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59. Ramie Arian, "Jewish Camp for Adults-In-Training," *Contact: The Journal of Jewish Life Network* 5 (Summer 2003): 11. See also, Gary A. Tobin, "The Future of Jewish Camping," *Contact: The Journal of Jewish Life Network* 4 (Summer 2002): 6.

60. *Contact: The Journal of Jewish Life Network* 4 (Summer 2002), cover. Elisa Spungen Bildner, "Why I Support Jewish Camping," *Contact: The Journal of Jewish Life Network* 4 (Summer 2002): 4. For examples of how American camping programs have been exported to Israel and the Former Soviet Union, see article on the Jewish Agency for Israel Web site, "$10 Million Dollars Allocated by UJC to Summer Camps in Israel," www.jafi.org.il/iefund/news_article.asp?id=34 (July 2003), and "FSU Summer Camps Held in Three Locations" on the World Union for Progressive Judaism's Web site, www.reform.org.il/English/Contact/news.asp (September 25, 2003). The Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism reported that in 2003, 412 Israeli children attended that movement's summer camp program. See "E-mail Newsletter of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism," www.reform.org.il/English/Contact/news.asp (September 2003).

61. On Eliot's quote, see Sarna, "Crucial Decade of Camping," in the present text. The quote is attributed to Gerson D. Cohen, the late chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary (in an interview taped by Shuly Rubin Schwartz). See Joselit, "Jewish Way of Play," note 1, p. 15. On the coalescence of Jewish and American culture, see Sylvia Barack Fishman, *Jewish Life and American Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), and especially Fishman, *Negotiating Both Sides of the Hyphen: Coalescence, Compartmentalization, and American-Jewish Values* (Cincinnati, OH: Judaic Studies Program University of Cincinnati, 1996).

2 The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping

Jonathan D. Sarna

Editors' Note: Jonathan D. Sarna's essay provides readers with a general overview of Jewish camping in America, and in doing so he places the nascence of Reform Jewish camping into a larger context. Sarna reminds us that the founding of Union Institute in 1952 was one chapter in the overall history of Jewish educational camping in America.

Some of those who participated in the founding of the camp in Oconomowoc sensed the historical significance of their efforts. Their personal reminiscences demonstrate that the process of creating educational camps for Reform Judaism in America was both a personal and a communal achievement:

> *The opportunity to work on the development of a permanent camp came when the late Rabbi Eisendrath asked me to become the director of the Chicago and Midwest Federations. Mr. [Johann S.] Ackerman, one of our lay leaders, was so convinced of the value of the idea of a Jewish Reform Camp that he spent time with me to visit area sites, all of which we had to reject as unsuitable for our camp. Then we found an advertisement about Briar Lodge, a camp in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, which was being offered for sale. We concluded rather quickly that this was the best site that we had found. The property cost us $63,000. We decided on a four-fold summer program. We declared that we would study and pray, work and play. From such simple pioneering undertakings developed rather soon the need for a permanent director. (Rabbi Herman Schaalman, June 13, 2000)*

> *Once the property on Lac La Belle was acquired, the physical plant required a lot of repair and cleaning which, along with the actual designing*

and construction of the first camp chapel, was largely undertaken by the rabbinic faculty and the staff. Camp life as we knew it in the early years had a very intimate feeling. The summer day revolved around the porches of the big house (Bayit), where, in between discussion groups, ping-pong games and impromptu song sessions seemed to always be going on. Tennis was played on cracked cement courts outside the Bayit. At the bottom of Bayit Hill stood a dramatic totem pole remaining from the previous occupants, out of place and yet memorable. The lake and chapel were the only other focal points of the scheduled activities. These were the modest beginnings of OSRUI. In those days, we called it Union Institute, or more informally and endearingly, simply "Oconomowoc." (Eudice G. Lorge, May 5, 2001)

As humble and unsteady as its beginnings may have been, Sarna asserts that Union Institute's founders were active participants in a new and important developmental phase of American Jewish camping.

The founding in 1952 of the first Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) camp, in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, concluded the most portentous decade in the history of Jewish camping. Brandeis Camp Institute (1941), Camp Massad (1941), Camp Ramah in Wisconsin (1947), Camp Ramah in the Poconos (1950), and what later became known as Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute (1952) were all founded between 1941 and 1952, and so were a range of lesser-known but still influential camps, including Camps Aguda (1941), Avodah (1943), Yavneh (1944), Galil (1944), Lown (1946), and Sharon (1946). The decade also marked a turning point in the character of the whole Jewish camping movement. Before 1940, according to Daniel Isaacman's admittedly imprecise figures, some two-thirds of all new Jewish camps were either philanthropic, geared to the children of immigrants and the urban Jewish poor, or community-based camps founded by Jewish federations and community centers. By contrast, in the two decades following 1940 less than a quarter of all new camps fell into these categories, while almost 40 percent of them trumpeted educational and religious aims; they were sponsored either by a major Jewish religious movement, a Hebrew teachers' college, or a Hebrew cultural institution. Revealingly, fewer than 5 percent of all new Jewish camps had fallen into these categories before 1940. Indeed, until the 1940s, Hebrew-language camps (with one brief and minor exception) and the so-called denominational Jewish camps did not exist at all.[1]

Understanding the transformation that took place during the crucial decade of Jewish camping, when "intensive Jewish educational camps" developed, first requires a look back at the early history of Jewish camping in America.[2] The

original Jewish summer camps were founded around the turn of the century, just at the time that the American camping movement as a whole began to develop. Although one enthusiastic writer dates the history of camping back to "the 40 year wilderness trek of the Children of Israel led by Moses,"[3] the organized camping movement as we know it usually traces its roots back to the school camp created by Frederick William Gunn and his wife in 1861. Camping spread slowly, but by the end of the nineteenth century, the first Protestant (1880) and Catholic (1892) camps commenced operations; Sumner F. Dudley started the first YMCA camp (1885); a few private camps for wealthier youngsters began, notably in New England (where Ernest Balch established his influential Camp Chocorua [New Hampshire] in 1881); the first "Fresh Air" funds designed to bring the uplifting benefits of country air to the urban and immigrant poor originated (1887); and the first family camp (1888) and girls' camp (1892) opened.[4]

The first known Jewish camps also came into existence at this time: Camp Lehman, founded in 1893 by the Jewish Working Girls' Vacation Society, on the site of what would later become Camp Isabella Freedman; and the Educational Alliance Camp, established in 1901 in Cold Springs, New York, and later incorporated as Surprise Lake Camp.[5] Thereafter, and until the Great Depression, camping developed rapidly in both the general and Jewish communities. Over one hundred summer camps of various types existed in the United States in 1910, and almost thirty-five hundred in 1933.[6] Although no parallel figures exist for Jewish camps, a *Directory of Summer Camps Under the Auspices of Jewish Communal Organizations*, published by the Jewish Welfare Board in 1936, listed eighty-eight camps in the United States and Canada, without taking account of the many privately run summer camps that American Jews had by then established.[7] Isaacman, in his study, enumerated seven varieties of Jewish camps that occupied the summers of young people before 1940, including private camps, federation-sponsored camps, Jewish community center camps, educational camps, Yiddish camps, Zionist camps, and philanthropic camps.[8] Jewish camps (like their non-Jewish counterparts) might also be divided into different class levels: (1) private camps that aimed to turn a profit and courted the well-to-do; (2) philanthropic camps that focused on immigrants, the poor, and the needy; and (3) communal and ideologically based camps, which originated later and tended to be more heterogeneous, that served those whose immigrant parents had risen into the middle class. In many ways camps thus reflected and extended the class structure already familiar to Jews from home.[9]

Several factors underlay the rapid growth of Jewish camps in the early decades of the twentieth century. For one thing, Jews, like other Americans, were swept up in "the cult of the strenuous life, whose most vigorous exemplar and prophet was Theodore Roosevelt."[10] Camping's primary goals in the early years, like those of the cult as a whole, were thoroughly antimodernist: they sought

"to *restore* those values of life which come from living in the great outdoors," to "find joy in the *simplicity* of living," and to "develop a love of nature and a study of all that God created for our enjoyment."[11] Camp Kennebec, a private camp founded in Maine in 1907 by four young Philadelphia-area Jews, explicitly advocated Roosevelt's "strenuous life" goals. Jewish camping enthusiasts also believed that their programs effectively countered anti-Semitic stereotypes concerning Jewish weakness and also promoted the great goal of Americanization. Campers were thus supposed to breathe in the "pure sweet air of American mountains, lakes and forests" and to exhale any residual foreign traits. As the summer progressed, they were likewise supposed to imbibe the manners and mores of America, and to become (as one camper recalled in his old age) "stalwart, healthy American adults."[12] Even Jewish philanthropic camps, which, like their "Fresh Air" cousins, offered shorter vacations, less staff, and fewer amenities, promoted these goals. Besides restoring poor, malnourished, and ghetto-ridden Jews to renewed health and vigor, they also sought to build up the character of their charges and to do what they could to Americanize them.[13]

Initially, then, camps represented something of a counter-life for American Jews: the rural camp setting, the antimodernist values that camps championed, and the strenuous activities that filled the camp day ran counter to everything the vast majority of Jews experienced in their urban homes. Symbolically, the transition from home to camp was a move away from the workaday Jewish world and into the rural world of American gentiles. Small wonder that at most of these early camps Judaism was reduced to a whisper. For example, at Kennebec, according to its perceptive historian (herself the wife of a prominent rabbi and scholar): "The founders' policy of balancing an all Jewish enrollment with a non-Jewish staff, aimed at enriching everyone's experience, seemed to claim that religious observances, if any, should lean in the direction of neither faith. Thus the Quiet Hour (not a service) has always been held on Sunday (not Friday) night. From this has followed a tacit avoiding of anything Jewish except in the realm of humor or self-satire."[14] At Winslow, "cultivation of the child's Jewish interests and loyalties was not a paramount objective. . . . There were simple Friday evening services . . . and that was all."[15] At most Jewish Center and communal camps, as late as the 1930s, according to Isaacman, the situation was the same: they "were almost completely devoid of any meaningful Jewish programming or consciousness."[16]

To be sure, there were exceptions. Noted educator and bibliophile George Alexander Kohut, the son of Rabbi Alexander Kohut, founded Camp Kohut in Maine in 1907. According to his stepmother, he

> remembered always that he was a rabbi sworn to a special mission so far as these boys were concerned. He had to hold up to them the light that is Israel; he had to make them mindful of the dignity of the Jewish people and the glory of the Jewish religion. In his Sabbath services conducted in a grove of apple trees, "God's temple," he frankly discussed with the boys the problems of the Jew in the modern world, the special problems of the first generation of American-born, the necessity for worshiping God and taking one's own part. He spoke to them of things that worried them, things that were generally never mentioned in their own homes.[17]

Rabbi Bernard C. Ehrenreich, ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary and related by marriage to Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, knew Kohut and seems to have consciously followed in his footsteps. At Camp Kawaga in Wisconsin, which he founded in 1915, Ehrenreich, according to his biographer, "pursue[d] his lifelong goal of bringing youth to God, of building a new and vital generation of American Jewish youth." His camp was reputedly "a laboratory for religious education," and he served as his campers' "spiritual guide."[18] Ehrenreich, Kohut, and a few other farsighted directors of private Jewish camps seem to have intuited camping's educational and religious potential long before most of their contemporaries did, although the extent of their camps' Jewishness should not be exaggerated.[19] Subsequently, during the interwar years, these pioneers were joined by professional educators—both secular and Jewish—who likewise gained new appreciation for what camping could accomplish. In turn, as we shall see, they set the stage for Jewish camping's "crucial decade."

The First Efforts at Jewish Educational Camping

Progressive educators worked out a new theory of camping during the interwar years. Focusing on camp as an educational setting, they emphasized its role in shaping the character and personality development of campers, both individually and as part of a group. "The organized summer camp is the most important step in education that America has given the world," Charles B. Eliot, former president of Harvard University, famously declared in 1922. Fear of summertime idleness and delinquency as well as anxieties concerning the fate of "latchkey children" further encouraged camping's development. In 1929 a volume titled *Camping and Character,* by Hedley S. Dimock and Charles E. Hendry (with a laudatory introduction by the renowned philosopher of education William H. Kilpatrick), brought together the central ideas of a new educational theory of camping. Based on extensive field research, it described how camps could foster the development of socially desirable ideals, attitudes, and habits.[20]

Progressive Jewish educators, notably Albert P. Schoolman, one of the worshipful disciples of the "father" of American Jewish education, Samson Benderly, had heard all of this as a student long before Dimock and Hendry's book.[21] Back in 1919 (when he was all of twenty-five years old), Schoolman

began to apply these ideas at the Central Jewish Institute (CJI) that he directed.[22] Perhaps at the suggestion of his associate Leah Konovitz, CJI inaugurated a Jewish school camp, soon known as Cejwin, to overcome the problem of students' forgetting during the summer what they had learned at the institute's Talmud Torah school during the year.[23] A three-year experiment proved "auspicious," and the camp—"operated on the same standards as well-conducted private camps" and aimed at "a clientele of lower-middle-class families who send their children to the more progressive Jewish schools in the community"—then established permanent quarters near Port Jervis, New York. It became the first Jewish educational camp in the United States, and was dedicated to what its founder called "the art of Jewish living."[24]

Informal Jewish education became the hallmark of Cejwin; it promoted what Schoolman's successor described as "daily living activities and experiences . . . which fortify the knowledge, the feelings and attitudes of youth and make Jewish living worthwhile."[25] "The camp environment," Miriam Ephraim, Cejwin's assistant director, explained in 1936, "gives [Jewish boys and girls] an opportunity to socialize their knowledge, to make their information work" while also fostering "an at-homeness with their Jewish cultural background."[26] Schoolman himself at one point described the camp as an "educational paradise for the camp director," "an effective instrument for Jewish culture," and "an indispensable aid to the Jewish teacher for the education of his pupils."[27] Although after the first few years there were no formal classes at Camp Cejwin, and its standard of Hebrew fell far below what some of the more intensive Jewish camps would later demand, the camp proved highly influential. The founders of Camp Ramah, one of whom had attended Cejwin, drew directly on Schoolman's experience, and others, whether they admitted it or not, learned much from his success.[28]

The most immediate beneficiary of Cejwin's success, however, was a camp that Schoolman himself had a hand in establishing. In 1922 he and his gifted wife, Bertha, joined with two other pioneering American Jewish educator couples—Isaac and Libbie Berkson and Alexander and Julia Dushkin—to found a "private, self-paying experimental Jewish summer camp for the middle-upper-class Jewish families, which were then struggling with the Jewish education of their children."[29] Modeled on Cejwin but aimed at a different and wealthier clientele, Camp Modin in Maine advertised itself as "The Summer Camp with a Jewish Idea." "We sought to create a living synthesis of the classic Jewish traditions in home and synagogue with the new folkways of the *yishuv* [settlement] in Palestine, the American love of the outdoors and sports, with a sense of Jewish community living," Dushkin later explained. While formal Jewish education was optional at the camp, "each day periods were set aside for study." The camp also encouraged the speaking of modern Hebrew and the singing of modern Hebrew songs.[30]

Three features of Camp Modin are especially significant for historians of Jewish camping. First, the Schoolmans, Dushkins, and Berksons established Modin with the conscious aim of becoming financially independent; "it would be psychologically important for us as community workers, struggling for our ideas with and against communal *baale batim* [community leaders], to have independent financial income." The plan succeeded, and Dushkin reveals that he was later able to accept positions at the Hebrew University "at salaries below subsistence level," because he had this additional source of income.[31] In fact, economics played a role in all of Jewish camping, and private camps, when properly managed, proved to be very good businesses indeed. For example, one of the first private camps in Maine, Tripp Lake Camp for Girls, founded at the turn of the century by two sisters of Rebekah Kohut (Cyd and Eva Bettelheim), yielded a "splendid livelihood," according to Rebekah's recollections. George Alexander Kohut's Camp Kohut was likewise successful, she reports, and brought him "financial security."[32] The profit motive also helps to explain why the educational component of Jewish camping developed so slowly. Owner-investors feared that if camp were too much like school, then campers would not want to return, and their investment would be lost.[33] The success of Camps Modin and Cejwin demonstrated that this fear was exaggerated, but as we shall see, it was not totally groundless.

Second, women played a highly important role in running Camp Modin. According to Alexander Dushkin, "the three ladies, Libbie Berkson, Bertha Schoolman, and Julia Dushkin, were responsible at various times for the Girls' Camp and for 'opening and closing the camps.' "[34] Subsequently, Mrs. Berkson essentially ran the camp. Women played central roles at other camps too, especially, of course, at girls' camps, as the early example of Tripp Lake Camp and the charity camps of the Jewish Board of Guardians demonstrate. In 1916 two Jewish Sunday School teachers, Carrie Kuhn and Estelle Goldsmith, founded Camp Woodmere.[35] Later, during the "crucial decade" of Jewish educational camps, Rivka Shulsinger worked closely with her husband at Massad, Leah Konovitz Hurwich oversaw day-to-day operations at Camp Yavneh, and in 1947 Sylvia Ettenberg played a pioneering role in the founding of Camp Ramah. "Throughout the century," historian Nancy Mykoff observes, "Jewish women justified their camping activities in terms of extending their child-rearing duties to a more public sphere. This enabled them to journey to summer camp without crossing traditional gender boundaries. . . . But women's less traditional camping activities suggest that they challenged as well as confirmed contemporary ideas about male and female behavior." Through camps like Modin, they helped to transform "pieces of the 'great outdoors' into prototypes of the American home."[36]

Finally, Camp Modin prided itself on being a pluralistic Jewish camp. Although Dushkin subsequently described it as "religiously Conservative with

leanings toward Liberal Reconstruction," it attracted youngsters of various religious backgrounds, including, Dushkin proudly reports, the children of such Orthodox leaders as Rabbis Meir Berlin and Leo Jung.[37] Into the 1950s many Jewish camps, like their counterparts the Jewish community schools, believed they could simultaneously meet the religious needs of a wide range of Jews by maintaining a "traditional" Jewish environment, complete with kosher food and Sabbath observance, but without strict allegiance to any particular religious movement. In the early years of Camp Massad, for example, Shimon Frost reports that the camp was the very "embodiment of the idea of *klal yisrael* [community of Israel; the reference for the totality of the Jewish people]. Children from Orthodox Zionist homes and children from the socio-cultural elite of Conservative and Reform Judaism lived together with children from secular Zionist homes. The cement that unified them all was Hebrew and Zionism."[38] Camp Yavneh in New Hampshire, an offshoot of the Boston Hebrew Teachers College, similarly sought to attract children from a range of religious backgrounds; in its case, the unifying cement was a shared commitment to Hebrew and Jewish study. This tradition of pluralism within Jewish camping, hearkening back to the idea that the community rather than the synagogue should oversee Jewish education, assumed that culture (and especially the Hebrew language) unified Jews, even as religion divided them. The ideology helps to explain the relatively late development of denominational Jewish camps, like those of the Conservative and Reform movements. They faced opposition from those who charged that they "fragment the Jewish community away from the ideal of *Klal Yisrael*."[39]

Even as Camps Modin and Cejwin proved successful, the third prewar attempt at creating a Jewish educational camp failed. Camp Achvah, founded in 1927 by the "father" of modern Jewish education in America, Samson Benderly, was initially the summertime portion of an ambitious year-round program in leadership training. Called by the name *kvutzah* (cooperative group), and presumably influenced by the cooperative ideals of the Israeli kibbutz, it involved during the course of its existence a total of fifty outstanding New York Hebrew high school students whom Benderly sought to train for careers in Jewish educational leadership.[40] Those who were chosen—on the basis of scholarship, leadership potential, and personality—studied year-round both independently and in classes and then came together in summer for what became, in 1928, a full-scale study camp, conducted entirely in Hebrew. Like so many of Benderly's educational ventures, this small, elitist camp, conducted on a democratic basis without formal counselors, was far ahead of its time. Two participants in the program discovered years later that it had been remarkably successful: a third of their fellow campers went on to careers in Jewish communal life, and over half claimed to be very active in Jewish organizations.[41] But, probably for economic reasons, the *kvutzah* experiment ended after the summer of

1932; it was a casualty of the Great Depression. Camp Achvah itself labored on, filling a one-hundred-acre estate in Godeffroy, New York, that Benderly had purchased in the hope of furthering his vision of what a Jewish educational summer camp could accomplish. In its reorganized state, operating as a commercial enterprise, Achvah, like Cejwin and Modin, came to focus on informal Jewish education, with an emphasis on singing, dancing, and pageantry, as well as on impressive Sabbath celebrations and a memorable commemoration of *Tisha B'Av* (the Fast of the Ninth of Av). Even so, according to Alexander Dushkin, by 1941 the camp was deeply in debt—so much so that the fiasco nearly cost Benderly his pension. The experience serves as a reminder that the success of Jewish educational camping was by no means a forgone conclusion.[42]

Many of the underlying ideas and activities later associated with Jewish educational camping took shape at Camps Cejwin, Modin, and Achvah. Yet, during the interwar years, Jewish educational camping remained a small and high-risk venture. Educators, both general and Jewish alike, recognized camping's vast cultural and educative potential. The "total environment" of the summer camp, they understood, offered what one historian calls "an unparalleled venue for the transmission of values."[43] Meanwhile, Yiddishists, Zionists, and others demonstrated how camps could shape the "total environment" available to them to offer campers a taste of utopia, a seemingly realizable vision of an alternative communist, socialist, or Zionist way of life, complete with some educational content.[44] Still, camping remained out of reach for most American Jews, particularly in the dark days of the Depression, and most of those camps that did attract Jews promoted recreation and Americanization above all other goals. It was only afterward, between 1941 and 1952, in what we have dubbed the "crucial decade," that the core of camping's educational potential would more fully be realized, and Jewish educational camping finally took off.

The Crucial Decade for the Growth of Jewish Educational Camping

The large-scale emergence of Jewish educational camping, including the founding of Union Institute, forms part of a dramatic expansion in all aspects of American Jewish education that began in the late 1930s. In 1937 three significant Orthodox Jewish day schools were founded: HILI (Hebrew Institute of Long Island), Ramaz School in Manhattan, and Maimonides School in Boston. In the ten years between 1940 and 1950, ninety-seven different Jewish day schools were founded across the United States and Canada (as compared to twenty-eight that had been founded in the previous twenty-two years).[45] During the same period, adult Jewish education also experienced enormous growth. The Conservative movement's National Academy for Adult Jewish

Studies was founded in 1940, and according to Israel Goldman's survey, the adult Jewish education movement as a whole in America "began to emerge and develop." The Department of Continuing Education of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was founded in 1948, the same year that B'nai B'rith began its adult Institutes of Judaism.[46] The Jewish Publication Society, which promoted Jewish education and culture through books rather than classroom instruction, also roared back to life with the waning of the Depression. Its total income increased fivefold between 1935 and 1945, and the number of books it distributed tripled.[47] Other publishers of Judaica, including university presses, experienced similar increases in Jewish book sales.[48] Finally, Jewish organizational life as a whole surged during this period. In 1945 the *American Jewish Year Book* reported that "a larger number of new organizations . . . formed during the past five years than in any previous five-year period, forty-seven new organizations having been established since 1940." "Interest in Jewish affairs," it explained, "has undoubtedly been heightened as a result of the catastrophe which befell the Jews of Europe under the Nazi onslaught."[49]

The Holocaust, the waning of the Depression, and the explosive rise during the interwar years of domestic anti-Semitism all undoubtedly influenced the "increased community interest and support for Jewish education" that so many contemporaries noticed.[50] Jewish education represented both a defensive response to adversity and a form of cultural resistance, a resolve to maintain Judaism in the face of opposition and danger. It also promised to prepare the community for the new responsibilities that it faced in the wake of the European Jewish catastrophe. "American Jews," the *American Jewish Year Book* reported as early as 1941, "are realizing that they have been spared for a sacred task—to preserve Judaism and its cultural, social and moral values." That same year, Hebrew Union College historian Jacob Rader Marcus, who would soon shift the central focus of his own scholarship from Europe to America, also pointed to the American Jewish community's new historic role: "The burden is solely ours to carry," he declared. "Jewish culture and civilization and leadership are shifting rapidly to these shores."[51] The arrival of learned Jewish refugees from Europe underscored the significance of the "cultural transfer" that was taking place between the old world and the new. At the same time, America generally was placing new emphasis on education. Federal aid during the Depression brought about a "remarkable improvement" in general education, especially within the public schools. Catholic parochial schools also experienced significant growth during these years—a development, as the historian of one Jewish day school notes, that "invited imitation in the Jewish sphere."[52]

The growth of Jewish camping followed directly on the heels of all of these developments. Perhaps unsurprisingly, formal and informal Jewish education expanded at roughly the same time and for many of the same reasons. Yet Jewish educational camping also benefited from three additional factors peculiar

to the 1940s era. First, camps came to serve an important childcare function. With fathers away at war and mothers working, overnight camps offered worried parents the security of knowing that their children were in a safe and protected environment. Second, land was still relatively cheap at this time, and summer camps sold for much less than they had cost to build. Many camps had never recovered from the hard times of the Depression; others could not find adequate male staff during the war years and closed down. The founders of Camp Yavneh in Northwood, New Hampshire, particularly benefited from this buyers' market: they purchased a sixty-acre camp site in 1943 that met all of their requirements and cost a mere $18,000. "The owner had to sell it," Louis Hurwich recalled, "because war conditions made it impossible to find counselors and suitable help."[53] Shlomo Shulsinger, the founder of Camp Massad, similarly recalled how "many camps were for sale at good prices" in the early 1940s, since "many camp directors had been drafted, and those who hadn't couldn't keep up their camps for lack of manpower and food supplies."[54] A decade later the market had improved and Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, cost more—$63,000.[55] But given the rapidly rising cost of land, it too proved to be an excellent investment. Finally, all Jewish educational camps enjoyed a special (and rarely mentioned) advantage during eras of conscription. Many of their best male staff members were rabbinical students, who were exempt from the draft. This gave them a distinct staffing advantage over other camps that had trouble, during wartime, finding sufficient male staff for their operation.[56]

Against this background, Jewish educational camping came into its own during the "crucial decade." Indeed, the slew of remarkable and influential camps that were founded between 1941 and 1952 changed the face of Jewish camping and transformed camps into important components of Jewish educational and religious life. Educators recognized this at the time. "Not long ago the summer was considered a complete liability to Jewish Education," the editor and educator Azriel Eisenberg admitted in a June 1946 lead editorial introducing a special issue of *Jewish Education* devoted to summer camping. Comparing the summer to the Psalmist's "stone that the builders rejected," he predicted that, thanks to the advent of Jewish educational camps, the summer might in time "become the cornerstone in the future structure of American Jewish education."[57]

Brandeis Camp Institute (BCI), which opened in 1941 in Amherst, New Hampshire, embodied many of the strengths of this new "cornerstone." It began, much as Union Institute did, as an experimental summer leadership-training program. Founded by the charismatic Columbia Teachers College–trained Jewish educator Shlomo Bardin, then-director of the American Zionist Youth Commission, it evolved into a Los Angeles–based program for college-aged young adults (more than twice as many of them women than men) that

combined recreation with experiential learning and placed a heavy emphasis on drama, music, and the celebration of Shabbat—"a distinctive form of Shabbat," historian Deborah Dash Moore observes, "that provided meaning, community and religious experience." Moore characterizes the BCI experience as "a form of spiritual recreation" and suggests that its real goals were "to inspire Jews to be Jews, to link them with Jewish peoplehood, to whet their appetite for more learning, and to encourage them to bring up their children as Jews."[58] These, of course, were precisely the goals that all of the Jewish educational summer camps espoused, however much their strategies for accomplishing these goals differed. Bardin especially emphasized the *transformative* power of camp, which is why (like the more recent Birthright Israel program) he focused on college students. In 1946 he published the following testimonial from a student at the University of Southern California, which, in his words, provided "a pertinent summary of the [camp's] imponderable values . . . in shaping Jewish personality." The testimonial (minus one or two details) might have been echoed by attendees or alumni of any one of the intensive Jewish educational camps established over the ensuing decades. Its message attesting to the transformative power of camp helps to explain why camping was so quickly and passionately embraced by innovative leaders within Conservative and Reform Judaism: "When I arrived at the Institute, I felt no particular attachment to the Jewish people. On leaving, however, I took much away with me. Pride in Jewishness; a desire to preserve the continuity of a brave people; a sense of belongingness in a well-defined group; a desire to create, as a Jew among Jews; a joy through my identification with a worthy cause—the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. All this is making life more meaningful. Youth all over the United States are crying for this. How I wish they could all share my experience."[59]

Similar testimonials emerged from the other significant Jewish educational camp that dates its origins to 1941: Shlomo Shulsinger's Camp Massad. Massad, which began as a day camp and became an overnight camp in 1942, was the first Jewish educational camp to place the Hebrew language at its core. When he was in his late twenties, Shulsinger, who was born in Jerusalem, recalled being part of a group that was "absolutely fanatic about Hebrew language and culture . . . as a basis for Jewish life." The camp's name, from the Hebrew word meaning "foundation," was inspired by a line from a poem by Hayim Nahman Bialik ("If you have not built the rafters but only the *massad* [foundation], be content, my brothers, your toil is not in vain"), and was supposed to symbolize the idea "that Hebrew camping would be the foundation for Hebrew education—and through it, for Jewish life."[60] Indeed, the camp sought "to give the Jewish child, during the months of summer vacation, a living and creative Hebrew environment,"[61] one that *molded* children from a young age,

rather than *transforming* them in college. Thus, unlike BCI and Achvah, Massad did not focus chiefly on leadership development. Nor did it offer formal classes. Instead, it sought to create what Shulsinger described as "a little Hebrew world," a kind of Hebrew utopia that was at once staunchly American in its activities and celebrations, profoundly Zionist in outlook, "positive" toward Jewish religious traditions, and fanatical (especially in the early years) about the Hebrew language.[62] Given its Hebrew emphasis, the camp proved especially attractive to Jewish day school students; they formed its primary clientele. The camp's influence, however, extended far more broadly. "Over the years," Walter Ackerman has observed, "Massad set the standards by which all other Hebrew speaking camps were judged."[63] It also attracted a number of future Reform rabbis, including Balfour Brickner, who served on its staff as a lifeguard.[64] Although Massad does not seem to have directly influenced the founding of Union Institute, its rapid growth attracted notice from all Jewish educators. Its impressive rise from 47 campers in 1942 to 210 in 1945, and from over 600 campers in 1956 to over 900 in 1966, demonstrated that full-scale intensive Jewish educational camps could succeed both culturally and commercially.[65]

Both Massad and BCI were initially established by Jewish organizations (the Histadrut Ivrit and the American Zionist Organization) to further broad ideological aims: Hebraism and Zionism. By the 1946 special issue of *Jewish Education* devoted to summer camping, however, it was already clear that more limited, locally based Jewish educational camps were also starting up. In 1944, for example, the Boston Hebrew College established Camp Yavneh as an extension of its supplementary educational program. Not only was the camp committed to Hebrew (though not quite as single-mindedly as Massad), but it also featured ten to fifteen hours a week of formal classes—complete with tests. One former director recalls that "it was not at all uncommon for youngsters to awake at five in the morning, or earlier, to prepare."[66] The same year witnessed the founding in Cleveland of Camp Galil, an educational camp established by the director of that city's Bureau of Jewish Education. A year later, Chicago's College of Jewish Studies, in cooperation with the Chicago Bureau of Jewish Education, inaugurated plans for Sharon Camp, a small "summer camp institute" of "intensive Jewish studies" for college-aged students who were interested in becoming Jewish educators. This was the second camp that Chicago Jewish educators founded in the "crucial decade" of Jewish educational camping; the first, Camp Avodah (1943), had combined farmwork and Jewish living.[67] While neither of these camps were particularly significant, they helped to build local community support for the institution of Jewish camping. The next two ventures in Jewish educational camping that began in Chicago—Ramah and Union Institute—would change the face of Jewish educational camping forever.

The Advent of Educational Camping in the Reform and Conservative Movements

Both Camp Ramah and Union Institute developed from the same concern for safeguarding America's Jewish future that animated the educational revival of the late 1930s and 1940s. Reform and Conservative Jews alike developed significant new youth groups at this time: the National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) in 1939 and Leaders Training Fellowship (LTF) in 1945. The former, originally focused on young adults in their early twenties, proved an immediate success and subsequently expanded its coverage to embrace teenagers.[68] The latter, established as part of the Jewish Theological Seminary's "Ten Year Plan to Reclaim Jewish Youth to Religious and Ethical Life," was much more elitist than NFTY; it aimed "to identify and cultivate the best young people within Conservative synagogues and lead them into Jewish public service."[69] Both organizations looked upon camping—a total immersion program in Judaism—as a central component of their program, and both entered the camping field in 1947.

Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, which opened in 1947, was by far the more ambitious of these undertakings. It also represented the first significant foray into intensive educational camping by an American Jewish religious movement. Earlier camps, as we have seen, were established by institutions (like the Central Jewish Institute), movements (Hebraism, Zionism), or individuals (Dushkin, Benderly). They professed to be Jewishly pluralistic, embodying the *klal yisrael* ideal. Camp Ramah, by contrast, was founded by and for the Conservative movement. Those who established it, concludes Shuly Rubin Schwartz in her history of the camp's early years, "saw camping as one vehicle to further the goals of the Conservative movement as a whole." Along with LTF, which was overseen by the same people who were in charge of Camp Ramah, these youth-oriented institutions aimed to create an indigenous Conservative leadership—both lay and rabbinic—that would perpetuate the movement into the next generation.[70]

Camp Massad, Schwartz shows, "had a profound effect on the development of Ramah on all its levels." Yet even as it emulated Massad, Camp Ramah also deviated from it in significant ways, partly because most of its campers were less well-equipped for a Hebrew-speaking camp—they attended supplementary afternoon Hebrew schools rather than Jewish day schools—and partly because Ramah's program responded to many of the criticisms leveled at Camp Massad: that it was too authoritarian, too Zionist, too focused on Hebrew, and somewhat hypocritical in its approach to religious practices. Many of Ramah's founders, Schwartz suggests, "constructively channeled their discontent with Massad by founding and working in Ramah." They also sought to adapt the Massad model to suit the needs of the Conservative movement.[71]

While the central ideas and educational philosophy underlying Camp Ramah

took shape at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, where LTF was also housed, the camp itself opened in Wisconsin, thanks to the tireless efforts of Chicago-area Conservative rabbis and lay leaders, notably Rabbi Ralph Simon and Reuben Kaufman, chair of the Chicago Council of Conservative Synagogues. Simon, whose own children had attended Camp Massad, was reputedly "the pivotal figure who introduced the idea of such a camp to the Chicago area and then closely supervised its development."[72] Local lay leaders of the Conservative movement, responding to the widespread call to intensify educational programming for Jewish youth, endorsed the idea and agreed to support the camp, with the following significant stipulation: "This camp will be for children of parents affiliated with a Conservative Congregation and will be sponsored by the Council only; that is not in connection with the Board of Jewish Education."[73] Camp Ramah thus represented a declaration of independence on the part of local area Conservative Jewish leaders. They pointedly broke with the prewar pattern of pluralism in Jewish education overseen by a community-wide (if somewhat Orthodox leaning) Board of Jewish Education. Instead, they insisted that their new camp, like a growing number of their suburban synagogue schools, would now be avowedly Conservative—both in its philosophy and in its constituency.[74] The Reform Jewish camping movement, in time, followed much the same course.

In three other ways too, the new Conservative camp distinguished itself from its predecessors in Jewish educational camping, but, revealingly, in these cases the Reform movement camps did not subsequently follow its lead; instead, all three features remained unique to Ramah. First, Camp Ramah was directly overseen by the Jewish Theological Seminary, the training ground of the Conservative movement, rather than by its synagogue movement, the United Synagogue of America. The seminary's Teachers Institute assumed responsibility for the educational supervision of the camp (it also supervised LTF), and before long the seminary assumed financial responsibility for Ramah as well. Camp Ramah thus operated on the top-down model historically preferred by the Conservative movement: the seminary ruled. Second, Camp Ramah believed in formal study for *everybody*. The staff too was supposed to regularly attend classes in camp. The aim was to underscore the idea that for young and old alike, "living a full Jewish life meant studying every day"—nobody was exempt.[75] Finally, every Ramah camp had a professor-in-residence, most often from the Jewish Theological Seminary. "Originally," according to Michael Brown, "the professor had no formal duties but was to serve as a role model for campers and staff 'of a Jew who continues to study.' He would also act as 'a buddy of the director in times of crisis.' Over the years, the professor came to be the guarantor at Ramah 'of the principles of Conservative Judaism'. . . . The professor became the representative and the symbol of the Seminary in camp."[76]

By the early 1950s Ramah was a movement. A (short-lived) Ramah in Maine had opened in 1948. A (still-flourishing) Ramah in the Poconos opened in 1950. And more camps were in the planning stages. Camping had become one of the most successful of all of the Conservative movement's postwar initiatives.

Reform Jewish camping, meanwhile, was developing in a quite different direction. Beginning in 1947, and probably at the instigation of the new and highly creative director of the youth department at the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Rabbi Samuel Cook,[77] NFTY initiated a series of short conclaves and Leadership Institutes that it held at various camp sites (Camp Henry Horner in Painesville, Ohio; at Camp Lake of the Woods in Decatur, Michigan; etc.). The program of the 1948 Leadership Institute featured "classes," "services," and "study" in addition to "sports," "dramatics," "campfires," "dancing," and "fellowship," and it aimed to "create a strengthened movement for Reform Judaism." The program was described as a "huge success," and Rabbi Ernst M. Lorge, one of those who directed the program, expressed the conviction "that conclaves and other camping programs are essential to Jewish education."[78]

Lorge was no stranger to Jewish camping. He and Rabbi Herman Schaalman, then-director of the Chicago Federation of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, along with several other German-born Reform rabbis, had experienced Jewish camping in Germany, where, according to Lorge, it had an "incredible effect . . . on Jewish education and living."[79] Rabbi Alfred Wolf, who played a central role in the establishment of Camp Hess Kramer (1952) and other Reform Jewish camps that operated under the auspices of Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles, similarly credited his German experience with stimulating his interest in camp: "You might say that Camp Hess Kramer began when, in my teens, I was called upon to organize Jewish youth groups in Heidelberg, in a Germany just shaken to its roots by the Nazi take-over. It was then that I realized how much of Jewish values I could get across to young people as we were hiking or camping together under the open sky."[80] These rabbis subsequently witnessed the impact of both Jewish and Christian camping in America, and their resolve to create a movement of Reform Jewish camping was reinforced. But though the German experience was an important underlying factor in the development of Reform Jewish camping, it was not (as some claim) determinative. As early as 1946, the American-born Sam Cook had attempted, unsuccessfully, to acquire a permanent camp site for the Reform movement.[81] That same year, Rabbi Joseph L. Baron of Milwaukee (born in Vilna), who thought he had actually found a camp donor, described in a letter, "how anxious we have all been to develop a stimulating religious educational program for our youth during the summer months, how particularly important such a program is in this post-war era, and how much the success and growth of our summer activities depend on a suitable site in the country."[82] In the

immediate postwar years, the development of a Reform Jewish camp was thus on the agenda of a wide range of Reform Jewish leaders, natives and immigrants alike. In the end, though, no project made real headway until 1951, and then the project took shape at the local level, spearheaded by rabbis and lay leaders in Chicago.

On March 29, 1951, the UAHC Chicago Federation, headed by Rabbi Schaalman, unanimously approved "the project of building a camp for our youth." The Chicago lay leader who headed up the project, Johann S. Ackerman, knew that the national body was already "exploring the field for a camp" so that NFTY conclaves would not continually have to wander, but he argued that "the Chicago Federation does not need to wait, it could be first." The example of Camp Ramah, which had so recently been purchased for the seminary by Conservative Jewish lay people in Chicago, was presumably a factor here, but the minutes are (probably purposefully) vague.[83] They disclose only that "Rabbi Lorge explained other camp programs for Jewish youth in which he had participated" and that Rabbi Arnold Wolf "explained that other Jewish camps combined study and sports." Whatever the case, the meeting was a resounding success, "with all present enthusiastically endorsing the project."[84] The executive board of the UAHC agreed, and by July 1951 an appropriate site had been identified for possible purchase: a private Jewish camp known as Briar Lodge in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. The details of the purchase and the proposed use of the camp had been ironed out by November, and what UAHC president Maurice Eisendrath enthusiastically described as "the first 'Union Institute of the U.A.H.C.' ever to be officially and actually established" was announced to Midwestern area rabbis on February 26, 1952. It was to be known, simply, as Union Institute.[85]

The new camp differed markedly from Ramah, Massad, and in fact from all of the other Jewish educational camps that had been established in the "crucial decade" of Jewish camping. First of all, Hebrew played little role in the camp. There was no Hebrew in the camp's name and hardly any Hebrew in its curriculum; and, for that matter, there was no emphasis on Zionism at first.[86]

Second, most campers attended the camp for two weeks or less. In the initial year, there were "2 two-week Institutes . . . primarily for young people from Chicago and the Midwest," a one-week Adult Institute, two ten-day Leadership Institutes sponsored by NFTY, and a three-day Labor Day Conclave of the Chicago Federation of Temple Youth. Some 442 people participated in camp activities during that first year, but none of them devoted their full summer to Jewish living and learning.[87] This same pattern of short "institutes" rather than a full summer of "immersion" became a feature of Union Institute. Its program, like Reform Jewish education as a whole, was essentially supplementary; it left a great many summer weeks open for secular pursuits.

Third, Union Institute served a different age range than the other camps;

the bulk of its campers were teenagers or adults. An "experimental one-week's session for 11 and 12-year-olds" was only initiated in 1954 (later in the 1950s, a "junior session" was created for children aged 9 to 11).[88] Like Brandeis Camp Institute, which, as we have seen, focused on the college-aged, Union Institute initially sought to *transform* its campers. Massad and Ramah, by contrast, sought to *mold* them.

Fourth, more than at any other Jewish camp, Union Institute emphasized direct contact with rabbis as a central feature of its program. Visiting rabbis were treated as celebrities, akin to the "professor-in-residence" at Camp Ramah. They taught the ninety-minute study sessions, led regular "bull sessions" with participants, and were the camps' dominant personalities. Each summer more rabbis offered to come to Union Institute, some of them sacrificing a portion of their vacations in order to do so. Union Institute thus promoted closer relations between rabbis and young Reform Jews. Over time, it also stimulated many young people to enter the rabbinate.[89]

Finally, and perhaps as a consequence of the deep rabbinic involvement in the program, Union Institute placed a much heavier emphasis than any other Jewish educational camp on promoting spirituality. Indeed, during the opening summer of 1952, religious activities were described in a report to the board as "probably the most successful single facet" of the camp. In addition to regular morning and evening prayers, which were "creatively developed by a committee of young people," there were "cabin prayers at night, and a recitation of prayers before and after each meal." "Very frequently," according to this same report, "a genuine mood of religious devotion was generated at these occasions, and many of the participants were deeply moved by them."[90] Later these creative services and the whole informal mode of camp worship would have a major impact on the Reform movement as a whole.

Within a few years, Union Institute, like Ramah, became a full-scale camping movement. Camp Saratoga (later Swig) opened in California, and three more camps opened by 1958, all of them guided by the Youth Division of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Unlike the Ramah camps, however, which were centrally directed from New York, the Union camps operated under a considerable degree of local autonomy.[91] Just as individual congregations enjoyed a great deal of latitude under the UAHC structure, so too did the individual camps. In this respect, as in so many others, the camps reflected the character of the movement that sponsored them.

The Lasting Influence of Educational Jewish Camping

The establishment of Union Institute rang down the curtain on the most creative and influential decade in the whole history of the American Jewish camping movement. Between the early 1940s and the early 1950s a wide range of exciting and innovative camps opened their doors, including, as we have seen, Brandeis Camp Institute, Camp Massad, Camp Ramah, and Union Institute. This unprecedented proliferation of Jewish educational camps reflected critical developments taking place within the larger American Jewish community, notably, (1) a dramatic expansion in all aspects of American Jewish education, (2) a new focus on young people and their leadership training, and (3) a perceptible shift over time from the "ideological" emphases of the early 1940s, seen in the Zionist, Yiddishist, and Hebraist camps, to the "denominational" identities of the 1950s, when Ramah and the Union camps expanded. Beyond merely reflecting critical developments, however, the new camps also came to have a shaping influence upon them. A whole generation of young, impressionable American Jews came under the spell of these camps—some young people were "molded" by them, others "transformed"—and from their ranks the next generation of rabbis, scholars, and lay leaders emerged. This was the return on the crucial decade's investment in Jewish educational camping, and during the second half of the twentieth century the investment continued to pay rich dividends across the spectrum of American Jewish life.

Notes

1. Recalculated from figures in Daniel Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps in the United States and Canada, 1900–1969* (Philadelphia, PA: Dropsie University, 1970), 118. For a critique of Isaacman's methodology and biases, see Baila Round Shargel, "The Literature of Ramah," *Conservative Judaism* 40 (Fall 1987): 56–57.

2. The term "intensive Jewish educational camp" is borrowed from Burton Cohen; see his "The Jewish Educational Summer Camp," in *Judaism and Education: Essays in Honor of Walter I. Ackerman,* ed. Hayim Marantz (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University, 1998), 245–52.

3. Eugene A. Turner Jr., *100 Years of YMCA Camping* (Chicago: YMCA, 1985), 25.

4. The standard "History of Organized Camping" was published by Henry William Gibson in various issues of *Camping* magazine, beginning in 1936, which, conveniently, have now been brought together on microfilm. See also Frank L. Irwin, *The Theory of Camping* (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1950), 3–7, and Daniel Cohen, "Outdoor Sojourn: A Brief History of Summer Camp in the United States," in *A Worthy Use of Summer: Jewish Summer Camping in America,* ed. Jenna Weissman Joselit and Karen S. Mittelman (Philadelphia: National Museum of American Jewish History, 1993), 10–13.

5. For the history of Jewish camping, see especially Daniel Isaacman, "The Development of Jewish Camping in the United States," *Gratz College Annual of Jewish Studies* 5 (1976): 111–20, and Shimon Frost, "Milestones in the Development of Hebrew Camping in North America: An Historical Overview" (in Hebrew with English summary),

in *Kovetz Massad,* vol. 2, *Hebrew Camping in North America,* ed. Shlomo Shulsinger-Shear Yashuv with Rivka Shulsinger-Shear Yashuv (Jerusalem: Alumni of Massad Camps, 1989), 17–79.

6. Gibson, "History of Organized Camping," presents these figures in his fourth chapter (unpaginated.)

7. *1936 Directory of Summer Camps Under the Auspices of Jewish Communal Organizations* (New York: Jewish Welfare Board, 1936); Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps,* surveyed only half as many camps from this period (see p. 118).

8. Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps,* 118.

9. Jenna Joselit argues that "Unlike other youth-oriented institutions like the Boy Scouts or the YMCA which offered an alternative, competing perspective, Jewish summer camp co-existed amicably with the same social sphere as the Jewish home and the afternoon school. Far from supplanting or vying with domestic and communal values, it sought instead to extend and deepen them." While this may exaggerate both the subversive nature of the scouting and YMCA movements, and the social conformity of Jewish camps, the hypothesis warrants investigation. See Jenna Weissman Joselit, "The Jewish Way of Play," in Joselit and Mittelman, *Worthy Use of Summer.*

10. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981).

11. Gibson, "History of Organized Camping," unpaginated (italics added). There is, of course, a parallel here to the European youth movements of the time that similarly extolled the countryside over the city and promoted the value of communing with nature. The *Judischer Wanderbund Blau-Weiss* (Jewish Hikers Association Blue and White), founded in 1912, reflected this same back-to-nature ideology; see Steven Lowenstein in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* ed. Michael A. Meyer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), vol. 3, 148.

12. David Lyon Hurwitz, "How Lucky We Were," *American Jewish History* 87 (March 1999), esp. 34, 42.

13. Frances Fox Sandmel, *The History of Camp Kennebec* (North Belgrade, ME: n.p., 1973), 1; Herman D. Stein, "Jewish Social Work in the United States, 1654–1954," *American Jewish Year Book* 57 (1956): 74; Charles S. Bernheimer, "Camps as Character Builders," in *Half a Century in Community Service* (New York: Association Press, 1948), 112–16. For a famously critical portrait of the "vacations" offered to immigrants by Jewish charities, see Anzia Yezierska, "The Free Vacation House," in *Hungry Hearts and Other Stories* (1920; New York: Persea Press, 1985), 97–113.

14. Sandmel, *History of Camp Kennebec,* 17–18.

15. Hurwitz, "How Lucky We Were," 39.

16. Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps,* 133.

17. Rebekah Kohut, *His Father's House: The Story of George Alexander Kohut* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1938), 113. Rebekah was Kohut's stepmother.

18. Byron L. Sherwin, "Portrait of a Romantic Rebel, Bernard C. Ehrenreich (1876–1955)," in *Turn to the South,* ed. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1979), 10–11; Harold S. Wechsler, "Rabbi Bernard C. Ehrenreich: A Northern Progressive Goes South," in *Jews of the South,* ed. Samuel Proctor, et al. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 62.

19. Albert P. Schoolman, writing in 1946, recalled that even "the very best Jewish camps" in 1920, even if they "served kosher food, had a Friday evening service and a 'Shabbat' meal with 'Kiddush,'" failed to observe the Sabbath thereafter. "Saturday, in preparation for Sunday visiting, became clean-up day for the camp." *Jewish Education* 17 (June 1946): 7.

20. Turner, *100 Years of YMCA Camping,* 46–50; Irwin, *Theory of Camping,* provides a later summary of educational theory concerning camping.

21. Alexander M. Dushkin, "A. P. Schoolman: The Story of a Blessed Life," *Jewish Education* 36 (Winter 1966): 72; see also the references to progressive educators in Alfred P. Schoolman, "Jewish Educational Camping: Its Potentialities and Realities," ibid., 77–86.

22. On the Central Jewish Institute, see David Kaufman, *Shul with a Pool: The "Synagogue-Center" in American Jewish History* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1999), 153–59.

23. The claim is made by her subsequent husband, Louis Hurwich; see his *Memoirs of a Jewish Educator,* trans. and ed. Aaron Darsa (Boston: Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Boston, 1999), 233; Schoolman himself credits the "Women's Auxiliary" of CJI for the camp's beginning in his "The Jewish Educational Summer Camp: A Survey of Its Development and Implications," *Jewish Education* 17 (June 1946): 9.

24. In 1913 Samson Benderly briefly experimented with extension courses in religion and history for young people who spent summers with their parents in Arverne, Long Island, but his biographer's claim that he thereby "founded" Jewish educational camping is baseless. See Nathan H. Winter, *Jewish Education in a Pluralist Society: Samson Benderly and Jewish Education in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 1966), 81, 185.

25. Abraham P. Gannes, "Camp—A Children's Community," *Jewish Education* 36 (Winter 1966): 91.

26. Quoted in Joselit, "Jewish Way of Play," 26.

27. Schoolman, "Jewish Educational Summer Camp," 12.

28. Shuly Rubin Schwartz, "Camp Ramah: The Early Years, 1947–1952," *Conservative Judaism* 40 (Fall 1987): 17; Dushkin, "A. P. Schoolman," 74. For Schoolman's influence on Massad, see *Massad Reminiscences* (Jerusalem: Abraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, 1996), 6–7, 11–12.

29. Alexander M. Dushkin, *Living Bridges: Memoirs of an Educator* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1975), 63. In an earlier telling, Dushkin described it as a plan to create a "private summer camp for children of well-to-do Jewish families"; see Dushkin, "A. P. Schoolman," 73.

30. Dushkin, *Living Bridges,* 64, 67.

31. Dushkin, "A. P. Schoolman," 74; Dushkin, *Living Bridges,* 63–64.

32. Rebekah Kohut, *More Yesterdays: An Autobiography* (New York: Bloch, 1950), 178; Kohut, *His Father's House,* 111.

33. See Schwartz, "Camp Ramah: The Early Years," 21, where Sylvia Ettenberg recalls that in 1947 some members of the Chicago Council of Conservative Synagogues suggested to her that she should not mention the study aspect of Camp Ramah when she went about recruiting potential campers.

34. Dushkin, *Living Bridges,* 65.

35. Kohut, *More Yesterdays,* 178; Bernheimer, *Half a Century in Community Service,* 17; Nancy Mykoff, "Summer Camping," *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia,* ed. Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore (New York: Routledge, 1997), 1362.

36. Mykoff, "Summer Camping," 1363.

37. Dushkin, *Living Bridges,* 67–68.

38. Frost, "Milestones in the Development of Hebrew Camping in North America," 35 (translation mine). See also, *Massad Reminiscences,* 44, where Rabbi Ray Arzt recalls that at Massad, "Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Hebraists, secularists—all were in that camp and I cannot remember any tension whatsoever among the groups. The camp was run on a more or less traditional basis, *t'fillot* [prayers] every morning. Those people among the counselors who had strong objections and did not like prayer did not go."

39. Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps,* 30.

40. A. P. Gannes and Levi Soshuk, "The Kvutzah and Camp Achvah," *Jewish Education* 20, no. 3 (1949): 61–69; Winter, *Jewish Education in a Pluralist Society,* 131–43; Frost, "Milestones in the Development of Hebrew Camping," 20–21.

41. Gannes and Soshuk, "Kvutzah and Camp Achvah," 68.

42. Dushkin, *Living Bridges,* 158.

43. Mykoff, "Summer Camping," 1361.

44. Fradle Freidenreich, reading an earlier version of this essay, has persuasively argued that Yiddish camps, of which there were about twenty-five before World War II, promoted an educational agenda as early as the 1920s and were therefore forerunners of Jewish educational camping. Zionist camps such as Moshava, sponsored by the Habonim movement, likewise promoted an educational agenda. In both cases, of course, the education was distinctly ideological, as were the camps. Full-scale studies of the Yiddishist and Zionist camping movements remain to be written.

45. Alvin I. Schiff, *The Jewish Day School in America* (New York: Jewish Education Committee of New York, 1966), 37, 42, 44, 49.

46. Israel M. Goldman, *Lifelong Learning among Jews* (New York: Ktav, 1975), 308; Deborah Dash Moore, *B'nai B'rith and the Challenge of Ethnic Leadership* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1981), 230–33. B'nai Brith's Committee on Adult Jewish Education was founded in 1950.

47. Jonathan D. Sarna, *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 183–84.

48. Charles A. Madison, "The Rise of the Jewish Book in American Publishing," *Jewish Book Annual* 25 (1967–1968): 81–86; Amnon Zipin, "Judaica from American University Presses," *Jewish Book Annual* 42 (1984–1985): 172–82.

49. *American Jewish Year Book* 47 (1945–1946): 559.

50. Ibid., 234.

51. *American Jewish Year Book* 43 (1941–1942): 28, 780, 789.

52. Judah Pilch, ed., *A History of Jewish Education in the United States* (New York: American Association for Jewish Education, 1969); Diane Ravitch, *The Great School Wars* (New York: Basic, 1964), 239; Lawrence Cremin, *A History of Education in American Culture* (New York: Henry Holt, 1953), 568–69; Shaul Farber, "Community, Schooling, and Leadership: Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's Maimonides School and the Development of Boston's Orthodox Community" (PhD dissertation, Hebrew University, 2000), 105–06, 108.

53. Hurwich, *Memoirs of a Jewish Educator,* 235.

54. *Massad Reminiscences,* 17.

55. J. S. Ackerman to Phineas Smoller, July 7, 1952, OSRUI Papers, American Jewish Archives.

56. See Hurwich, *Memoirs of a Jewish Educator,* 236.

57. Azriel Eisenberg, "The Stone Which the Builders Rejected," *Jewish Education* 17 (June 1946): 2.

58. Deborah Dash Moore, "Inventing Jewish Identity in California: Shlomo Bardin, Zionism, and the Brandeis Camp Institute, in *National Variations in Jewish Identity: Implications for Jewish Education,* ed. Steven M. Cohen and Gabriel Horenczyk (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 201–21.

59. Shlomo Bardin, "The Brandeis Camp Institute," *Jewish Education* 17 (June 1946): 27.

60. Shlomo Shulsinger, "*Massad Memoirs: How It All Began,*" and *Massad Reminiscences,* 9, 11; see also Bardin, "Brandeis Camp Institute," in *Kovetz Massad,* vol. 2, 83–96.

61. Shlomo Shulsinger, "Hebrew Camping: Five Years of Massad (1941–1945)," *Jewish Education* 17 (June 1946): 16.

62. Shulsinger, "Massad Memoirs," 10; Shulsinger, "Hebrew Camping," 18; cf. *Kovetz Massad,* vol. 2, 86.

63. Walter Ackerman, "A World Apart: Hebrew Teachers Colleges and Hebrew-Speaking Camps," in *Hebrew in America: Perspectives and Prospects,* ed. Alan Mintz (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), 115–17.

64. See Haskel Lookstein, "What I Learned from Massad," in *Kovetz Massad,* vol. 2, 334 [in Hebrew].

65. *Massad Reminiscences,* 15; *Kovetz Massad,* vol. 2, 31, 93–94; Shulsinger, "Hebrew Camping: Five Years of Massad," 23.

66. William B. Furie, "Yavneh," *Jewish Education* 17 (June 1946): 28–29; Hurwich, *Memoirs of a Jewish Educator,* 233–47; Ackerman, "World Apart," 116; and Frost, "Milestones," 68–73.

67. Samuel M. Blumenfield, "Summer Camp Institute Sharon," *Jewish Education* 22

(Summer 1951): 37–40; Isaacman, "Development of Jewish Camping," 116. It is not clear when Sharon actually opened. Blumenfield dates the initial organizational meeting to 1945, but the camp was not mentioned in the 1946 issue of *Jewish Education*. It likely began in 1946.

68. Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Oxford, 1988), 307; "NFTY after Fifty Years: A Symposium," *Journal of Reform Judaism* 36 (Fall 1989): 1–38; Eve S. Rudin, "The Development of Reform Jewish Youth Programs," senior honors thesis, Brandeis University, 1992.

69. Michael Brown, "It's Off to Camp We Go: Ramah, LTF, and the Seminary in the Finkelstein Era," in *Tradition Renewed: A History of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America,* ed. Jack Wertheimer (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1997), vol. 1, 826–27. The United Synagogue had created a "Young People's League" for eighteen-to-thirty-five-year-olds in 1921. It was abandoned in 1951 in favor of a new more broadly based United Synagogue Youth (USY) program aimed at Conservative youngsters between the ages of thirteen and seventeen. See Pamela S. Nadell, *Conservative Judaism in America: A Biographical Dictionary and SourceBook* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 347.

70. Shuly Rubin Schwartz, "Camp Ramah: The Early Years, 1947–1952," *Conservative Judaism* 40 (Fall 1987): 17, 22.

71. Ibid., 18–20.

72. Ibid., 20.

73. Ibid., 21.

74. Burton I. Cohen, "A Brief History of the Ramah Movement," in *The Ramah Experience: Community and Commitment,* ed. Sylvia C. Ettenberg and Geraldine Rosenfield (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary/National Ramah Commission, 1989), 5–6; see also, Seymour Fox with William Novak, *Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions* (Jerusalem: Mandel Institute and the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, 1997).

75. Schwartz, "Camp Ramah," 24.

76. Brown, "It's Off to Camp We Go," 831–32.

77. On Cook's significance, with the assistance of Eleanor Schwartz, see Rudin, "Development of Reform Jewish Youth Programs," 20.

78. *Chicago Councilor* (1948); NFTY "First Annual Leadership Institutes" brochure (1948); and Ernst Lorge to Sidney I. Cole (October 22, 1948), all in OSRUI Papers, American Jewish Archives (hereafter, AJA).

79. Lorge to Cole (October 22, 1948); Edwin Cole Goldberg, "The Beginnings of Educational Camping in the Reform Movement," *Journal of Reform Judaism* 36 (Fall 1989): 6–7. See also, Steven Lowenstein's discussion of German-Jewish youth organizations in M. Meyer, ed., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times* III, 147–50; and Michael Brenner, "Turning Inward: Jewish Youth in Weimar Germany," in *In Search of Jewish Community: Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria, 1918–1933,* ed. Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 56–73.

80. Alfred Wolf, *Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps. The First 25 Years, 1949–1974: A Personal History* (Los Angeles: n.p., 1975), 5 [Jacob Rader Marcus's copy of this privately printed memoir is found in the rare book room of the Brandeis University library].

81. Rudin, "Development of Reform Jewish Youth Programs," 21.

82. Letter from Joseph L. Baron to Maurice Eisendrath, June 30, 1946, Joseph L. Baron Papers, in the possession of AJA.

83. Goldberg, "Beginnings of Educational Camping," 8, is less tentative on this point, but cites no sources. "Another factor that helped convince lay people of the need for a camp," he reports, "was the establishment of Camp Ramah. If the Conservative movement had a camp, then the Reform movement needed to acquire one too."

84. "[Minutes of the] Combined Committee for Camp Project Meeting, Thursday, March 29, 1951," OSRUI Papers, AJA.

85. Memo from Herman E. Schaalman to J. S. Ackerman, July 9, 1951; "Memorandum on Camp Institute," November 29, 1951; memo from J. S. Ackerman to Mae O. Garland and Sherman Pearlstein, December 27, 1951; memo from Herman Schaalman to "All Rabbis in the Midwestern, Rocky Mountain & Great Lakes Regions of the Union including all the Rabbis in Chicago," February 26, 1952; memo from Maurice N. Eisendrath to J. S. Ackerman, February 29, 1952; J. S. Ackerman, "History and Purpose of Union Institute," January 23, 1955; Dedication invitation, December 24, 1952; all in OSRUI Papers, AJA; Goldberg, "Beginnings of Educational Camping," 8.

86. An undated fact sheet, probably from 1952, in the OSRUI Papers reports that "No politics of any sort will be discussed (Zionism, communism, etc.). The American Flag will be the only flag raised and lowered."

87. "Preliminary Report of Summer Operation of Oconomowoc" [1952], OSRUI Papers, AJA.

88. "Report on Union Institute Program to Chicago Federation, U.A.H.C.," May 27, 1954; 1959 Union Institute Brochure, OSRUI Papers, AJA.

89. "Report of the Union Institute Program to Chicago Federation, U.A.H.C.," May 27, 1954; undated fact sheet (probably 1952); Goldberg, "Beginnings of Educational Camping," 8–9.

90. "Preliminary Report of Summer Operation of Oconomowoc" [1952], OSRUI Papers, AJA.

91. Goldberg, "Beginnings of Educational Camping," 9.