

Image 1: Michelangelo's *Moses*.

Picturing Palestine: Visual Narrative in the Jewish Art Calendars of National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods

JESSICA CARR

For the Hebrew months of Sivan and Tammuz 5674 (May–July 1914), the calendar of National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS) depicts Michelangelo’s sculpture of Moses, a work of art housed in the Church of St. Peter in Chains in Rome as part of the tomb of Julius II (image 1). The calendar explains, “Michelangelo’s heroic figure of Moses and the Tablets brings out the chief thought of Shabuoth—the giving of the law.” Sketches of Mount Sinai and a modern pulpit and ark surround the photograph of Michelangelo’s sculpture.¹ The inclusion of Michelangelo’s *Moses* exemplifies the production of Jewish identity through visual culture that relies on images of biblical life and Palestine. Like their Christian-American counterparts, NFTS members—the auxiliary organization for Reform Jewish women in the United States—valued such images. But while the art calendar allowed NFTS to share culture with non-Jews, it also offered a polemic. Christianity may commemorate the reception of the commandments, but the calendar asserts—as indicated by the association of the sculpture with the celebration of Shavuot—that Moses belongs in the tradition of Judaism, not Christianity. The calendar makes one other change to the representation of Moses: The horns that emerge from Moses’s head on the sculpture in Rome were removed for the Jewish art calendar.²

The story of NFTS art calendars begs the question: Where should the Jewish past reside in the Jewish present? A central religious practice in Jewish-American* life has been to try to direct Jewish attentions in this matter: to “place” the Jewish past—that is, to understand Judaism as a tradition with material geographical roots. NFTS art calendars printed

*Though the AJA and its journal have a long-standing institutional and stylistic tradition of employing the term “American Jewish” (as in American Jewish history), the author of this article prefers the term “Jewish American.”

from 1913 to 1948 articulate a narrative of Jewish history that begins in ancient Palestine, runs through Europe, and culminates in the United States.³ Even as Jewish culture flourished in Palestine in the early twentieth century, Palestine was valued more for its “pastness” than its present day, which would have rivaled American exceptionalism. In that way, NFTS counters hegemonic Zionism, which values Palestine as the culmination of contemporary Jewish civilization. (This language is borrowed from Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, who defines “contemporaneous” as describing “those in the present who are valued for their pastness” and “contemporary” as “those of the present who relate to their past as heritage.”⁴) The art calendars thus present Palestine in a way that confers value on the Holy Land within the larger frame of Reform Judaism and American citizenship. In other words, the calendars present Jewish history as a precursor to American history, culture, and politics. That the visual culture of NFTS calendars articulate a counternarrative to European and Zionist visual cultures by use of images drawn from both speaks to the very production of heritage—a process that “adds value to the outmoded by making it into an exhibition of itself.”⁵ By exhibiting images originally produced in European and Zionist contexts, NFTS art calendars recontextualize those images. In doing so, they make two simultaneous implications: that those European and Zionist meanings are outmoded *and* that a new layer of American Reform meaning exists on top of them.

Because territory was a staple in modern nationalist myths, Americans at large and Jews as a subgroup faced particular challenges in articulating histories that linked them to territories in the way that many of the histories of Western European nations and groups were linked to a place. Americans faced the problem that their nation was a young, new territory: How could they see their nationhood as emerging out of a primordial existence? In the late nineteenth century, as Americans traveled abroad in increasing numbers, travel stories and histories published in the United States sought to make Rome in particular a comfortable place for Americans and white Protestants to build into their stories. White Protestant Americans focused especially on the catacombs as their link to early Christian history. The ornate churches, which also fascinated them, would not have been at home in their narrative, as they were a symbol of Catholicism. The hidden underground catacombs, however, served

as a powerful metaphor for white Protestant Americans' understanding of internal spirituality. Those whose tours took them throughout the Mediterranean, including a stop in Palestine, approached integrating the Holy Land into their worldview in a similar way: by incorporating elements of the territory's history that, even centuries later, point to white Protestant America as the culmination of Christian destiny.

As Jews sought to integrate images of Palestine into their own visual culture and communal memory—reclaiming mythic Palestine for Jewish rather than Christian history and identity—they shared a geographic impulse with their white Protestant American counterparts. By printing Michelangelo's *Moses* and other representations of the Jewish past, NFTS calendars cultivated a visual culture that evoked Jewish life in America as a safe existence, alongside yet distinct from Christianity. This Jewish identity and visual culture were dynamic, not static; they shifted with the changing images of both Jewish and American culture. Through the art calendars' images, we see a narrative of Jewish-American identity, from ancient Palestine to European communities to the United States. This narrative links Jews to a primordial nationhood rooted in Palestine and simultaneously articulates a vision of America as the final fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham's descendants. It is a narrative that parallels broader white Protestant American narratives of culmination in the United States.

Conceptualizing the relationship between “modern Jews” and Palestine played an important role in articulating Reform Judaism, though it was not the sole concern of Reformers.⁷ As Michael A. Meyer demonstrates, early reformers of Judaism and ideologues of the institutionalized Reform movement never constituted a monolithic Jewish community. Modern Jews held various notions of Jewish tradition, including contradictory ideas of tradition. In Western Europe and America, many Jews demonstrated what might be called “religious laxity,” to which others responded with more deliberate understandings of which ideas and practices were essential to Judaism and which must be discarded. As American Reform Judaism coalesced into a movement, participants continued to disagree and contradict themselves in their understandings of Reform's internal and external struggles to make sense of modernity. In understanding Reform Judaism as a movement, then, I follow Meyer in acknowledging the explicitly religious character

of Reform. Yet, like Meyer, I also want to emphasize the diversity and complexity of Reform at any given time as well as its dynamism throughout history, including interactions with many other social, political, and religious movements intrinsic and extrinsic to Jewish life, including Zionism, feminism, and aestheticism. Jewish Americans organically reformed Judaism throughout the nineteenth century, and the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) marks a separation of American Reform Judaism from other Jewish-American institutions and movements.⁸ The third plank of the platform affirms the historical significance of certain parts of Jewish law for the Jewish people's "mission during its national life in Palestine," but the platform accepts as binding "only its moral laws," deeming the rest as irrelevant to modernity. The fifth plank expresses optimism for a coming Messianic era of "truth, justice, and peace among all men" and at the same time rejects Jewish nationalism: "We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state."⁹ This apparent stance countering Zionism would be visited and revisited over the next decades.

American Reform's posture toward Palestine as the location of Jewish memory, culture, and politics, of course, was not fixed. The CCAR continued to publish new platforms throughout the twentieth century, which increasingly sought to embrace the diversity within Reform Judaism, including the founding of NFTS in 1913. The sisterhoods that chose to affiliate with NFTS articulated their own point of view of Jewish tradition and its geographical past, present, and future. Their art calendars offer a particular window into how members of NFTS participated in larger questions of Jewish life in America. Beyond explicitly political concerns and prior to the acceptance of Zionism by the American Reform movement at large, NFTS members endorsed images of Palestine and work by artists from Palestine, especially those from the Bezalel school, for their newly founded Union Museum and Jewish art calendars.¹⁰

In addition to signifying developments in American Reform and the representation of Palestine, the calendars also were on trend regarding aestheticism at the turn of the twentieth century. For Jewish immigrants and their children, the value of aestheticism centered around the

home. Historian Jenna Weissman Joselit demonstrates that by the early twentieth century, Jewish-Americans—especially women—expressed a “powerful interrelationship between décor and identity.” Artists, objects, and images of Palestine played a key role in the creation of this Jewish-American material aesthetic.¹¹ Jewish Americans desired objects that displayed their good taste and American style. Home observance was part of the founding mission of NFTS, and leaders sought to include among these materials not only Judaica but “Judaica *plus* the knowledge of how and when to use it.” The Executive Committee noted that this was an important goal because so many Jewish holidays were home celebrations. To cultivate this observance, NFTS members focused on goods such as Passover plates, candlesticks, and the Jewish art calendar. The calendar helped cultivate home observance by displaying “a beautiful reminder” of holidays in every home. In this context, sisterhoods sought to “solidify the bridge” between synagogue and home.¹² The art calendar offered the possibility of displaying Judaica in the style that middle-class Jewish-American homemakers sought, it introduced Jewish artists to an American audience, and it offered the dates of holidays as well as Bible readings for Shabbat that cultivated an explicitly religious Jewishness.¹³

The images of the calendars published during the first half of the twentieth century present a pictorial message about Jewish-American identity vis-à-vis Palestine. These pictures give an account of ancient Jewish life in Palestine as a closed chapter of Jewish history. The visual narrative culminates in a claim that America would serve as the future community of Judaism, which also frames the end of the European Diaspora. After the creation of the State of Israel, however, NFTS calendars included images of the newly formed state, which reopened the debate about the Holy Land being a closed chapter as a source of Jewish identity. These new images also created tension with the emphasis on American exceptionalism—an emphasis that had reached a peak during World War II. Since 1913, NFTS art calendars had created a strong visual culture centered around Palestine, which created the space for the tension between these representations of the United States and Palestine. As the organization shared the impulse to represent Palestine with Jews and non-Jews in America during the first half of the twentieth century, it negotiated multiple ideologies and its identity as a Reform Jewish organization in the United States. And later, the increased appearance of

images of the State of Israel after its creation in 1948 would have seemed to be in visual continuity with earlier representations of Palestine, even though images of a Jewish nation-state outside of the United States marked a shift in ideology and identity for NFTS.

Images in Historical Context

Palestine featured centrally as the authentic site of the Jewish past in NFTS Jewish art calendars. All of the extant calendars from 1913 to 1927 depict biblical life in the Holy Land, and the majority from 1929 to 1951 invoke Palestine (although two calendars celebrate ceremonial Jewish objects—one featuring the anniversary of Hebrew Union College [HUC] and the other in honor of the Charleston Jewish community's bicentennial). This is seen in the biographies of the artists, who spent at least some time in the East, as well as in the subject matter of the images. Technological developments in the nineteenth century altered the possibilities for representing, visiting, and picturing Palestine. Photographs suddenly proliferated, which “made a remote land seem closer and its ‘exotic’ cultures seem more accessible” and “helped to create a shared visual portrait of the Holy Land.” Archaeologists discovered more and more relics of the ancient world, and travel became faster and more luxurious, providing a link but also intensifying the contrast between past and present.¹⁴

Studies of Zionism have tended to focus on political influence, fundraising, and the immigration of Jews to the land of Palestine.¹⁵ However, images of the Holy Land reveal more about Jewish Americans than about the land of Palestine or the State of Israel. As mythical images of Palestine evolved in America from the eighteenth century to the twentieth, Jewish Americans were “increasingly out of touch with reality back in Eretz Israel.”¹⁶ Therefore, scholars of religion have turned toward material culture to give voice to lay people and show the significance of Palestine in America beyond “membership numbers, fundraising income, and favorable presidential pronouncements, as important as these may be.”¹⁷ Recent studies, such as those by Ken Koltun-Fromm and Beth Wenger, examine concern among Jewish Americans in the early twentieth century about whether Jewish identities and values would be passed on to the next generation.¹⁸ A response to changing social and political situations, the concern for transmission of identity also reveals

the shift away from Jewish law in defining the essence of tradition for many Jews.

The production of material culture has been a central practice for Jewish Americans seeking to pass on something concrete to their children. It has also been a trend in the broader study of American religious history and speaks to larger questions of community, religious thought and practice, and the complicated relationships between religion and nation. The art and artifacts produced by Americans of various traditions show that groups have continuously borrowed forms and ideas from each other.¹⁹ Studies have linked Jewish acculturation, gender, and material culture; for example, Joselit, Paula Hyman, and Andrew Heinze use acculturation and material culture as a window into the religious practices of women, which are often missed in studies solely concerned with theology. This scholarship looks at which objects make homes identifiably Jewish and how material culture offers a medium through which Jews can transform themselves and their practices to suit American norms.²⁰ In the visual culture of NFTS as exemplified in Jewish art calendars, Palestine was not just an imaginative fantasy for Reform Jewish women; it was a critical component of their religious identity and cultural engagement in the United States. Repeated viewing of these images helped solidify their identities as American Jewish women.

As a vehicle for harmonizing Jewish and American identity, these reproductions of Palestine allowed Reform women to share common values—such as their very identification with the Holy Land—with Jews and non-Jews alike. Yet the calendars fit Palestine into a Reform worldview, at times functioning to reclaim symbols for Judaism in general or Reform specifically. Interestingly, although the images in NFTS art calendars generally depict either landscapes or men—not women—their production and use did create a space for an organization and leadership that incorporated women into the Reform movement. In the early twentieth century, Reform Jewish men and women rejected Jewish laws that subordinated women. And yet, they were part of a larger American society that, prior to the first wave of feminism, prevented women from assuming traditionally masculine roles, such as heads of congregations. NFTS women creatively responded to the constraints and commitments of Reform Judaism and American culture through the projects of their organization.

Space for Women in Jewish History in the Early Twentieth Century

At the start of the nineteenth century, Jews in Europe and America interpreted the public nature of synagogue services and communal Jewish life as limited to men. Although Reform's reconceptualization of the authority of Jewish law sought to remove barriers to women's full participation in Jewish public life, men and women continued to struggle to envision new roles for women in Judaism. Moreover, social norms constrained the roles for women across religious traditions in America. Therefore, it is not surprising that women were largely invisible in very early Reform. Generally, Jewish women continued to be unable to take lay or rabbinic leadership roles and were often denied membership in synagogues throughout the nineteenth century, despite reforms in the halakhah. These limits on women's membership and lay leadership in Jewish communities went beyond what was typical for Christian American women, indicating that Jews were not just copying Christians in order to acculturate. However, like their Christian counterparts, Jewish women became increasingly present in congregational life, "an implicit and persistent challenge to the structure and essence of the institution."²¹ Jewish women used the same rhetoric of domesticity that Christian women used, but they faced a different set of challenges. Jewish tradition conceptualized synagogues as public, setting up a clear tension between the rhetoric of domesticity and the efforts of Jewish women to play a greater role in Jewish communal life.

While the role of women in Jewish life had very long traditions, Jewish-American women created new forms of institutional life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, albeit forms influenced by traditional religious associations. Jewish women understood their roles in synagogue and communal life as tied to values deeply rooted in Judaism. But as Pamela Nadell and Rita Simon have argued, "through organized communities of women, they created a culture that enabled them to change the expectations of their proper behavior within [synagogue] portals and expand Jewish women's public religious roles." Beginning in the early nineteenth century, Jewish female immigrants formed benevolent societies and other formal and informal groups to aid the sick, perform charity or *tzedakah*, aid the poor and provide other social welfare, and bury the dead. These groups may have been rooted

even further back in time in German Jewish women's organizations called *Frauenvereine*.²² Perhaps the earliest institutionalization of Jewish-American women's benevolent work was the 1819 founding of the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society in Philadelphia by Rebecca Gratz and other members of the Mickve Israel Congregation. Many of these same women would later create a Hebrew Sunday School and institutions for Jewish orphans.²³

The large display of women's work at the 1893 Columbian Exposition inspired Jewish-American women, many from the Reform movement, to found their own national organization, the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW). However, while NCJW sought to unite all Jewish-American women, disputes—such as whether to observe Sabbath on Sunday and how to allocate funds—troubled it from early on. The women who founded local sisterhoods and joined NFTS sought a more explicitly religious organization, focused on Jewish observance more so than were other women's organizations such as "Sisterhoods of Personal Service" (a Jewish social welfare organization) and NCJW.²⁴ When NFTS was federated in 1913, the decision to use the term "sisterhood" over "auxiliary," "sewing club," "social club," or a variety of other terms was deliberate. "It was a modern term that resonated simultaneously with the political themes of the women's emancipation movement and the spirit of social activism that characterized the Progressive Era."²⁵ From the perspective of NFTS members, their organization was a much-needed alternative to NCJW, but at the same time they were conscious that they should "neither disturb nor duplicate' other Jewish women's societies."²⁶ In many ways, NFTS drew on the American tendency to express religiosity through organizations, but the members of NFTS saw it as a counter to those who substituted social service for religion.²⁷ Gary P. Zola argues that rabbis committed to classical Reform Judaism helped introduce to women the idea of ameliorating society through work in social justice; thus this type of work became the task of Reform Judaism.²⁸

Through organizations in the United States, Jewish women established themselves early on as essential to synagogue and communal life. New organizations addressed the social position of Jewish women in America, who saw not only other Jewish groups as allies and models for public action but Protestant women's groups as well—clubs such as the Young Women's Christian Association and the Woman's Christian Temperance

Union, whose exclusively Christian nature precluded Jewish women's membership.²⁹ Women's organizations became central to American religiosity in the early twentieth century, and both Jewish organizations (including NFTS, NCJW, Pioneer Women, Spanish and Portuguese Sisterhood, and Women's International Zionist Organization) and other religious or nonreligious groups (e.g. Hull House, Settlement House, and other Progressive organizations) proliferated. These institutions were not in the home—they were part of Jewish and American public life—yet women entered institutional life through rhetoric about maternalism and the home.³⁰

In 1913, women from congregations within the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC, now the Union for Reform Judaism [URJ]) formed NFTS (today known as Women of Reform Judaism [WRJ]). This united many sisterhoods that predated the federation and that would at times express skepticism about the benefits of a national organization. American Reform Jewish women and men who created NFTS saw its constituent sisterhoods and members' acts of caring for the synagogue community as part of feminine norms of spirituality. Such practices included purchasing and using ritual objects, raising funds for HUC, supporting religious education, celebrating new traditions such as Mother's Day as a fulfillment of Jewish values, contributing to and patronizing a Reform Union Museum, and producing Jewish art calendars. These are the practices I focus on in this study to see the creative ways women reworked their roles in Reform Judaism to construct new spaces in which they could be authoritative.

By participating in a broader American social movement to reconceive the place of women in religion and the public sphere, NFTS provided a bridge between women and positions of Jewish authority. This was true even as the women initially hesitated to formally challenge men's traditional roles of authority. Rabbis such as David Philipson and George Zepin supported Reform Jewish women in creating a federation of sisterhoods focused on explicitly religious concerns. By creating an overarching NFTS, "sisterhood women sought influence over their own religious lives."³¹ NFTS women may have seen their roles rooted in Jewish traditions, but when arguing for women's representation—such as the institutionalization of women's suffrage—they turned to broader American social contexts to articulate the call for change.³²

NFTS chose to establish itself as an auxiliary organization to the UAHC. At its founding men and women argued for the contributions of women through their traditional, gendered roles in the home. Mrs. Israel Cohen emphasized the integral role of women in modernization, arguing that, “our city [Chicago] is but a replica of what the forces in every hamlet are striving to extract from the cauldron of modern agitation. Need I assure you that the women form no inconsiderable part of these forces?... [T]hey have induced changes in education, politics and society.”³³ Simon Wolf from the UAHC lauded the sisterhood, saying, “It is conceded that the women of our country are the dominant factors in the development and uplift of religious life.... Religious education and home training are the fundamental principles of good citizenship.”³⁴ NFTS was thus a link between home and synagogue. While motherhood and home life served as foundational values for women in Reform Judaism, NFTS quickly institutionalized new committees and practices that linked the public and home practices of its members.

NFTS projects such as the art calendars allowed for new spaces and forms of authority for women without challenging men’s roles within Reform Judaism. NFTS’s National Committee on Religion chose the images, oversaw the printing, and distributed the calendars for sale. The Committee on Religion sold calendars to individual sisterhoods at wholesale cost (10 cents in 1915), and each sisterhood was responsible for selling its calendars at a requested price (25 cents in 1915). The sale of the calendars for two and a half times the wholesale price allowed each sisterhood to use the calendars as a fundraiser. While local sisterhoods could decide how to use the money, NFTS’s National Committee on Hebrew Union Scholarships helped direct how funds could be used: for local sisterhoods’ discretionary needs but also as “an additional source of revenue to make up for the 25 cents per capita abstracted for the Scholarship Fund”—the minimum required.³⁵ By raising funds for the seminary, NFTS members showed their commitment to men’s training and the rabbinate; at the same time, they established a position of power for themselves by being in charge of every aspect of the calendars. Advertisements for the calendars emphasized their importance in marking domestic space as Jewish and as the specific realm of Jewish mothers. But although the calendars raised funds for contemporary American rabbis, images of the rabbis are conspicuously absent in the stories told through the artwork of the calendars.

Claiming Biblical History in Visual Culture: The First Jewish Art Calendars

As part of its influence on the Reform movement, NFTS established a visual culture that signified the organization's Jewish identity by presenting—and thereby transforming—the scenes of Palestine according to the worldview of NFTS members. Central to the development of that visual culture, beginning in 5674/1913–1914 and continuing throughout the twentieth century, NFTS printed and distributed calendars that featured depictions of Jewish prophets and life in Palestine. Many of the images in the early-twentieth-century calendars were of Jewish art produced and distributed by Zionists, especially those influenced by the concepts of Ahad Ha'am, the Hebrew essayist known as the founder of cultural Zionism. The work of Herman Struck and his students at the Bezalel School, the Zionist art institute established in Jerusalem in the early twentieth century, was well represented; several of those images were collected specifically for an exhibition of Jewish artwork at the Fifth Zionist Congress in 1901.³⁶ Such artwork was reprinted and circulated, much of it becoming iconic throughout Europe, the United States,



Image 2: From the Sistine Chapel.

and Palestine. As members of movements outside of Zionism, such as NFTS, constructed visual culture in concert with their identities, they used many of the same images circulated by Zionists, but they adapted them according to their worldviews and movements.

Early NFTS visual culture depicted biblical life, playing with the tension of sharing such images with Christians. For the 5676/1915–1916 calendar, NFTS chose the theme, “The Prophets of Israel.” The cover and calendar pages from that issue depict paintings of Isaiah, Joel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Zachariah drawn from the Sistine Chapel—images that were originally produced for Christian contexts (image 2). These images of ancestral life in Palestine demonstrate comfort in borrowing visual culture from Christians—that they were not Jewishly produced pictures speaks to the unique relationship in America between Jews and non-Jews. Even though the artwork was European, the combined images in NFTS visual culture as well as the interest in making that culture available for mass consumption were American impulses, shared between Jews and non-Jews. As their Christian neighbors produced material that reflected their religions, NFTS art calendars helped create a material Judaism that drew on “European impulses that spread to America”: sentimentalism and romanticism, which “understand faith as an element of feeling rather than rationality”; devotional emotionalism at home, where the calendars would mark space as “Jewish” and thus “sacred”; and industrialization, which facilitated the inexpensive availability of material goods.³⁷

Using Michelangelo’s artwork established a cultural realm for NFTS members vis-à-vis their Christian American neighbors in two distinct ways: (1) it demonstrated commonality through their shared values of art and consumption, and (2) it maintained boundaries by making polemical claims about the function of prophets in Jewish tradition and theology. The prophets are not themes or figures from Christian art that have been reworked by Jewish artists; they are exact reproductions of explicitly Christian artwork that indicate an exchange of symbols and meanings on a Jewish–Christian American middle ground. But printing images of the Sistine Chapel in the Jewish art calendar suggests these images rightly belong to Jewish tradition. They did not even need to be reworked to be properly Jewish; the original images assert the centrality of the prophets in both Jewish history and in Jewish understandings of prophecy over Christianity’s claims.

The 5674/1913–1914 calendar suggests just such a reclamation of Moses. One of its pages features Michelangelo’s sculpture of Moses from the Church of Saint Peter in Chains in Rome with the explanation that the artwork is “illustrative of Shabuoth.”³⁸ While both Jews and Christians understood Moses to have received the law on Mount Sinai, Michelangelo or his Christian viewers would not have had the Jewish holiday of Shavuot in mind. Thus this altered the meanings of both Jewish and Christian culture. The very means of acculturating—of becoming like their surrounding neighbors—was also a means of speaking back to that culture and of creating boundaries between Jews and Christians. Ivan Marcus argues that cultural exchange, shared customs, and polemics were critical aspects of premodern inward acculturation but disappeared with the greater tendency to assimilate in modern contexts when Jews were granted full citizenship. However, the visual culture of NFTS suggests that these complex modes of acculturation characterize both premodern and modern Jewish practice.³⁹



Image 3: *Jochebed*.

For example, NFTS presented figures such as Moses’ mother Jochebed (image 3) in an effort to counter assimilation. Whereas Christianity connected Jesus’ mother Mary to the idealization of motherhood, NFTS found a Jewish alternative in Jochebed to depict maternal love. The importance of establishing such a Jewish symbol is illustrated by Johanna Kohler’s “Report of the National Committee on Union Museum”—a vehicle for requesting sisterhoods to donate funds—in which she directly invokes the intentions to commission artwork from Boris Schatz’s Bezalel School in Palestine for display in the Union Museum and synagogues:

Mr. Schatz has had in mind for a long time an idea for a piece of sculpture which will portray Jewish Motherhood with all the depth of maternal love which is characteristic of the Jewish woman. This work would, in a measure, offset the popular conception of ideal Motherhood as depicted by Christian artists in the representation of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

The artist believes that maternal love might be typified in the person of 'Jochebed,' the mother of Moses, and that the group of sculpture might show Jochebed at the moment of supreme sacrifice, when she is bidding farewell to the infant Moses.⁴⁰

By supporting Schatz, Kohler supported the representation of the values of motherhood that had been foundational for NFTS. Kohler and Schatz asserted through Jochebed that motherhood was at least as central to Judaism as it was to Christianity. Like the prophets and Moses himself, Jochebed was a figure that Judaism and Christianity share. The place of Jochebed in traditional Judaism serves to emphasize her as a symbol for Jewish women. But the prominence in American national consciousness of the Exodus story in general and Moses specifically, whose story begins with Jochebed's resistance against the orders of Pharaoh, may also have helped to elevate Jochebed as a symbol for Kohler and Schatz.⁴¹ If Jochebed was revered as an excellent mother and a symbol of Jewish women, then Jewish-American women could see their potential as virtuous mothers as rooted biblically and equal to their Christian neighbors. Further, although Schatz and Kohler selected Jochebed as an alternative to Christian symbols of motherhood, Kohler's suggestion that Schatz's artwork would depict Jochebed at a moment of "supreme sacrifice" of her child for the good of Israel seems to draw polemically on language typically used by Christians to portray Jesus, Mary, or God the Father.

The substitution of Jochebed for Mary does more than solely adapt Christian symbols by Judaizing them; it inserts Jewish symbols into American culture. In their embrace by NFTS, Jochebed and Moses became a part of American sensitivity designed as a corollary and alternative to Jesus and Mary. Jochebed and Moses were always a part of the symbolic repertoire of Jewish tradition, but Jochebed, especially, was a more marginalized figure in the past. Moses and Jochebed's significance was heightened beyond tradition through this injection into American culture insofar as Moses became a kind of Jewish Jesus and Jochebed, a Jewish Mary.



Image 4: Artwork of Eduard Bendoric.



Image 5: By the Waters of Babylon.



Image 6: *The Scribe* and *Midnight Prayer*.



Image 7: Boris Schatz.

Internalizing the Jewish Past, 1924–1935

A decade later, in 5685/1924–1925, the calendar focused solely on the story of Jeremiah, through the work of German artist Eduard Bendemann. Bendemann, who converted from Judaism to Christianity, had his work exhibited at the Fifth Zionist Congress in 1901. He produced *The Mourning Jews in Exile* in 1831, before his conversion, and *Jeremiah on the Ruins of Jerusalem* later that decade, after his conversion. His work thus predated Zionism and did not articulate a hope for a Jewish return to the land that the Zionist movement would later seek in connection with a revitalization of Jewish culture. Yet he struggled with the same questions of emancipation and equality to which NFTS and the Zionist movement responded.⁴² Although the calendar begins with Jeremiah being called to prophecy, a later image—that of Jerusalem’s destruction—becomes even more central (image 4). The final image actually takes place outside of Palestine (image 5). Psalm 137 in German frames the image: “By the waters of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.”⁴³ Marked by Bendemann’s German translation rather than the quote in Hebrew, this image subtly links the American Reform Jewish community to German heritage and invokes Germany as a place of high culture. Thus it reminds viewers of Zion while also referencing the progress that the Jewish community has made from this moment in time, suggesting American Reform Jews internalized the best of Jewish heritage, from antiquity to the modern Enlightenment and the Reform movement.

Not all of the calendars produced during the pre-state period depict images of Palestine, though Palestine played a new role for artists who traveled, studied, and occasionally relocated there. Biblical stories from outside of the land were portrayed, as well as other images associated with Judaism, such as photographs of plaques of *The Scribe* and *Midnight Prayer* from the 5690/1929–1930 calendar (image 6). That year’s calendar introduces a change in the format as well. Previous calendars were more than twice the size of this one and most likely designed for display on the walls of the home. This calendar, with its cork backing, seems better suited for desk use, though I have not found any first-hand reports of sisterhood members on their own calendar use. Along with the differences in format and artistic subject matter, this calendar

invokes Palestine in a new way—not obvious in the images themselves but in the lives of the artists. It presents the artwork of Schatz, who was born in Lithuania and moved to Jerusalem to found the Bezalel Art School (image 7). The school played a significant role in the Zionist movement, but NFTS presents his biography and artwork within its own worldview, which does not conform to Zionist ideological or political claims. Though it is not explained in the calendar, he also designed plaques for HUC and several Reform synagogues, thus establishing a tie among contemporary Palestine, American Jewish communities, and a developing visual culture outside of the calendar that would have been familiar to the women of NFTS.

Over the next five years, the calendars continued a similar pattern. They maintained a smaller format and eventually became similar to today's planners, a format that NFTS continued to use through the end of the twentieth century. Members could carry their calendars wherever they went, marking all of their organizational duties—at home and away—as Jewish and modern. In these later calendars, as in the Schultz calendar, NFTS selected artists born in Central or Eastern Europe, and their biographies describe immigration or travel to Palestine, along with art exhibitions there, as evidence of their excellence. Sometimes these calendars include contemporary images of Palestine (image 8). The pattern of invoking Palestine through images in the calendars, the biography of artists, or both, along with the birth and travel of artists in Eastern Europe, suggest a simultaneous connection to and distance from Eastern Europe and Palestine that may subtly indicate the supersession of America as the future of Judaism. Gazing upon scenes of the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile to Babylon could have assured viewers of the progress of Jewish-American history apart from Jewish national life. The romantic and Orientalist nature of these later calendars evoke both Palestine and Eastern Europe as evidence of grand Jewish pasts that had come to an end. Just as Jewish artists and their artwork moved from Eastern Europe and Palestine to America, the calendars imply, so did the center of Jewish religious practice.

This sense of “Americanness” that NFTS constructed was very similar to that created by its Protestant-American counterparts. American Protestants’ understanding of their religious and national identities was heavily influenced by images of Catholic European life. Artwork

and photos of Europe as well as travel literature became popular in nineteenth-century American Protestant culture. As Protestants viewed this material culture, they “othered” Catholicism by experiencing it through images of Europe that treated Catholic sites as museums and tourist attractions—relics of Christianity’s past rather than sacred spaces tied to the continuing dynamics of American or European Catholicism. By internalizing these images, Protestants learned about Christianity by gleaning the best of Catholic culture while avoiding what they considered to be Catholic idolatry and discarding through their geographic and chronological distance any negative aspects of the culture.⁴⁴ Protestants also portrayed Palestine in travel literature, photographs, postcards, and replicas of Jerusalem. As Protestants saw themselves drawing from the best of the Christian past, they also used representations of Palestine to extract the best of ancient Israelite culture to form ideal contemporary Protestant selves.⁴⁵ The Jewish women of NFTS, then, followed a similar path in creating their Americanness, by predominantly viewing Palestine and Europe as communities and cultures eclipsed by American progress. NFTS calendars authorized a construction of Reform Jewish selves juxtaposed to Jewish life in Palestine and Europe. While some positive essence of Judaism might be extracted from those communities, Reform Jewish Americans’ selfhood was stipulated on their ability to avoid the pitfalls (such as idolatry or ritual anachronism) of their “Oriental” and European counterparts.

Explicit Exceptionalism, 1936–1945

The rise of Nazism further entrenched the representation of Jewish life in Europe as surpassed by Jewish vitality in America. The 5697/1936–1937 calendar features artwork of Hella Arensen. Beyond the biography of Arensen in the calendar, the March–April 1936 NFTS newsletter explains that Arensen was “a young German-Jewish artist who is now residing in the United States.” Encouraging NFTS members to purchase a calendar of Arensen’s drawings of European cities as a gift for weddings and other occasions, the newsletter also notes that purchase of the calendar would give Arensen “encouragement and necessary practical assistance” as a refugee in the United States.⁴⁶ In addition to several overt statements of the security Arensen could find in America, the image titled *Old Jewish Quarter* could be taken as a pun: Not only is the

Jewish Quarter “old,” as in well-established for centuries in Germany and other European nations, but it was also already in the past (image 9). Though Arensen painted images of Jewish life from her own experiences, the presentation of these images in the art calendar, along with their description in the newsletter, suggests that Jewish culture in Europe had been eclipsed by Jewish-American culture. The calendar simultaneously reminds users of the success of Jews in America by embodying American values of good taste in material consumption *and* commenting on the struggles of European Jews. Unlike previous calendars, this calendar did not draw on Palestine, but similar viewing practices—treating Europe, like Palestine, as a land of heritage and thus imposing a sense of its anachronism—were applied here as well.

During both world wars, Jewish-Americans used numerous expressions—from public performances of massive pageants to poetry to military service—to show their loyalty and optimism in American values while simultaneously articulating their sense of the relevance of Jewish history.⁴⁷ But nearing the end of World War II, artistic assertions of America’s exceptionalism and NFTS’s commitment to the American nation became even more explicit. No longer implying American triumphalism through the gaze upon representations of Palestine and Europe, a 5705/1944–1945 image explicitly invokes a prayer from the *Union Prayer Book* over America, as represented by the U.S. Capitol Building (image 10). The prayer reads:

Fervently we invoke Thy blessing upon our country and our nation. Guard them, O God, from calamity and injury; suffer not their adversaries to triumph over them, but let the glories of a just, righteous and God-fearing people increase from age to age.

Enlighten with Thy wisdom and sustain with Thy power those whom the people have set in authority, the President, his counselors, and advisers, the judges, law-givers and executives, and all who are entrusted with our safety and with the guardianship of our rights and our liberties.

May peace and good will obtain among all the inhabitants of our land; may religion spread its blessings among us and exalt our nation in righteousness.

The Boy David Sophie Solovitch

1933	MARCH	1933	1933	APRIL	1933	
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	30

Mar. 12—Purim. Mar. 22—New Moon, Nisan, 1.
April 11-17—Passover. April 27—New Moon, Iyar, 1.

MYSTIC GATED

1936	NOVEMBER	1936				
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Nov. 15—New Moon Kislev, 1.
Nov. 23—Fast of Tamara. Nov. 29—New Moon, Ah. 1. (Fast of Ah.)
Dec. 12—New Moon, Elul 1.

GENT ARAB IN DEHRMINE QUARTER - JERUSALEM

1935	NOV	1935				
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

1935	NOV	1935				
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Nov. 15—New Moon Kislev, 1.
Nov. 23—Fast of Tamara.
Nov. 29—New Moon Ah. 1.
Dec. 8—Fast of Ah.
Dec. 20—New Moon Elul, 1.

Image 8: Art and artists of Palestine.

OLD JEWISH QUARTER

1936	NOVEMBER	1936				
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

1936	DECEMBER	1936				
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Nov. 15—New Moon Kislev, 1.
Dec. 9—Hanukkah; 15—New Moon Tebet, 1.

1936	NOVEMBER	1936
SUN.	1	
MON.	2	
TUES.	3	
WED.	4	
THU.	5	
FRI.	6	
SAT.	7	OR. 23-24-25-26

Image 9: Old Jewish Quarter.

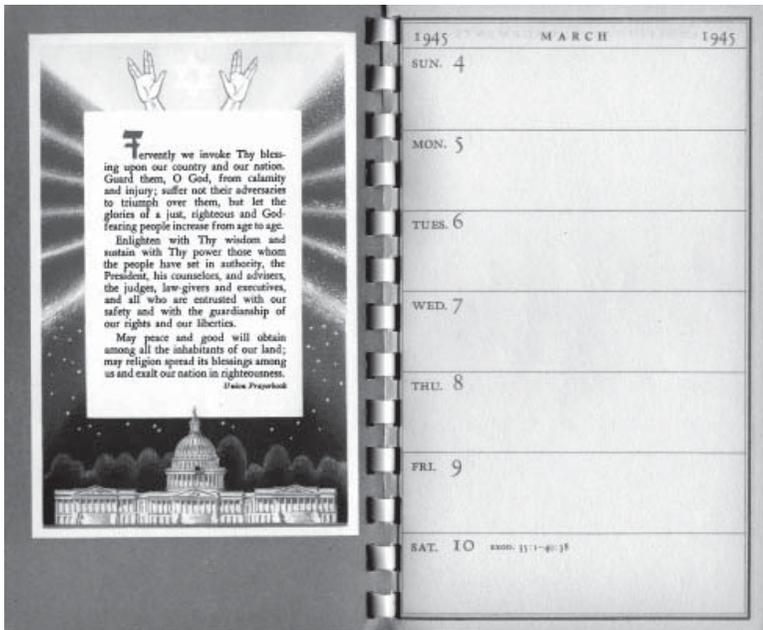


Image 10: “Fervently we invoke Thy blessing upon our country and our nation.”

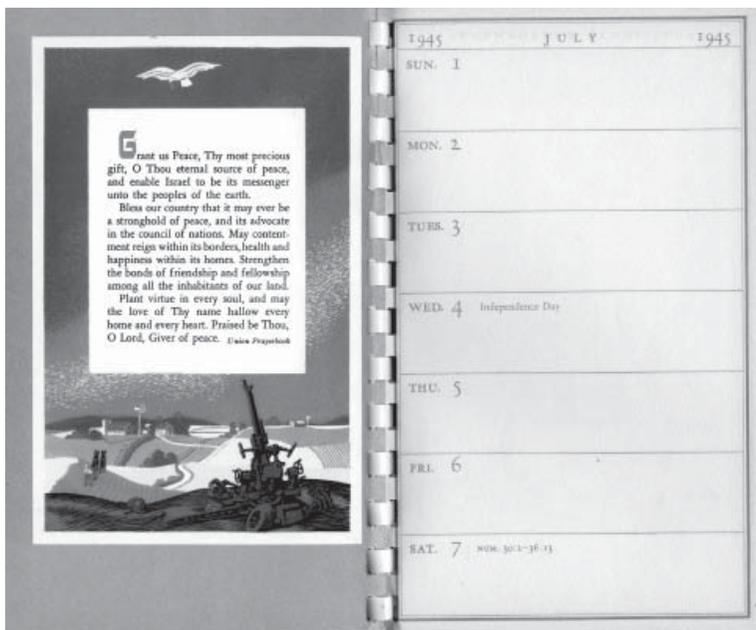


Image 11: “Plant virtue in every soul.”

This prayer dates to the fourteenth century, and various Jewish communities have altered it to suit their context, such as changing from a monarchy to a presidency.⁴⁸ Taken together, this image and prayer assert that, from NFTS's perspective, "our country and our nation" refers definitively to America, not a Jewish nation. It portrays a complete integration of Jewish and American values, ushering in an era when Jews felt more securely at home in America than ever before. The rays of light exuding from the Star of David onto the Capitol Building suggest not only a connection between the two but that the righteousness of Jewish tradition would influence the future of America as well. Channeling Isaiah, the calendar projects a sense that Judaism would be a light unto America, suggesting a reconception of the Jewish covenant. In other words, here "chosenness," or the Jewish mission, appears connected to Jews' ability to join and lead America and a special relationship between Jews and other Americans rather than a more traditional conception of the observation of halakhah and a special relationship between Jews and God.

In the same calendar, another more ambiguous image might leave us with questions over how to understand the nexus among Reform America, and Palestine in NFTS identity (image 11). The text, also attributed to the *Union Prayer Book*, floats on a white block in the center of the sky, hovering over a farm, stating:

Grant us Peace, Thy most precious gift, O Thou eternal source of peace, and enable Israel to be its messenger unto the peoples of the earth.

Bless our country that it may ever be a stronghold of peace, and its advocate in the council of nations. May contentment reign within its borders, health and happiness within its homes. Strengthen the bonds of friendship and fellowship among all the inhabitants of our land.

Plant virtue in every soul, and may the love of Thy name hallow every home and every heart. Praised be Thou, O Lord, Giver of peace.

The text emphasizes the people of Israel as "messengers unto the peoples of the earth," yet this prayer was not as definitively linked to the United States as the previous prayer. A single farmer with two horses tills bright green and yellow farmland in the distance, and a dilapidated piece of

modern farm equipment sits in the foreground. Did the farm equipment represent the failure of modernity? A shadow in the foreground falls over the farm equipment, seemingly indicating the darkness of the future of modern technology and perhaps by extension at least certain conceptions of modernity itself. The sun shines as the farmer works the land himself, however, suggesting the possibility for a bright future. How would members of NFTS have interpreted this within their own community? What would have been the forces of darkness and light? Who would have been the country of reference in the prayer, and where would owners of the calendar have imagined this land to be? The image of the Capitol Building and this prayer assert the identity of the nation referenced by that prayer, but we cannot be certain, unless we take the proximity of the two images within the same calendar to be a hint. This is a nondescript farm that could be anywhere (though the rolling hills and gold suggest wheat fields typical of the American landscape), yet the image evokes a typical hegemonic Zionist style that idealizes a return to the land and the peace and stability that would come with it. A value of the land and the peace it offers is a shared principle between American and Zionist cultures, and the utter absence of any markers is striking. Much Zionist artwork is equally nondescript in its portrayal of the land. Like these images, it features images of farms and farmers who could belong to any agrarian society, and the association of images in Labor Zionist artwork as Jewish, much less Zionist, is only made explicit by a small Star of David and information such as journal and organization titles printed on or around the images.⁴⁹ The inability to determine the location of the farm or the identity of the farmer thus seems to constitute an intentionally open-ended image. Rather than pinning NFTS to a single political ideology, the calendar authorizes various interpretations by allowing viewers to see the image within the context of their own understandings of Jewishness, Americanness, and Zionism. This strategy allows NFTS and Reform by extension to remain a larger umbrella that could encompass competing political views, and it recurs throughout the movement as the political debate over Zionism heightened in the 1940s.

The Debate over Zionism

Although these calendars feature many images of Palestine, none of the images so far explicitly endorses Zionist ideology, including the

romantic farm image discussed above. An exception proves the rule, but even in this case, the strategy of carefully selecting words and images shapes NFTS’s inclusion of Zionist culture as an attempt to leave the organization open to those who may not have embraced Zionism. The 5698/1937–1938 calendar features artwork from Max Pollak, including several etchings that use similar subject matter to earlier calendars, such as *David’s Tower in Jerusalem*, but also an image of a *haluzah* (image 12), or “pioneer.” This is a central image throughout Zionist culture, representing the Zionist pioneers who prepared the land of Israel for Jewish immigration and national life. A viewer would not have to be familiar with this visual trope to know it was a pioneer in Palestine, as the reverse page of the calendar explains that this pioneer girl lived in a collectivist colony in Palestine and was known as a Sabra, the cactus plant for which children born in Palestine were nicknamed. Even though the calendar invokes an image and discourse shared with Zionist culture, the term “Zionism” is never explicitly used in the description. This reflects a strategy for unity within the Reform movement throughout the 1930s,

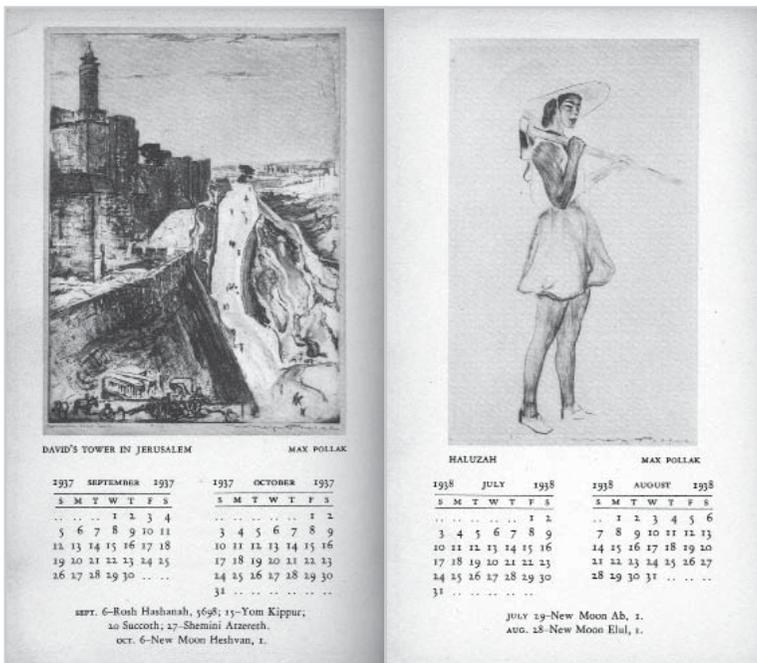


Image 12: Artwork of Max Pollak.

when factions could not agree on whether and how American Reform Jews should support a Jewish state. The strategy is demonstrated in this excerpt from “The Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism,” the 1937 Columbus Platform of the CCAR:

In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life.⁵⁰

This is a marked shift from the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, which explicitly rejected any hope for rebuilding Palestine. Here, the 1937 platform calls Palestine a Jewish *homeland*. Yet it does not endorse Zionism by name nor does it mention Jewish *statehood*. Instead, it emphasizes culture and spirituality, palatable to a broad range of politics and ideologies. Further, the *haluzah* in the 5698/1937–1938 calendar looks quite different from the muscular Jews, men and women, who typically appeared in Zionist publications. A small girl detached from farm scenes, factories, or lives of soldiers, she does not embody any of the typical imagery of Zionist nationalism even as she is linked to life in Palestine as a *haluzah*.⁵¹ We can imagine that even those who supported Jewish settlement in Palestine but not necessarily a Jewish state or hegemonic Zionist ideology could still connect to the image of the *haluzah*. The careful representation of the girl demonstrates that while Reform members were certainly aware of the debates and divisions over Zionism, they also sought ways to hold their movement together and to find images and language that allowed them to maintain a sense of unity despite their disagreements. Despite not emphasizing Zionism by name, however, the 5698/1937–1938 calendar is still markedly different from earlier images that suggest an end to vibrant Jewish life in Palestine. No such claim could be made about this *haluzah*, as her work would obviously take place in the present.

Even so, early-twentieth-century NFTS art calendars largely relied on images that portrayed a grand Jewish past in Palestine, and later in Europe, but implied a greater future for Jews in America. Although NFTS did not take an official position on Zionism and typically eschewed all language—“Zionist,” “non-Zionist,” and “anti-Zionist”—that would

address the issue directly, it did from its first biennial meeting officially support Jewish life in Palestine. It passed a resolution for a “Woman’s Palestinian Day” to raise funds to benefit Jewish pioneers in Palestine.⁵² Yet the resolution does not frame this support as a nationalist cause. No mention is made of aspirations for Jewish statehood; rather, the resolution was passed in the face of the negative impacts of World War I on international Jewish life. The link between NFTS and Palestine revolved around a sense of Jewish community interested in humanitarian relief. This created space for a connection to the people and the land of Palestine without necessarily considering the ideological or political consequences of “Jewish pioneers” in Palestine: not necessarily Jews for or against a certain kind of state, they could simply be perceived as Jews, co-religionists, in need.

In 5711/1950–1951, the calendar linked the significance of Israel for Jewish-American identity more strongly than in the past. The biography of the artist, Elinor Mintz, described her visit to Israel from 1947 until her return to the United States shortly after the establishment of the State of Israel as “the most potent influence on her life to date.” Mintz’s *The Workers’ Village* (image 13), included the caption, “With Immigrant Camps In the Distance: And the legend becomes a reality, after the camps they are building their settlements.” Contrary to the depiction of Israel in the calendars of the early twentieth century, by 1950 NFTS had chosen to closely define itself through images of Jewish



Image 13: *The Workers’ Village*.

settlement in the land of Israel. NFTS members from 1950 might have been able to look back and see how this alignment came out of the patterns and practices throughout the first half of the twentieth century, when calendar images drew on Jewish life in Palestine in various ways, frequently left open the interpretation of images of the land, and always indicated the importance of American patriotism and Jewish-American life regardless of how Palestine was to be understood.

Conclusion

Aside from serving as a space to debate and construct how NFTS members understood Palestine, Europe, and America, the calendars reveal various other concerns with which Palestine and politics were always in tension. Women created sisterhoods as spaces for leadership that did not overtly challenge either legal or cultural structures within Reform Jewish institutions. Women worked in ways that helped them define themselves as Jewish subjects, even if many aspects of Jewish tradition were unavailable to them. Thus their ascension to leadership went hand-in-hand with their turn toward new forms of visual culture that relied on Palestine as a motif. This constructed Palestine not only as a political question or as a space for women in NFTS to inhabit but also as an ideal with which to synthesize their many commitments as Jewish Americans.

Three major changes catapulted visual culture into more central importance for the construction of Reform Jewish-American women's identity: technology, shifting roles of halakhah and Jewish tradition in American Reform Judaism, and the development of new women's organizations. Images may always have been a part of Jewish culture,⁵³ but technological developments in photography and the ability to cheaply reproduce images en masse created a new possibility for the production and circulation of visual culture. Reform's deauthorization of halakhah as *the* practice of Judaism opened up space for alternative ways of embodying and marking one's Jewish life, especially for women. This, along with broader social changes in the United States, influenced the innovations of NFTS in the organization of Reform Jewish communal life.

By using images of Palestine, NFTS created an overt connection to Jewish history while also practicing a form of Jewishness not structured by halakhah. Through distributing and viewing those images, NFTS women

could assert their own vision for American Judaism and create roles for themselves within it, at once drawing from and speaking back to Jewish tradition, American culture, and Zionism. NFTS art calendars were thus part of a process in which sisterhood members inscribed themselves as American and part of broader American narratives without compromising their connection to Jewish history. The production of a visual culture in America through materials such as the art calendars thus proved innovative for Jewish culture and American culture by combining the two. The calendars were tangible evidence that one could be both Jewish *and* American. The increasing centrality of American exceptionalism indicates the comfort that NFTS members felt in asserting that their participation in Judaism not only did not conflict with American citizenship but was, in fact, an affirmation of American values.

Jessica Carr is the Philip and Muriel Berman Scholar of Jewish Studies and an assistant professor in the Religious Studies Department at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania. She is working on a book manuscript on representations of Palestine in Jewish-American visual culture during the first half of the twentieth century.

Notes

¹All of the calendars discussed are available at the Klau Library and The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio.

²Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 33.

³NFTS continued to print calendars throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, but I have confined this study to 1913–1948. The 1950–1951 calendar is discussed on pp. 28–29 as an example of the legacy of the pre-state calendars after the creation of the State of Israel. Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, the land of Palestine (as it was called by Jewish Americans, including Reform Jews) was an especially malleable imaginary space, as it did not yet have an explicit political definition or structure. Reform Jews did not yet have to contend with an officially entrenched national narrative and could even hope to influence the future political structure in Palestine, even as they also sought to shape their place as citizens in the United States.

⁴Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production,” *Museum International* 56, nos. 1–2 (2004): 56.

⁵Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “From Ethnology to Heritage: The Role of the Museum,” in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, ed. Bettina Messias Carbonell (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2012), 199.

⁶John Davis, “Catholic Envy: The Visual Culture of Protestant Desire,” in *The Visual Culture of American Religions*, ed. David Morgan and Salley M. Promey (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 107–128; Jenny Franchot, *Roads to Rome: The Antebellum Protestant Encounter with Catholicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 16–81.

⁷Abraham Geiger and other rabbis began to attempt to institutionalize in the mid-nineteenth century to counter the authority of Orthodoxy. On the question of Palestine, at the Reform Rabbinical Conference at Frankfurt, for example, David Einhorn—who emigrated from Germany to the United States, where he became a key architect of American Reform Judaism—argued, “The concept of the Messiah is closely linked to the entire ceremonial law,” i.e., halakhah, and that therein lay “the cause for all our lamentations over the destruction of the Temple.” However, he asserted that “now our concepts have changed. There is no need any more for an extended ceremonial law.... The decline of Israel’s political independence was at one time deplored, but in reality it was not a misfortune, but a mark of progress.” Samuel Holdheim expressed similar sentiments at the conference, though he noted that not all attendees were in agreement about the compatibility between loyalty to modern nations and the hope for a restoration of Palestine as a Jewish national home. Furthering Einhorn’s argument, Holdheim asserted, “The wish to return to Palestine in order to create there a political empire for those who are still oppressed because of their religion is superfluous. The wish should rather be for a termination of the oppression.” “The Question of Messianism (1845),” in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, 3rd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 207–208.

⁸Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988), vi–xi, 12–13, 17–18, 225–334.

⁹“Declaration of Principles,” The Pittsburgh Platform of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (hereafter CCAR), 1885 Pittsburgh Conference, <http://ccarnet.org/rabbis-speak/platforms/declaration-principles/> (accessed 21 May 2013).

¹⁰Joellyn Wallen Zollman, “Constructing Identity: Gift Shops and the NFTS Campaign for Home Observance,” in *Sisterhood: A Centennial History of Women of Reform Judaism*, ed. Carole B. Balin, Dana Herman, Jonathan D. Sarna, and Gary P. Zola (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2013), 162–163.

¹¹Jenna Weissman Joselit, *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880–1950* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 154, 161.

¹²Zollman, “Constructing Identity,” 159–160, 165, 172.

¹³Joselit, *Wonders of America*, 155–156; Zollman, “Constructing Identity,” 166.

¹⁴Jeffrey Shandler and Beth Wenger, “The Site of Paradise,” in *Encounters with the “Holy Land”: Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture*, ed. Jeffrey Shandler and Beth Wenger (Hanover, PA: National Museum of American Jewish History and the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania through the University Press of New England, 1997), 12–15, 20.

¹⁵For one example, see Reinharz and Raider’s introduction to the section on “*Aliyah*, Social Identities, and Political Changes,” in *American Jewish Women and the Zionist Enterprise*, ed. Shulamit Reinharz and Mark Raider (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2004), 185.

¹⁶Jonathan D. Sarna, “A Projection of America as It Ought to Be: Zion in the Mind’s Eye of American Jews,” in *Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of North American*

Jews, ed. Allon Gal (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), 41–42.

¹⁷Arthur Goren, “Celebrating Zion in America,” in Shandler and Wenger, eds., *Encounters with the “Holy Land,”* 41.

¹⁸Ken Koltun-Fromm, *Material Culture and Jewish Thought in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010); Beth Wenger, *History Lessons: The Creation of American Jewish Heritage* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

¹⁹David Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze: Religious Visual Culture in Theory and Practice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Barbara Metcalf, ed., *Making Muslim Space in North America and Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Leigh Schmidt, *Consumer Rites: The Buying & Selling of American Holidays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

²⁰Paula Hyman, *Gender & Assimilation in Modern Jewish History: The Roles & Presentations of Women* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995); Joselit, *Wonders of America*; Andrew Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption, and the Search for American Identity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

²¹Karla Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery: Finding a Place for Women in American Judaism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 2–37.

²²Pamela S. Nadell and Rita J. Simon, “Ladies of the Sisterhood: Women in the American Reform Synagogue, 1900–1930,” in *Active Voices: Women in Jewish Culture*, ed. Maurie Sacks (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 63–64; Pamela S. Nadell, “‘The Synagog shall hear the Call of the Sister’: Carrie Simon and the Founding of the NFTS,” in *Sisterhood: A Centennial History of Women of Reform Judaism*, 19.

²³Gary P. Zola, “Sisterhood and the American Synagogue: An Introduction,” in *Sisterhood: A Centennial*, 3.

²⁴Nadell, “‘The Synagog,’” 20–23.

²⁵Zola, “Sisterhood,” 6.

²⁶Louis Grossman, “A Federation of Sisterhoods,” *American Israelite* (16 January 1913): 4; Nadell, “‘The Synagog,’” 31.

²⁷Carrie Simon, “Woman’s Influence in the Development of American Judaism,” (29 January 1915): 1ff; cited in Nadell, “‘The Synagog,’” 36.

²⁸Walter Jacob, *The Changing World of Reform Judaism: The Pittsburgh Platform in Retrospect: Papers Presented on the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Pittsburgh Platform* (Pittsburgh: Rodef Shalom Congregation, 1985), 109.

²⁹William Toll, “A Quiet Revolution: Jewish Women’s Clubs and the Widening Female Sphere, 1870–1920,” *American Jewish Archives* 41, no. 1 (1989): 7–8; Nadell, “‘The Synagog,’” 20.

³⁰Toll, “A Quiet Revolution,” 8–9; Mary McCune, *The Whole Wide World, Without Limits: International Relief, Gender Politics, and American Jewish Women, 1893–1930* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005); Melissa Klapper, “‘Those By Whose Sides We Have Labored’: American Jewish Women and the Peace Movement Between the Wars,” *The Journal of American History* 97, no. 3 (2010): 636–658; Nadell, “‘The Synagog,’” 24–25.

³¹Nadell and Simon, “Ladies of the Sisterhood,” 65–67.

- ³²Beth Wenger, “Jewish Women of the Club: The Changing Role of Atlanta’s Jewish Women, 1870–1930,” *American Jewish History* 76 (March 1987): 327; Nadell and Simon, “Ladies of the Sisterhood,” 71.
- ³³Mrs. Israel Cowen, “Address of Welcome,” 19 January 1915, 45, *Proceedings of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods*, Women of Reform Judaism Papers, MS-73, Box A-1, Vol. 1, AJA.
- ³⁴Remarks of Hon. Simon Wolf, 21 January 1913, 21, *Proceedings of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods*, MS-73, Box A-1, Vol. 1, AJA.
- ³⁵Report of the National Committee on Hebrew Union Scholarships, 19 January 1915, 70, *Proceedings of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods*, MS-73, Box A-1, Vol. 1, AJA.
- ³⁶Kalman P. Bland, *The Artless Jew: Medieval and Modern Affirmations and Denials of the Visual* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3–12, 50–54, 59–60.
- ³⁷McDannell, *Material Christianity*, 4–6, 68; Catherine Albanese, *A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 4–17.
- ³⁸Report of the National Committee on Religion, 19 January 1915, 61, *Proceedings of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods*, MS-73, Box A-1, Vol.1, AJA.
- ³⁹Ivan Marcus, *The Jewish Life Cycle: Rites of Passage from Biblical to Modern Times* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 5–9, 51.
- ⁴⁰Report of the National Committee on Union Museum, 31 October 1919, 28, *Proceedings of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods*, MS-73, Box A-1, Vol. 1, AJA.
- ⁴¹Bruce Feiler, *America’s Prophet: Moses and the American Story* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009).
- ⁴²Gilya Gerda Schmidt, *The Art and Artists of the Fifth Zionist Congress, 1901: Heralds of a New Age* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 33–38.
- ⁴³“An den Wassern zu Babylon saßen wir und weinen, wenn wir an Zion gedachten.”
- ⁴⁴Franchot, *Roads to Rome*, 34, 57–67, 81.
- ⁴⁵Burke Long, *Imagining the Holy Land: Maps, Models, and Fantasy Travels* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), see especially 33, 69, 158–160.
- ⁴⁶“Art Calendar for 5697: Drawings by Hella Arensen,” (Cincinnati: National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, 1936); and “Refugee’s Art Work in New Calendar,” *Topics and Trends* (March–April 1936): 3, MS-73, Box 69, Folder 2, AJA.
- ⁴⁷Wenger, *History Lessons*, 58–95; Lauren Love, “Performing Jewish Nationhood: *The Romance of a People* at the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair,” *TDR: The Drama Review* 55, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 57–67.
- ⁴⁸Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1993), 26–28.
- ⁴⁹Mark A. Raider, *The Emergence of American Zionism* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 60.
- ⁵⁰Howard Greenstein, *Turning Point: Zionism and Reform Judaism* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 24–30; 1937 Columbus Platform, CCAR, <http://ccarnet.org/rabbis-speak/platforms/guiding-principles-reform-judaism/> (accessed 21 May 2013).
- ⁵¹On Zionism and masculinity, see Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality*

and the Invention of the Jewish Man (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 271–312; David Biale, *Eros and the Jews: From Biblical Israel to Contemporary America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 176–203; Hyman, *Gender & Assimilation*, 134–169.

⁵²Mrs. Julian Rosenwald, “Woman’s Palestinian Day,” Chicago 1915. *Proceedings of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods*, Volume I, 1913–1923 (1923): 73.

⁵³Bland, *The Artless Jew*, 3–14, 59–60.