

## Train Up a Child: On the *Maskilic* Attempt to Change the Habitus of Jewish Children and Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

Members of the Jewish Enlightenment movement and Jewish financial entrepreneurs undertook an active, conscious project to effect significant transformations in the Jewish habitus in German-speaking areas during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. A symbiotic relationship allowed these groups to disseminate a new vision of Jewish society through multiple mediums including, as this article examines in particular, a new Jewish educational system and new educational texts written for children and young adults. With guidelines on daily practices including personal hygiene, dress, language, leisure, and interactions with one's surroundings, these texts reached not only their intended audience but the parents' generation as well. What should one do after getting up in the morning? Should one wash, and, if so, when? How should one behave at the table? How should one dress, or employ one's leisure time? These and others are among the daily practices that organize a person's life. They are not spontaneous actions; rather, they derive from social norms and cultural codes that characterize a particular social group and distinguish it from others. To put it another way: they comprise the habitus of a specific individual and the social group to which he or she belongs. This article examines for the first time the changes in the Jewish habitus that resulted from significant transformations within Jewish society in German-speaking areas during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and the active role played by a new Jewish educational system therein. Changes of this sort are generally inconspicuous and latent; this article, however, points to an intentional and marked effort toward transforming the Jewish habitus via the active help of the educational system made by two key groups: members of the Jewish Enlightenment movement (*Maskilim*), and the Jewish financial elite of the time. It examines the realities and motivations that spurred both groups to action, the synergistic relationship that existed between them, and the methods each employed.

### Habitus and change

During the decades surrounding the turn of the 19th century, Jewish society in the German-speaking sphere underwent an important social transformation that reshaped it completely (Bodian, 1984; Feiner, 2004; Katz, 1973;

Lässig, 2004; Lowenstein, 2005; Toury, 1972). Changes that had appeared as early as the beginning of the 18th century, initially among parts of the Jewish economic elite (Schochat, 1956, 1960), began to permeate larger circles of middle-class Jews until they characterized many strata of Jewish society, especially Jewish city-dwellers.

The concept of *habitus* was developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1984, pp. 171–175), building on the work of Norbert Elias (2000).<sup>1</sup> It refers to preexisting dispositions that provide both visible and hidden guidelines for the daily practices that organize a person's life: how one behaves, what one wears or eats or reads, which preexisting formulas one uses in everyday and professional interactions, and what one's personal space looks like. This set of implicit behavioral codes, which determines individual conduct within a certain group, also plays a role in distinguishing a given individual and a given social group from other individuals and groups. What makes the efforts to construct a new Jewish habitus by the members (*Maskilim*) of the Jewish Enlightenment movement (the *Haskalah*) so interesting is how explicit their guidelines were. Normally, the set of behavioral codes that determines a given habitus is a *doxa*—in other words, it is taken for granted in any particular society (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164) and hence need not explicitly be formulated. The case of the *Haskalah* is of special interest, because it involves the introduction of explicit instructions for a new habitus consisting of new behavioral codes.

The discussion of the introduction of a new habitus into Jewish society has three focal points:

- The historical, economic, and social circumstances that led to the emergence of a new Jewish habitus, including the motivations behind the willingness of the Jewish financial elite to support and fund the education projects of the *Maskilim*.
- A description of the behavioral guidelines issued by the *Maskilim*, which were provided in their texts for children and young adults.
- An attempt to identify some of the sources from which these behavioral guidelines were adopted.

Before I turn to these focal points, I would like to make a general remark concerning the notion of change. A change in a cultural model does not imply changes to all its components. In fact, it usually suffices to introduce change into several components—even only a few—in order to make an old model new (Shavit, 1989). Thus a new model may resemble its predecessor to a large extent, being composed of many old components alongside those that

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<sup>1</sup>On Norbert Elias' influence on Pierre Bourdieu, see Algazi (2002); Sela-Sheffy (1997).

have been replaced; and only a few new elements need exist in order to create innovation.

### **Jewish entrepreneurs as actors for cultural change**

I argue that the creation of a new Jewish habitus became possible because of the successful convergence of interests and programs of two groups in Jewish society: members (*Maskilim*) of the Jewish Enlightenment movement (the *Haskalah*),<sup>2</sup> and members of the Jewish financial elite. Miriam Bodian (1984), in a fascinating study, refers to the latter group as “entrepreneurs”; and in fact that label applies as well to the *Maskilim*, who functioned as cultural entrepreneurs. Both groups shared, to some extent, a similar and innovative vision for Jewish society; both undertook projects and concrete steps to realize that vision. Cooperation between the two derived from their shared desire to bring about deep change, not only in the Jews’ *Weltanschauung* but also in their lifestyle and everyday practices.

The interests of these two groups furthermore converged with those of high-ranking officials in the absolute monarchy of Prussia, which had introduced economic and social changes initiated by Frederick the Great as a result of his strict policy of imposing mercantilism (Toury, 1972). As is well known, Frederick the Great’s mercantilism encouraged the entrance of Jews and other foreigners (such as the Huguenots) into the Prussian economic system. This, among others factors, made possible the emergence of a new Jewish financial elite.

Most of these Jewish entrepreneurs sought, at least at first, both to preserve their Jewish identity and to be able to remain an integral part of their (Jewish) communities while they advanced in and adapted to the broader Prussian society. Their financial means afforded them great influence over Jewish society, and they used it to introduce change into the lifestyles of community members in order to minimize their own sense of alienation from their fellow Jews and more easily to feel at home among them. In this way they hoped to be able to live in harmony in both Jewish and non-Jewish milieus. They believed that the *Maskilim* could act as social agents for the transformation they sought to bring about—and in fact they were correct in that belief.

Jewish entrepreneurs introduced change in two ways: through the personal example they set in their own lifestyle, and through the *Maskilic* program, which endeavored to introduce, disseminate, and inculcate social change by means of its projects, and especially its educational projects.

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<sup>2</sup>On the nature and the importance of the *Haskalah* movement, see the seminal works by Yaacov Katz (1973) and Shmuel Feiner (2004); especially Katz’s “The image of the future,” pp. 57–79.

There existed a clear division of labor between the entrepreneurs and the *Maskilim*: the latter were responsible for the ideological program, and the former had the means to fulfill it by financing projects aimed at spreading and inculcating the scheme in Jewish society. The financial entrepreneurs helped the *Maskilim* to realize several cultural projects, most of which highlighted the program in the public sphere. One such project was the establishment of a new network of schools (Eliav, 1960) where new daily practices were taught to the younger generation. Children and young adults were expected to internalize these new practices and apply them in organizing and conducting their lives (Lowenstein, 1994, pp. 43–54). It was these new customs that became the foundation of the new Jewish habitus, and they were taught in maskilic schools through educational texts geared toward that purpose, as we will see in detail further on.

The financial entrepreneurs also supported the publication of numerous other texts that disseminated the ideas and ideals of the *Haskalah* movement. Among these were flyers, occasional poems, essays, and sermons, and above all books and periodicals. In addition they supported a variety of social organizations, such as *Chevrat dorshei leshon ever* (The Society of Friends of the Hebrew Language), which was founded in Königsberg in 1782 (Feiner, 2004, pp. 79, 81), and *Chevrat shoharei ha-tov veba-tushiyah* (The Society for the Promotion of Goodness and Justice), which was founded in Berlin in 1787. These social organizations provided a social environment for the *Maskilim* in which their habitus was the norm, and furthermore disseminated the publications of the *Haskalah* movement; the latter organization, for example, published *Ha-me'asef*, the leading organ of the *Haskalah*.

If the efforts of the *Haskalah* movement had culminated only in the publication of written texts—texts whose direct influence and effectiveness might be questioned—the story of that movement might have been remembered as a failed attempt to reform Jewish society. But here we have a different story—one in which ideology and written texts were accompanied by a social program that aimed to instill new practices, that was underwritten by a group of entrepreneurs with financial means, that challenged the authority of the rabbinical elite, and that offered Jews a full-fledged alternative to that authority. It was, I contend, the combination of these two factors that led to the changes the movement envisioned.

Nonetheless, I argue that, most Jews were exposed to the *Haskalah* project not through its official organizations or through its written organs, which they often experienced only second- or third-hand, but through familiarity with the lifestyle and everyday behavior of both the *Maskilim* and the Jewish financial elite—in other words, with their new habitus. This habitus created a new type of Jew who would serve as a model for larger circles of Jews, far beyond the narrow worlds of the entrepreneurs and the *Maskilim*.

When we examine portraits of members of the *Haskalah* movement and of the financial elite, for example, it is impossible not to notice elements of their new habitus with regard to dress and hair style. They pose for the artist in a manner expressing self-confidence and self-esteem; several wear 18th-century wigs. We need only compare these portraits to depictions of Jewish peddlers or Jewish villagers (Rowlandson, 1975, in Ruvens, 1954, No. 1491), taking into account, of course, their stereotypical representations, to understand the enormous difference between the appearance of the traditional Jew and that of the new Jew. Furthermore, a comparison of images of *Maskilim* or of the Jewish financial elite on the one hand with images of the German bourgeoisie on the other reveals clear similarities between those social realms.

Consider, for instance, the portrait of Isaac Daniel Itzig, a wealthy Jewish entrepreneur (D'Arbes, 1787). Nothing in Itzig's appearance discloses his ethnic identity as a Jew. What we see is that he has adopted practices common in 18th-century Germany: his face is clean-shaven and he sports a short wig with an arrangement of "side curls"—"sausage curls," if you will (Lowenstein, 1994, p. 45)—fashionable among the German bourgeoisie of the time. His clothing, too—a blue velvet jacket—is the costume of the German upper middle class. His appearance overall reveals his wealth and his attachment to the higher bourgeoisie. This is also true of the portraits of Dr. Elieser Marcus Bloch<sup>3</sup> and Dr. Marcus Herz,<sup>4</sup> who each wear a plaited wig and a fashionable jacket over a shirt with ruffles, or of Naphtali Herz Wessely.<sup>5</sup>

Yet these Jewish entrepreneurs still maintained ties to their Jewish backgrounds and to Jewish society; unwilling or unable to leave it behind entirely, they sought to bring the Jewish world closer to their own and to ease the way for future generations to integrate within the broader Prussian society. They found an ally for these goals in the *Maskilim*.

## Traditional Jews within a new habitus

In 1833, Michael Benedict Lessing published a description of (likely urban) Jewish society in the German-speaking sphere. He noted particularly the "tremendous change" he observed:

[...] Let us take a hard look at some of these individuals; let us consider the tremendous change that has taken place in the language, dress, way of life, needs and leisure activities, customs and habits of the Jews! [...] Their appearance—how much it has changed. Who would not have noticed Jews immediately by their cumbersome Eastern dress, their large, dark caftan, their fur hat weighing down

<sup>3</sup>The portrait of Dr. Elieser Marcus Bloch was retrieved from ([http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marcus\\_Elieser\\_Bloch.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marcus_Elieser_Bloch.jpg)).

<sup>4</sup>The portrait of Dr. Marcus Herz was retrieved from ([http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Markus\\_herz.JPG](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Markus_herz.JPG)).

<sup>5</sup>The portrait of Naphtali Herz Wessely was retrieved from ([http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Naphtali\\_Herz\\_Wessely.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Naphtali_Herz_Wessely.jpg)).

the forehead, their slippers and their beard disfiguring the face? Who would not immediately have noticed a Jewish matron by her silver-embroidered cap, her stern-looking face, lacking any ornament? And how many Jews still look like that today, except for those remnants of the past or those coming from Poland? How carefully they once adhered to the pettiest customs, and who would have ventured even thirty years ago to open his shop on a Saturday, or engage in business, or write, or travel? [...] Would one have seen them thirty years ago in inns and restaurants sitting next to Christian guests, chatting with them freely, eating the same food, drinking the same drinks? [...] When comparing the records of Christian schools from the last 30 years of the previous century and the first third of ours, one cannot fail to notice that back then a Jewish boy among Christian students was as rare as a white raven, whereas nowadays Christian schools in every city accept almost all the children of the Jewish inhabitants, especially in the higher grades. [...] Only in a few households is the Jewish dialect still used, and only by the elderly, whereas children, above all children in the great cities, speak at home and outside their home the same language as their fellow Christian citizens [...] Hundreds of thousands of people can still testify to the once absolute absence of Jews from concerts, parties, balls, public festivities, [...] in coffee shops and in the offices of the exchange market; they can testify as to whether they ever used to show any interest in daily newspapers [...]; whether they had ever then met Jews equal to their Christian peers in manners and knowledge, met a Jew in the theatre, music hall, or art exhibitions, [...] whether they had ever encountered Jews in scientific and other educated circles, or whether Christian scholars and statesmen would frequent the salons of a Jewish lady? (Lessing, 1833, pp. 129–132; cited partially in translation into Hebrew by Toury, 1972, p. 81)<sup>6</sup>

Lessing's description points to the very aspects of daily life where a transformation began to take place in Jewish society during the last decades of the 18th century and gradually permeated large segments of it in the decades after. He demonstrates the changes that arose in their interactions with non-Jewish surroundings and in their external appearance and language, the degree to which they observed Jewish law (mainly in regard to Jewish dietary laws and the Sabbath), their patterns of leisure-time activity (attending concerts, expositions, and the theater), their reading habits, and their social manners.

This collective portrait indicates that the economic entrepreneurs and the *Maskilim* borrowed from the surrounding society with respect not only to external appearances but also to daily customs. Just how different these were from the practices of traditional Jews several decades before Lessing's description of Jewish society, and how foreign and strange they appeared to traditional Jews, is evident in the reaction of the future philosopher Shlomo Maimon at his first visit to the home of Moses Mendelssohn in Berlin, probably in 1779:

He [Mendelssohn] invited me to visit him, and I accepted his invitation. But I was so shy, the manners and customs of the Berliners were so new to me, it was not

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<sup>6</sup>Unless otherwise noted, translations of quotations of Hebrew and German citations are mine.

without fear and embarrassment, that I ventured to enter a fashionable house. When therefore I opened Mendelssohn's door, and saw him and other gentlefolk who were there, as well as the beautiful rooms and elegant furniture, I shrank back, closed the door again, and had a mind not to go in. (Maimon, 1792–1793/2001, p. 215, translated from the German by J. C. Murray)

It is interesting to point to the elements that made Maimon feel out of place: not only the “beautiful rooms and elegant furniture,” but also the way in which the people there mingled. It is clear that Maimon felt he was unfamiliar with the unwritten norms and formulas underlying that interaction.

If the *Haskalah* movement indeed fomented a revolution, this was where it occurred. “The implications of this revolution, which took place in Europe from the eighteenth century, were truly remarkable,” writes Shmuel Feiner (2004, p. 2), a scholar of the *Haskalah*. Whether it was a revolution or a gradual change, as another scholar, Elchanan Reiner (2007) claims, it cannot be disputed that if we examine the social history of late 19th-century Jews in the German-speaking sphere in terms of *la longue durée* (Braudel, 1958), with regard to their social organization and the features of their ways of life on both the individual and the public level; what we find is that noteworthy parts of Jewish society in that time and period looked different, acted differently, and had a different *Weltanschauung* than did Jewish society at the end of the 18th century.

Within the framework of this change, or revolution, the traditional Jewish *Weltanschauung*—which had emphasized the unbridgeable differences between Jews and non-Jews—was replaced by a new view of relations between Jews and their surrounding society. Alienation and separation were replaced by a view of non-Jewish society as a model that one should adopt and accept.

The partial acceptance of *Maskilim* into German bourgeois society and their adoption of the latter's habitus attracted attention, primarily among members of the German Enlightenment movement, who documented it in various writings. In 1784 J. G. Krünitz's *Die Oekonomische Encyclopadie* included an entry titled “Jews” in which he described Berlin Jewry; that city's Jews, according to Krünitz, could boast that its members included learned people and enthusiasts of literature and science. Providing specific examples, he concluded:

[T]he growth of free knowledge of religion that has emerged so amazingly from tolerance and from that philosophical spirit which is so different in the last half of our present century from that of all previous centuries, has brought about a very great revolution also among the Jews, among whom the Enlightenment is being vigorously promoted; and I almost dare to say that knowledge of the truth, and the clear light of the philosophy, have blossomed among them more quickly and

broadly than among the Christians. (Krünitz, 1784, cited partially in translation into Hebrew by Gilon, 1987, p. 215)<sup>7</sup>

When an article published anonymously in *Die Berlinische Monatsschrift*, the highly esteemed Berlin monthly of the German Enlightenment movement, described public lectures in Berlin it highlighted the fact that they were open to all and made education accessible to all, as in the days of ancient Athens, and that the audience included both non-Jews and members of the new Jewish society:

Officers, counselors, merchants, artists, clergy, upper schoolmen, messengers [*obere Schulmänner, Gesandten*], counts, pensioners [*Renteniere*], young Jews, and even ministers, all sit together, and also women come to some of the lectures. Every scholar is eager to have such an audience. (Anonymous, 1784, pp. 473–474; cited partially in Hebrew by Gilon, 1987, p. 215)<sup>8</sup>

Some of the *Maskilim* began to take part in the social activities of the German Enlightenment movement. Thus Isaac Abraham Euchel was a member of the “Fessler’sche Mittwochsgesellschaft” (1795–1806, not to be confused with the “Berliner Mittwochsgesellschaft” which was founded earlier in 1783), together with the playwright, theater director, and actor August Wilhelm Iffland and with the great German classical sculptor, and director of the Royal School of Sculpture, Johann Gottfried Schadow. Participants in the meetings of this society enjoyed refreshments while listening to musical performances and readings of literature and philosophy. In addition to Euchel, one could find Daniel Itzig’s daughters and Marcus Herz among the participants. “The group would not recognize differences of religions,” Avraham Geiger noted in hindsight with undisguised satisfaction:

Next to the serious Wednesday society there was another, more cheerful one, established by Fessler in 1796. There on wilder and less wild days attendees used to read, chat, make music and eat. It consisted of about fifty people: men and women; artists such as Schadow, Darbes, Frisch, Berger, Belter, Iffland; officials such as Becherer, Rosenstiel, Mayer (who later became the stepfather of Jean-Paul); scholars such as M. Herz, who showed a special interest in physics, and A. Hirt and Rambach; as well as tradesmen such as Sander, Is. Euchel; and wives of the above, or other women like Sara Levy M. Wulff and the daughters of I.D. Itzig, since this society, which adhered to ideal of humanity, would not recognize differences of religions. (Geiger, 1895, p. 201; cited partially in translation into Hebrew by Gilon, 1987, p. 216)

Jews now adopted practices they had previously found alien; these included not only the cultivation of friendships with non-Jews, but also alterations to the most basic aspects of their ways of life. First and foremost among these was linguistic change. Yiddish was replaced by German; a

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<sup>7</sup>My thanks to Dr. Kerstin von der Krone for her help.

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command of German became a status symbol and was, of course, also an essential tool for acquiring a general education (see also Katz, 1973, pp. 64–65; Lowenstein, 2005, pp. 127–129; Meyer, 1997, pp. 93–94; Schochat, 1956, pp. 219–226).

The acquisition of German was also accelerated by decrees issued by various German governments, such as the ban on the use in commerce of Yiddish or of *jüdisch-deutsch* (German written in Hebrew letters) (Lowenstein, 2005, p.127). The authorities' directive to the principal of the Wilhelm School in Breslau referred explicitly to a command of German, stating that it was necessary to use any means to root out "jargon" in order to ensure that German was the only language spoken (Eliav, 1960, p. 86).

Obviously, the process of acquiring a command of German was a slow one. At times it required three generations until certain sectors of Jewish society achieved full mastery of the language and displayed linguistic and cultural literacy in speaking, reading, and writing German (Toury, 1972, pp. 80–81). We have early evidence concerning mastery of French and German among certain circles (Schochat, 1956, pp. 220–226), but such circles were the exception, not the rule. Many Jews continued to communicate among themselves in Yiddish (Eschelbacher, 1916, p.172) and to use Hebrew letters when they wrote in German. This may be seen, for example, in a demand made by the parents of several pupils at the *Freischule* in Hamburg; they asked the principal to continue teaching transcription of German in Hebrew letters because, as they wrote in their letter, the lack of that skill "[was] felt keenly by those who went to work in [Jewish] offices" (cited by Lowenstein, 2005, p.127). Inspectors visiting Jewish schools frequently noted in their reports a poor pronunciation of German (Lowenstein, 2005, p. 128). Even Jews who had an excellent command of German did not always use it in their interactions with families and associates. The most telling example, of course, is Moses Mendelssohn, who wrote in Yiddish to his fiancée (later his wife) Fromet and to some of his associates (Katz, 1973, p. 65; Mendelssohn, 1929).

The other notable change, in addition to this linguistic shift, involved Jews' external appearance, especially the styling of one's beard and sidelocks and the wearing of wigs, as was fashionable in the 18th century, and new clothing, where the capote, the Jewish skullcap (*Judenhut*), and the clumsy overcoat were exchanged for modern, fashionable dress. Other notable changes took place in the structuring of private time, as manifested in the adoption of leisure activities such as attending concerts, learning to play music, and dancing. In 1777, Fromet Mendelssohn wrote to her husband that their daughter Brendel (later known as Dorothea von Schlegel) had played the piano to entertain guests after a meal. In the same letter she also told him about going out to socialize with non-Jewish friends, something that would

previously have been unheard of (letter from Fromet to Moses Mendelssohn dated 18 July 1777, Mendelssohn, 1929, pp. 217–218, letter 194).

Entrepreneurs and some members of the *Haskalah* movement went to exhibitions, attended balls and concerts, visited the public baths (see Naimark-Goldberg, 2013, pp. 146–179), and ate their fill in restaurants and cafés. Other leisure activities included attending public lectures and reading books, daily newspapers, and various magazines.

The construction of this “New Jew,” on the basis of the new habitus envisioned by members of the Enlightenment movement, was linked to the very elements that Lessing highlighted in his description of early 19th-century bourgeois Jewish society—namely, the individual’s behavior with respect to specific private and public situations, dress, language, leisure time, and other interactions with one’s surroundings. Yet these transformations were not spontaneous; what is remarkable here is that education was consciously harnessed as a tool to disseminate and guide a widespread transition to a new habitus. A network of *Maskilic* schools was established at the end of the 18th century, and guidelines for these new ways of interaction and behavior were provided—both implicitly and explicitly—in various texts written by *Maskilim* for the use of the children and young adults who studied there. These texts were written both as propaganda and for practical purposes. In fact, they laid bare the ideals of the *Haskalah* movement since they translated, so to speak, those ideals into everyday practices. All these texts shared the desire to create a clearly defined set of daily habits that would replace the old habits identified with traditional Jewish society, and offered instructions to guide the younger generation in organizing and structuring their lives. They were designed to serve as guiding principles for the daily practices of the young generation and hence to bring about change in Jewish society by disseminating these practices and instilling them in the minds of young Jews.

Before discussing these texts and guidelines in detail, however, we should note that in the case of daily practices, the line between traditional and *Maskilic* Jews was far clearer than that between traditional and *Maskilic* texts, which was less explicit. In fact, the boundaries between the rabbinic and *Maskilic* texts were not clearly defined and were hardly black and white. Only very few *Maskilic* books conveyed an explicit, critical, secular, and rational *Maskilic* message (as did, for example, the satires of Isaac Abraham Euchel, Saul Berlin, and Aron Wolfsohn-Halle). It should also be mentioned that many *Maskilic* books often tried to disguise the *Maskilic* message by adapting *Maskilic* textual models to those used in the Jewish textual tradition. Moreover, the two worlds were not essentially mutually exclusive. Not only did some rabbis become involved in the activities of the *Maskilim*, but some of the *Maskilim*, including the most prominent and best known, such as Naphtali Herz

Weisel and Isaak Satanow, sought and received rabbinic approbations (*haskamot*) for their books—a strategy obviously aimed at reducing opposition. For example, the rabbis Zevi Hirsch Levin of Berlin and Yechezkel Landau of Prague both gave their stamp of approval to *Maskilic* books.

The new habitus of the *Maskilim* had a greater influence than did their written texts in bringing change to Jewish society and in disseminating the values of the *Haskalah*. This was the case because that habitus had such a high degree of visibility. Here changes in even the smallest components of daily practice drew a clear line between the world of the traditional Jew and that of the new, modern, Jew, who adopted *Maskilic* practices at least to some extent, even if he or she did not adopt *Maskilic* values in their entirety. Thus, for example, Jews could cover their heads in the traditional Jewish manner, or wear a wig in accordance with the bourgeois fashion of the 18th century; but they could not do both.<sup>9</sup>

## The guidelines

Our discussion here must address two dimensions: One comprising the concrete written guidelines provided to children in *Maskilic* texts, and the other their implementation. We have a considerable amount of evidence concerning the guidelines given to children and young adults, who were expected to adopt those teachings and internalize them in their everyday practices. Regarding the extent to which these guidelines were indeed implemented we have far less evidence. The sources available consist of scant visual material and even fewer personal testimonies. We have at our disposal a few contemporary memoirs, usually written in retrospect after being shaped by the writers' life experiences as adults; in addition we have contemporary documents, such as reports of and about *Maskilic* schools.

The guidelines are found in four central and influential texts for children and young adults written by *Maskilim* and intended for their schools. These texts—which have until now escaped almost any critical examination—were formative books that were reissued time and again in many editions and continued to be published in Eastern Europe, some even until the end of the 19th century. All four include detailed explicit and implicit guidelines in each of the areas mentioned above.

The books—all written by leading *Maskilim*—are as follows: *Avtalyon*, by Aaron Wolfsohn-Halle (1790); *Mesilat ha-limud*, the first part of *Bet ha-sefer*

<sup>9</sup>Except for several amusing incidents such as the anecdote recounted by Franz Delitzsch about Issac Satanow, who is described as wearing two sets of dress at once: "A wonderful person of the strangest contradictions. Under his long Polish robe, above which hung his long beard, he wore the most delicate dress of a German given to French manners. As he used to say: the spiritual on top, the material below. And when his eye tired, he would assume a monocle" (Delitzsch, 1836, p. 115).

by Judah Leib Ben-Ze'ev (1802/1836); *Sefer toldot Israel*, by Peter Beer (1796); and *Moda le-yaldei bnei Israel*, by Moses Hirsch Bock (1811). One could further add the epistolary *Igrot Meshulam ben Uriah ha-Eshtemoi* by Isaac Abraham Euchel (1789–1790), whose instructions were more implicit.

As mentioned, these texts offered instruction to the younger generation concerning daily practices, in particular those related to personal hygiene, dress, language, and leisure—both the proper division of time between leisure and study, and recommended leisurely pursuits. Above all these instructions addressed the matter of interaction with one's surroundings—that is, how an individual should behave in specific private and public situations. Even though they often referred to the most trifling aspects of life, these texts prefigured substantial change because they defined new models of behavior distinctly different from those that characterized traditional Jewish society. Furthermore, since these books, officially written for young pupils, were frequently also read by adults, they transmitted a message to the parents' generation as well.

Traditional education taught Jewish children and students to distance themselves from non-Jewish surroundings. A typical example is that of Benjamin Wolf Ginzburg, a Jewish medical student in Halle. On January 8, 1737, Ginzburg wrote a letter to Rabbi Jacob Emden asking his permission to participate in practical lessons in anatomy. Several weeks later, on February 2, 1737, he received a negative answer. Despite acknowledging the importance of anatomy lessons, Emden advised Ginzburg not to mingle with the other students:

[...] Do not draw close to their homes, and do not desire to be in their fine-looking lodgings, [or] visit their courtyards or their castles [so that you do not] learn their customs and manners [...] the Sages decreed and ordained many rulings so that a person would not live with the heretics nor learn from their deeds. (Emden, 1739/1971, Responsum 41, pp. 34–37)

Forty-seven years later, in 1782, Naftali Herz Weisel made exactly the opposite case in his fundamental work *Sefer divrei shalom ve-emet*:

Even our rabbis of blessed memory used the phrase '*derech eretz*' [good manners] with regard to all these matters. They said (Avot 82), Excellent is Torah Study together with worldly business" [*Sayings of the Jewish Fathers (Pirqa Aboth)*, Taylor, 1897], that is, according to the manners [common to] humankind, [a person] should not separate himself from the company of people, so that they should not wonder at his behavior, and he should treat them with respect so they will enjoy his company. (Weisel, 1782/1886, p. 237)

Thus the *Maskilim* also turned to the Sages, but they did so in order to oppose Emden's position. For their part, they sought to teach Jewish children just the opposite—to resemble their non-Jewish surroundings as much as possible—in other words, to adopt at large their manners. The *Maskilim* perhaps envisioned the Jewish child as a future equal partner in German

bourgeois society and endeavored to prepare him for eventual membership in the bourgeoisie and a seat at the table with his Christian peers. Thus the vision of a common meal with Christians, a practice almost taboo for Jews at the time, can be seen as part of the social change the *Maskilim* envisioned.<sup>10</sup>

Instead of Jews who dissociated themselves from the surrounding society, members of the *Haskalah* movement envisioned Jews who engaged with their surroundings; instead of Jews who spoke “jargon,” Jews who spoke the language of their locality; instead of Jews with no manners, Jews who behaved in accordance with local manners; instead of Jews focused only on spiritual development, Jews who also developed their bodies; instead of Jews who lived “within the tent of the Torah,” Jews who divided their time between study and leisure; and instead of Jews who paid little attention to personal hygiene and whose clothes were sloppy, Jews who took pains with their appearance, their dress, and their personal hygiene.

This last issue was greatly emphasized, perhaps in response to the stereotype of the unclean Jew. In an article translated from the German in *Ha-me'asef*, an anonymous, apparently Christian writer described the pupils who took part in an oral examination at the Berlin Jewish school and noted particularly their pleasant behavior and the cleanliness of their clothing:

The boys with this education will be looked upon favorably, especially for the cleanliness of their clothing, and their pleasant behavior toward their teachers, whom they respect, for they stand in awe of their greatness—and not out of fear, as our boys do with regard to their teachers. (Anonymous, 1783, p. 62)

Similarly, in an article titled *Igeret el roei se pzura Israel*, which addressed the communities in “the kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria” and was published in *Ha-me'asef* in 1788, Naphtali Herz Homberg pointed out the objectives of modern education, noting especially cleanliness of body and clothing:

To instruct them in the best way to behave with fabric, not expensive but clean and whole, not patched; and to wash their faces, their hands and their feet, and to do the hair on their heads. (Homberg, 1788, p. 228)<sup>11</sup>

The five books mentioned above emphasized mainly social interaction and relations between individuals, regulation of leisure activities, maintenance of personal hygiene, and cleanliness of clothing.

### **Relations between individuals**

*Maskilic* writings emphasized the importance of relationships with non-Jews, which were accorded a universal value citing the verse in Leviticus, “Thou

<sup>10</sup>My thanks to Dr. Dirk Sadowski for this insight.

<sup>11</sup>My thanks to Prof. David Sorkin, who drew my attention to this quotation.

shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Leviticus 19:18, King James translation). Consequently they instructed children to relate equally to all human beings: “Because they are like you and their soul is like your soul,” stated Ben-Ze’ev (1802/1836, p. 121) in *Mesilat ha-limud*; and Naftali Herz Weisel (1782/1886) declared, as we have seen above: “[a person] should not separate himself from the company of people, so that they should not wonder at his behavior” (p. 237).

### ***Clothing and manners***

The *Maskilim* saw traditional Jewish dress as an obstacle to acceptance by non-Jewish society. In his satire *Igrot Meshulam ben Uriah ha-Eshtemoi*, Isaac Euchel (1789–1790) presented the need for Jews to adopt new social practices and emphasized, among other things, the need to abandon traditional dress:

You knew that my father ordered me to change my clothing and exchange the clothing of eastern lands for European clothing before I leave home—saying that when a person visits a foreign country and intends to learn its ways, he should get rid of all items that single him out as a foreigner and should don the clothing and manners of the people among whom he dwells, so that they will think of him as one of their own. (p. 40)

Note the implicit generational change hinted at in this citation: Whereas his grandfather’s generation disapproved of any change in traditional Jewish dress and saw it as a breach in tradition, the narrator was taught to wear clothes that would enable him to integrate in the surrounding society. The narrator adds, pragmatically, that had he not behaved in that way it would have been impossible for him to acquire the knowledge that was the purpose of his journey.

In *Avtalyon*, Wolfsohn-Halle (1790) explained that clothing played an important role in determining one’s status in non-Jewish society: “In your homeland it is your name that honors you; in a foreign country, it is your dress” (p. 12). Peter Beer (1796) instructed his readers explicitly to wear the same clothing as the people of the country among whom they dwelt: “Your clothing will conform to the attire worn in each country/Follow the manners of that country and do not stray from them” (p. 285). Naftali Herz Weisel (1782/1886) wrote plainly in the “fourth letter” of *Divrei shalom ve-emet* that his book was aimed at teaching his readers, for the benefit of their business, how to interact with other people, as well as proper table manners and dress:

[...] These lessons teach a person how to behave in the company of his friends, when he enters and when he leaves: He should speak calmly and not raise his voice, nor whisper. [It also teaches him] table manners, comportment and dress,

how he should behave with his household, how he should negotiate, so that other people will enjoy his company and his business and will yearn to do business with him, and so on. (p. 237)

### **Cleanliness of person and clothing**

In his memoir about the time he spent as a student at the Samson School in Wolfenbüttel, Shmuel Meyer Ehrenberg, who later became principal of the school, describes a lack of awareness of modern hygiene: “There was no bathtub, and toothbrushes were introduced only three years later” (Eliav, 1960, p. 103, note 5). The Wilhelm School in Breslau received the following order from the authorities concerning personal hygiene: [to] pay more attention to “cleanliness of the body, clothing, and books, which is generally neglected in education in Jewish homes” (quoted in Eliav, 1960, p. 86). An article titled “Chinukh ne’arim, al devar chinukh ha-banim kara’uyi [“The Education of Boys: On the Necessity of Educating Boys Properly”], which, as we will see, was an adaptation of passages from Rousseau’s *Émile* (Shavit, 2014), offers detailed instructions on how to bathe children:

They will also make a habit of bathing children/at least twice a week in cold water/so they will be strong and healthy/because apart from this being in keeping with cleanliness and ritual purity/it is also good and conducive to bodily health. (Baraz, 1787, p. 37)

Peter Beer (1796), in his book *Sefer toldot Israel* (1796), elaborated on how to keep the body clean:

Wash your hands and your face and also your neck with water/Do not forget to rinse [your] mouth and teeth, and keep your nails short/And [keep] your head combed every day and your hair in order. (p. 285)

My child! Before you lie down in your bed,/Go and kiss your father’s hands and do not forget to rinse your mouth and teeth/before you lie down to sleep, in clean water. So that in the morning your mouth will not smell bad,/and you will not be disgusting and repulsive to all who encounter you. (p. 294)

When you eat and your hands become grubby and soiled,/wash them afterwards so that you do not dirty your clothes. (p. 290)

In his very popular reader *Mesilat ha-limud*, Ben-Ze’ev (1802/1836) meticulously prescribed the rules of personal hygiene, with precise instructions for getting up, washing, and maintaining the cleanliness of one’s clothes:

You shall wake up and wash your face and hands, and brush and rinse your mouth with water and clean it and purify it of filth and mucus; and you should put on clean and splendid clothes and go over your hair with a comb, so that you will not be called by shameful names. (p. 114)

Similarly, in *Moda le-yaldei bnei Israel*, Moses Hirsch Bock (1811) offered general instruction on the use of soap:

Remove all filth from your body, wash it and clean it with soap, because cleanliness is very conducive to bodily health. (p. 189)

The need to keep clothing clean is mentioned repeatedly in almost all the guidelines of Peter Beer and Ben-Ze'ev. For example, Peter Beer (1796) stated:

Be careful not to dirty your clothes/because a soiled boy is disgraced and shamed [...] Change your white shirt once or twice a week/Do not be late or lazy, because cleanliness is the source of life. (p. 285)

Ben-Ze'ev (1802/1836) mentioned:

Your clothes should always be white and your dress clean of filth and spots, because a man is respected for the splendor of his clothing. (p. 114)

### ***Adopting social manners and appropriate speech***

One of the areas in which children were required to adopt patterns of behavior customary in non-Jewish society was that of social interaction and social manners. In *Mesilat ha-limud*, Ben-Ze'ev (1802/1836) emphasized the need to listen attentively to others and speak little:

And if a person asks you something, do not hurry [with] your mouth and heart to respond. Listen, hear, and understand, and if you have an answer—reply, and if you do not, put your hand on your mouth. Be careful to keep your mouth shut and do not talk too much. (p. 120)

According to Wolfsohn-Halle (1790),

If a person asks you a question, do not rush to answer before you have understood his question. Do not talk a lot because only fools talk a lot. The words of a wise person are few and good, and the words of a fool are countless and evil. (p. 12)

Similarly, in *Divrei shalom ve-emet* Weisel (1782/1886) described the proper manner of conducting a conversation: “One should speak pleasantly to people, not raise one’s voice or whisper” (p. 237).

Ben-Ze'ev (1802/1836) instructed children to behave with benevolence toward others:

Be pleasant to every person and make peace with all: When you meet a person, greet him, and if a person greets you, respond with joy and gratification. (p. 121)

He also emphasized table manners:

When you sit at a meal, do not eat quickly like a glutton and do not drink rapidly like a drunkard, for the glutton and the drunkard are hated by all who see them. If you are hungry, eat your fill, and if you are thirsty drink until your thirst is

quenched, unhurriedly and gracefully; and when you are finished, close your mouth and you will be well. (p. 118)

Peter Beer went into greater detail in his instructions concerning table manners. He addressed such topics as how to sit at a table (after older people have been seated), how to express aversion to food, how to use a napkin properly, and how to use cutlery correctly.

Do not rush to drink before you have swallowed the food,/and do not forget to wipe your mouth between drinking and eating. Do not hasten to be the first to choose a nice portion from the bowl,/take only if it is offered to you so that your companions will not be repelled by you. Hold the knife, the fork, and the spoon properly in your hands,/and make sure that your hands do not touch the food. [...] Chew your food with your teeth, while your lips are closed/and be careful to avoid whistling or snorting noises. Do not lick your lips with your tongue,/because that will startle people and revolt them. When you finish eating, wash your hands again,/and when you are finished, say grace to the Lord. (Beer, 1796, pp. 290–291)

### ***Leisure: Between studies and entertainment***

Members of the *Haskalah* movement adopted the notion of leisure as well as some of its concrete practices. In the article by Shimon Baraz mentioned above, he followed Rousseau in emphasizing the need to toughen the body with light clothing, well-ventilated rooms, and outdoor games.

“There is a time for everything,” Wolfsohn-Halle (1790) asserted, and went on to offer guidelines on leisure time:

There is a time for everything. A time to study and a time to play. If you worked properly during the day, to the satisfaction of your teacher, and have your teacher’s approval, you will have the evening to relax and enjoy yourself. (p. 13)

Ben-Ze’ev (1802/1836) emphasized the need for play:

When you are done with your homework, take the evening for rest and entertainment and enjoy your childhood. [...] Enjoy yourself in play that provides serenity to your soul and is suitable to you, for a boy is praised for wisdom in his studies and in his play. (p. 116)

### **Sources for the guidelines**

In almost all cases the *Maskilim*’s guidelines were drawn from non-Jewish texts, though the legitimization and rationalizations provided for those guidelines were taken from canonical Jewish literature. Concrete instructions were adopted from texts written by eminent Enlightenment writers, such as Locke and Rousseau, or from texts written by prominent German educators, such as Campe and Basedow, who maintained personal relations with members of the *Haskalah* movement.

## Why Basedow's *Elementarwerk*?

Basedow and Mendelssohn are well-known to have corresponded on philosophical issues (Altmann, 1973, p. 323). Basedow's educational program was adopted by the *Maskilim* (Simon, 1953, pp. 162–165) and implemented in the network of schools they established. According to Simon, Jewish schools were among the first to adopt Basedow's *Philantropin* system, even before it was introduced in German schools. The relationship between Basedow and Mendelssohn went beyond intellectual exchange; Basedow asked Mendelssohn to help him obtain financial support for his *Philantropin* Institute in Dessau, and indeed the Jews of Berlin donated 518 talers to the school (Simon, 1953, p. 159). In his *Elementarwerk* Basedow (1774/1972) devoted an entire table [*Tafel*] (number 80) which consists of four illustrations referring to Jewish matters, including Mendelssohn's profile as well.

Basedow's *Elementarwerk*, published in 1774, was strongly influenced by Rousseau's *Émile* (Hahn, 1885) and consisted of advice and guidelines for children and young adults. Most of the guidelines included in the five books mentioned above borrowed passages directly or indirectly from Basedow's book. The subtitle of Moses Hirsch Bock's *Israelitische Kinderfreund*—the German version of *Moda le-yaldei bnei Israel*—even refers directly to Basedow and reads *Ein Elementarwerk*.

The five books did not adopt all the topics discussed by Basedow; for instance, his advice on the pursuit of luxury, ostentation, and coquetry were omitted. In addition, books for Jewish children did not illuminate their instructions with examples. For instance, Basedow's section about table manners relates the story of a boy named David Naschmann, who never stopped eating sweets and consequently was in danger of becoming a drunkard or a thief. Another tells of a boy named Peter Vollmagen (naturally, in both cases the child's surname is emblematic), who never stopped thinking about food. Such anecdotes were not included in any of the books for Jewish children.

On other topics—such as personal hygiene and cleanliness of clothing, table manners, social integration, leisure culture, and interactions with other people—the *Maskilic* books offered cultural translations to passages of Basedow's (1774/1972) *Elementarwerk*. The notion of “cultural translation” demands an elaborated separate discussion. In the context of this article, it suffices to say that I refer to cultural translation as the process of making the source texts of Enlightenment writings a starting point for producing a text, targeted at a receiving system, that responds to that system's needs and values and thus significantly manipulates the source text for its own objectives. The source text is thus used essentially as raw material, and the translations must be analyzed primarily in the context of the receiving system.

In several cases, the similarity between paragraphs in the texts for Jewish children and paragraphs from Basedow's (1774/1972) *Elementarwerk* is evident, as for instance in their instructions regarding table manners, or the need to tend one's nails or to keep one's clothing clean if one wished to avoid arousing disgust.

Other cases of cultural translation involved attempts to disguise the source text under a well-known Hebrew one, as was the case in Baraz's translation of Rousseau's *Émile*.

### **Émile—Why and How**

Shimon Baraz was a virtually anonymous writer who belonged to *Maskilic* circles in Königsberg and died on October 4, 1787. Baraz (1787) adapted into Hebrew several paragraphs of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile* and this work was (posthumously) published in *Ha-me'asef* in an article entitled, as noted above, "The Education of Boys: On the Necessity of Educating Boys Properly." We may assume that Baraz had not read *Émile* in French, but rather had read one of the German translations. He may also have had access to some of the summaries, reviews, and articles written by intermediaries, who introduced the ideas of *Émile* into the German Enlightenment.

Baraz was probably motivated by *Émile*'s enormous success in Germany. *Émile* was translated into German immediately after its publication in 1762, and was then re-translated multiple times.<sup>12</sup> Baraz mentions Maimonides as the source of his text and refers to another work by the "Sages" which a detailed comparison suggests was in fact *Émile* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Baraz translated and adapted several paragraphs of *Émile* that deal with concrete issues of child-raising and provide detailed guidelines on different phases of everyday life: how to dress, bathe, and feed children, and even how to teach them to swim. He selected from *Émile* those passages that accorded best with Maimonides' view of the need to maintain bodily health as a prerequisite for mental health. In doing so, Baraz tried to connect Rousseau's discussion of the body with Maimonides' ideas on the subject, as well as to link the healing of the body and the healing of the soul (Maimonides, 1187–1191, Part III, Chapter 27). He also strove to associate his adaptation of Rousseau with rabbinical writing. For instance, to Rousseau's recommendation to teach a child to swim Baraz (1787) added a quotation from the tractate *Kiddushin*, which is the most significant source in rabbinical literature on educating children:

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<sup>12</sup>On Rousseau's place in the German Enlightenment, see Mounier (1979, 1980). On Rousseau's place in the Jewish *Haskalah*, see Conforti-Tzur (1999).

And the Sages already warned about this when they said (Kiddushin, Aleph), “The father is obligated to teach his son, etc. Some say, to teach him to swim too.” (p. 38)

Baraz followed Rousseau faithfully, even though the insertion of passages from Jewish texts often lends them a different character and meaning. Baraz was faithful to Rousseau even at the expense of contradicting Maimonides—for instance, in advising that children be bathed in cold water, which contradicts Maimonides’ instruction to keep the body warm (Shavit, 2014).

On several points Baraz, like other *Maskilim*, used his source text to criticize traditional Jewish education. For instance, in a variation on Rousseau’s criticism of the early exposure of children to unsuitable texts—unsuitable from a cognitive point of view, as explained in his analysis of La Fontaine’s *Fables*—Baraz (1787) addressed the teaching of Talmudic casuistry (*pilpul*) at too early an age:

And above all, personal supervision and a watchful eye are needed to preserve the health of the little ones, taking care not to weaken their beautiful brains with pilpul and sermons that are not appropriate to their tender understanding and are as difficult for their brains as the parting of the Red Sea [...] disease and illness will afflict them if they sit too much and are kept awake until the middle of the night in an effort to master difficult pilpul. (pp. 41–42)

Baraz left out many of the topics covered by Rousseau’s discussion of child care, such as all the sections in Book I in which Rousseau dealt with the tight swaddling of infants as well as weaning and teething. In at least one case, however, Baraz elaborated on Rousseau’s discussion, as he did on the question of whether it was right to expose a child’s body to cold. Rousseau, in *Émile*, made a brief reference to a discussion of the same matter by John Locke, reducing the latter’s argument to a single sentence with which he proceeded to disagree:

“If he would have a man all face, why blame me if I would have him all feet?” (Rousseau, 1762, Book II).

Baraz, in contrast, quoted the entire passage from Locke, in which a dialogue takes place between two men. He also changed the characterization of the speakers: Locke’s Scythian and Athenian are replaced by an anonymous figure and a wise Arab man. What is noticeable in this case is the fact that the passage in Locke, at which Rousseau only hinted, was known to Baraz and that he referred the reader to a German translation of Locke’s book, that is, to *Über Kinder-Erziehung* by Joh. Loke [sic] (Baraz, 1787, p. 37).

Baraz’s mention of Locke should not surprise us. The German Enlightenment movement, and consequently the *Maskilim*, were well-acquainted with Locke’s (1693) ideas, especially with his notion of *tabula*

*rasa*. Naftali Herz Weisel (1782/1886) described the idea of a person born as a *tabula rasa* in the opening chapter of *Sefer divrei shalom ve-emet*<sup>13</sup>:

The boy, he should be educated in his youth, while his heart is still pure [and free] of thoughts about the vanities of the world and of the upheavals of foreign ideas, because when his heart is like a fresh blank page it is easy to write truthful things on it. (p. 3)

Baraz (1784) himself referred to the idea of the *tabula rasa* in describing the heart and soul of a boy as “like a stone tablet that will accept everything inscribed on it” (p. 152).

Notably, Baraz mentioned Locke but chose not to cite Rousseau, referring somewhat vaguely instead, as noted, to a work of the “Sages.” This is probably because Locke’s writings were well-known to the *Maskilim*, who, in this respect as in many others, followed Moses Mendelssohn; the latter, as Simon so aptly puts it, served the *Maskilim* “both as a bridge as well as a dam” (Simon, 1953, p. 179). Altmann (1973) quotes the editor and author Friedrich Nicolai, who said that at the beginning of his career Mendelssohn knew only two philosophers: Maimonides and Locke (p. 27).

Baraz (1787) also referred specifically to Campe and “Campens [sic] *allgemeine Revision*” (p. 39). This was due to Campe’s special status among the *Maskilim*. As we have seen, Campe’s pedagogical doctrine was adopted by the *Maskilim*, and they read Campe’s writings enthusiastically and found in him a model for imitation. Campe himself befriended Mendelssohn and even visited his home (Shavit, 1992, pp. 48–49). Mendelssohn’s letter to Campe in March 1777, in which he analyzed the situation of the Jews, is one of his most-quoted. It is therefore not surprising that Baraz cited Campe and not Rousseau as an authoritative source on the importance of breastfeeding, although Campe had adopted this idea, as he did many others, from Rousseau himself. The reference to Campe was meant to support Rousseau’s views because Campe already enjoyed a high status in the *Maskilic* world, and it was much simpler to use his authority when introducing “foreign” ideas.

The guidelines described above offer a glimpse into the nature and characteristics of the model of the “new Jew” envisioned by the *Maskilim*. They also indicate the extent to which the *Maskilim* were versed in the European Enlightenment—but this calls for a separate discussion.

## The effectiveness of the guidelines

To what extent were the guidelines concerning the new habitus effective? Can we maintain that Jews in Western and Middle Europe replaced an entire

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<sup>13</sup>My thanks to Dr. Tal Kogman.

set of practices with another? Did the Jewish public, in other words, adopt a new habitus? If so, can we point to a link between this new habitus and the educational projects of the *Haskalah* movement in the last decades of the 18th century and the start of the 19th?

Based on the number of pupils in *Maskilic* schools and on their socio-economic profile, it is difficult to imagine that the dramatic change that Michael Lessing described could have resulted directly and exclusively from such *Maskilic* projects. The number of pupils in *Maskilic* schools was small. The average number of pupils in the Chinukh Ne'arim School in Berlin between 1800 and 1813 was no more than 55 per year. A school that opened in Breslau in 1791 had 120 pupils in the 1st year, but enrollment dropped to 90 in the 2nd year and never grew thereafter. In 1807, the total number of pupils in *Maskilic* schools was 440, and in 1812 a total of 900 children were enrolled in these schools (Eliav, 1960, pp. 93–141). Moreover, children in *Maskilic* schools came primarily from the lower socioeconomic classes. Shlomo Lachs and David Fraenkel, who founded the Jüdische Haupt-und *Freischule* in Dessau in 1799, literally recruited children off the street to attend their school (Eliav, 1960, p. 89).

On the other hand, one cannot ignore the role of the *Maskilic* schools as agents of social change. In 1803, in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Chinukh Ne'arim School, Isaac Daniel Itzig wrote a “Report on the Present Situation of the Jewish *Freischule* in Berlin,” in which he asserted that each Jewish community in Germany included one or two members who had been educated at the school in Berlin, and that the institution had a significant role in the fact that “Jews are now at a higher cultural level than their forefathers were in the first half of the previous century” (quoted by Eliav, 1960, p. 75).

Itzig may have been singing his own praises, but there is much truth in his words. Several of the graduates of those schools who became leading figures in Jewish communities helped to disseminate *Maskilic* values and ways of life and served as role models for at least some Jews. Graduates of the Dessau school became teachers in communities both large and small (Eliav, 1960, p. 91). As reported in *Ha-me'asef*, five of the pupils at Chinukh Ne'arim in Berlin went on to study at the prestigious Joachimsthalsches Gymnasium, “some to study medicine [*Chochmat ha-refu'a*] and others to study religion” (Anonymous, 1783, p. 61). Some of the pupils in the *Maskilic* schools later became teachers at those schools; several became prominent figures of *Chochmat Israel* [the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*]. Notable among these were Leopold (Yom Tov Lipmann) Zunz, for example, who became a teacher at the Samson School in Wolffenbüttel (Eliav, 1960, p. 103); Israel Wohlwill, who was principal of the *Freischule* in Hamburg and in 1838 became principal of the Seesen School (Eliav, 1960, p. 100); and Isaac Marcus Jost, one of the pioneering scholars of modern Jewish historiography (Eliav, 1960, p. 131).

Of course, graduates of these schools were not the only—nor necessarily the primary—agents for the dissemination of *Maskilic* values and the modern *Maskilic* habitus. However, those graduates were likely to serve as role models because of their status and position. Also, one must remember that the texts themselves, examples of which I have presented, were despite being aimed at young readers also read by adults, and at times mainly by that audience. For this we have ample evidence from various sources, such as the review of Mendelssohn-Frankfurt's *Metzi'at ha-aretz ha-chadasha* in *Ha-me'asef* (Anonymous 1809, p. 101), or Mendelssohn-Frankfurt's own foreword, which explicitly notes that his book is meant for the adult reader as well (Mendelssohn-Frankfurt, 1781/1807, no page numbers). *Avtalyon* describes itself similarly (Wolfsohn-Halle, 1790), and a further example is found in the personal testimony of Senior Sachs, a *Maskil*, who wrote of traveling to Berlin to see with his own eyes Baruch ben Judah Löb Lindau, whose textbook *Reshit limudim* [*The Beginning of Instruction*] he greatly admired (related by Yaf'z [I. I. Goldblum], 1887–1888, p. 289).

The books I have described often served their adult Jewish readers as a first encounter with the nontraditional world, and for many of them paved the way toward the Enlightenment and German culture. The books were distributed far beyond the geographic borders of the *Haskalah*, and not only in major cities. They continued to be published and distributed as living texts even after the *Haskalah* movement had declined in the centers of the German-speaking area. These texts maintained their popularity on the periphery of the German-speaking area, and later also in Eastern Europe. More than a few of them, such as Ben-Ze'ev's *Mesilat ha-limud* and Shalom Cohen's (1807) *Torat lashon ivrit*,<sup>14</sup> were reprinted in the 19th century in Eastern Europe—in Vilna, Warsaw, and Odessa—and even in Tel Aviv and Baghdad.

## Conclusion

It appears, then, that the guidelines offered in *Maskilic* books, as well as the personal example of the *Maskilim* and of the Jewish financial elites, became models and a source of legitimacy for their new habitus to many Jews in German-speaking areas, even those who did not read the books directly or attend the *Haskalah* movement's schools. These Jews often adopted a looser version of the new habitus, since they neither relinquished various elements of the old habitus nor adopted the values of the *Haskalah* movement in their entirety. But they were the ones who, like a stone thrown into the water and causing it to ripple out, introduced a

<sup>14</sup>Expanded edition, Dessau 1807, greatly expanded edition Prague 1816, Vienna 1816, Vienna 1825, Prague 1827, 1832, 1838, 1842, 1850, 1852.

more moderate version of *Maskilic* values to growing circles of Jews, ultimately transforming Jewish society in the German-speaking space. The *Maskilim* and the financial entrepreneurs paved the way for this transformation in their own habitus, and their common interests and goals ensured their cooperation in consciously and explicitly disseminating that habitus to the Jewish world around them.

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