her memoir, Sophie relates hearing about the start of World War One. In the passage that follows, Sophie's use of the pronoun "we" provides an example of where the transfer of an earlier narrative into a present context enables the synthesis of a binary in her self-identity. After explaining that many of the settlers had
family ties to the countries at war in Europe, she writes, "We were Americans, but we were much more. We were Jews whose roots went back not only to that land across the sea, but thousands of years to the land of Abraham and Moses. We were dispersed and scattered, but even in this new, strange land we could not forget" (108-09). At this point in her memoir, it is clear that as an adult Sophie rejects a literal interpretation of the Galut for her own identity. Moreover, the scene from above occurs in 1914 when she was only twelve years old; yet this is an adult observation that would unlikely be made by a child. The "we" therefore becomes problematic as its reference is partially in the present context of the writing as well as in Sophie's past. More importantly, her use of "we" in this instance collapses across all categories of Jewishness (i.e., all Jews have the same roots from the same land).
EPILOGUE

The Jews immigrating to North Dakota were unique as compared to the majority of Jews settling in other areas of the country in that they established their new homes in a place significantly isolated from established Jewish cultural and religious institutions. The North Dakota immigrant homesteaders, like their urban counterparts during the same period, modified willingly or unwillingly the Jewishness they expressed in their native countries. The North Dakota Jewish homesteaders, however, had to recreate their cultural institutions if they wished to continue in the practices of Judaism. Homesteaders faced great difficulties in continuing to observe traditional Jewish practices within the family and community; however, the practices were necessary for the establishment of a distinct Jewish cultural community on the prairie. Without these practices, there would have been few ways for homesteaders to express their Jewishness. The homesteaders were able to assert a conservative form of Jewishness that could also adjust to the environmental and economic stressors of homesteading. On an individual level, as the memoirs of Maier Calof, Rachel Calof, and Sophie Trupin show, homesteaders reflected varying levels of desire to "adjust" their Jewishness.

This current study addresses a Jewish immigrant context largely unresearched. No research to date has examined questions concerning Jewish cultural identity in regards to Jewish homesteading experiences in either North Dakota or other rural areas of the United States. Previous research has attempted to reconstruct the basic historical record
of Russian and Eastern European immigration to North Dakota. Little attention has been focused on the cultural and religious experiences of these immigrants or the relationship of these experiences to broader cultural and theological questions in American Judaism. Furthermore, few studies have examined the politics of remembering the past in the memoirs of Jewish immigrants in a rural or urban setting. I believe this area of study is significant because it reveals shifting registers of identity on both the individual and collective level.

An interesting and important expansion of this study would be to discuss the relationship of homeland and Diaspora, contrasting the rural and urban context. A comparison of immigrant experiences in both areas would provide a more comprehensive picture of the tensions present in discussions surrounding the political and theological significance of homeland and Diaspora for American Jews. Similarly, reading the individual's and family's expressions of Jewishness as analogous to this political and theological question would enable one to construct a close study emphasizing the importance of practices for the maintenance of collective cultural identity.

In the North Dakota context, an important remaining question concerns the parallels between the Jewish homesteading experience and other cultural groups who also modified their religious observances and cultural identity when on the homestead. Similar to the Jews, many Christian and Muslim groups faced significant difficulties establishing religious institutions in undeveloped and largely impoverished isolated areas. Many of these families also faced challenges passing down their heritage to the next
generation without significant modifications occurring. Learning how these challenges resulted in modifications of religious and cultural practices would help scholars to evaluate the general effect of immigration on diasporic communities and individuals.
NOTES

1. Rachel Calof's family arranged her marriage to Abraham Calof in order to, as she says, "dispos[e] of [her] embarrassing presence to [her] relatives" (Calof 9).

2. Although these two cases refer to socio-political forms of exile, the context for both is shaped and framed by the Galut, the exile of the Jews from Palestine. Rachel Calof and Harry Turnoy may not have characterized their immigration to America as "exile." However, it is likely both would have considered themselves as in galut from Israel as both were Orthodox Jews.

3. Alternatively, the galut is called the Diaspora (dispersion) but with significantly different connotations.

4. Between 1880 and 1920, Sherman estimates 800 Jewish immigrants settled in rural North Dakota. In 1936, the US. Census of Religious Bodies reported only thirty Jews living in rural areas of North Dakota (Sherman 397-98). In his Master's thesis, Marvin Kirk records that Jewish homesteaders settled in the following North Dakota counties: Ramsey, Nelson, Wells, McHenry, Ward, McLean, Burleigh, Morton, McIntosh, Adams, and Mountrail. The largest settlements occurred in Ramsey, Burleigh, and McIntosh counties.

5. The Pale of Settlement was located roughly around the borders of the Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania, and Poland. In 1772, Catherine II ruled that Jews had to live and trade within this region. Moreover, Jews were not permitted to own land in the Pale. Rachel Calof's
this region. Moreover, Jews were not permitted to own land in the Pale. Rachel Calof's shtetl was located in the Ukrainian section of the Pale. Rachel is like Israel in Egypt because she too is born into a political condition of exile as a result of her Jewishness.

6. Rachel's mother-in-law "misinterprets" these two mitzvoth by forcing Rachel's compliance to them when her health and her baby's is at risk, in contradiction to tradition which permits the suspension of a mitzvot when the health of the mother or child is at risk.
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