Talmud Study in the Modern Era

From *Wissenschaft* and Brisk to *Daf Yomi*

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ALTHOUGH there has always been competition for the intellectual attention of Jewish men, there is no question that in the nineteenth century, among those still loyal to tradition, Talmud study was the focus of their intellectual pursuits. There were certainly differences in emphasis, as there had been in the past as well, between those who focused on theoretical analysis and those who were more interested in seeing the development of practical *halakhah*. This divergence continues in our own day, and is seen most starkly in the differences between how Talmud is studied in Ashkenazic and Sephardic *yeshivot*.

The nineteenth century was, however, significant in that it saw the creation of two new approaches to Talmud study. On the one hand, there was the development of a critical, historical approach, pursued by the practitioners of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in western Europe and a group of scholars in eastern Europe who wrote scholarship that was then termed *Ḥokhmat Yisrael*. Current academic scholarship on the Talmud is a direct outgrowth of these two "schools." The other significant development was the creation, in traditional circles, of a more analytic approach to Talmud study than had previously been the norm. This approach would soon become the standard way Talmud was studied in the great *yeshivot*.

When nineteenth-century critical scholarship turned its eye to the Talmud, it was looking at a work that had been studied intensively for over a thousand years, yet its assumptions were bound to be very different from those of the traditionalists. Nevertheless, for almost all the questions asked and issues addressed, precedents were found in the classical commentaries. This was of great comfort for the traditionalists, mostly in eastern Europe, who also wished to apply modern methods to Talmud study. Whether the issue concerned corrupt texts or interpolations by post-talmudic authors, the traditional commentators had dealt with it. Yet one should not assume from this that the critical scholars were simply following in the path of their predecessors. While earlier figures might have offered a number of *ad hoc* "modern" observations, the critical scholars had a fundamentally different approach to the talmudic text.

Critical scholarship turned significant attention to the text itself, a practice termed lower criticism. The Talmud is full of difficult texts, and every page has alternate readings attested to by medieval authorities. Traditionalist commentaries had long ago recognized the importance of comparing these readings, and some of them were prepared to emend the standard talmudic text, either on the basis of alternate readings found in early sources or simply based on logic. The most famous of these attempts are found in the Vilna-Romm edition of the Talmud, namely, the emendations of R. Joel Sirkes (1561–1640) and R. Elijah Gaon of Vilna (1720–1797).[1] Yet until the nineteenth century, there had been no systematic work done in the area of talmudic lower criticism. Even if earlier generations of talmudic scholars had an

1. See Yaakov S. Spiegel, *Amudim be-Toledot ha-Sefer ha-Ivri* (Ramat Gan, 1996), chs. 10, 13.

interest in such an endeavor, they lacked the most basic tool for this task, namely, access to talmudic manuscripts.

It was actually a traditional talmudist, R. Raphael Nathan Nata Rabbinovicz (1835–1888), who took the first steps in remedying the situation. Beginning in 1867 and continuing until his death he published fifteen volumes of a work called *Dikdukei Soferim*. It contains variant talmudic readings from medieval authorities and early printings and, most importantly, manuscripts, including the famous fourteenth-century Munich manuscript, the only surviving medieval manuscript of the entire Talmud.[2] Although this work is vital for any critical studies of the Talmud, Rabbinovicz did not have this in mind. He directed his work to traditionalist scholars, assuring them that access to this material could help unravel many difficulties in the text. Problems that earlier commentators had struggled with could be solved by revealing an alternate reading. Yet, although the work was published with the approbations of some of the leading talmudists of his day, it was not often used by traditional scholars. Their concerns remained focused on issues of interpretation rather than text criticism, and they were not interested in proposing new explanations based on alternate readings.[3]

While there is, to be sure, some truth in the oft-repeated joke that the critical scholars were more interested in what the talmudic sages wore than in what they said, this certainly does not encompass the entire picture.[4] There were, in fact, many critical scholars who devoted themselves to Talmud study for its own sake, rather than for the historical or linguistic information that could be salvaged from the literature. Yet there were obviously differences between how they and their more traditionalist colleagues regarded the Talmud. We have already mentioned how the traditionalists ignored the issue of lower criticism, which was vital for the critical scholars. The critical scholars also used the *Tosefta* and the Jerusalem Talmud to a much greater extent than had been done in traditional circles, and this had the effect of showing how halakhic traditions and historical events were recorded differently in these sources than in the Babylonian Talmud. While this was obviously known before critical scholars turned their eye towards it, they were the ones to develop the implications of this knowledge. Unlike the critical scholars, traditionalist scholars were generally not prepared to doubt the historicity of events or accuracy of attributions recorded in the Talmud. Issues of higher criticism, such as the formation of *sugyot*, which sometimes identified sections added after the *amoraim*, were not merely off-limits, but for many even verged on heresy. Yet even the most traditional of talmudists, those who had no interest in Semitic and classical languages or realia, found it difficult to avoid using the magnificent dictionaries of talmudic literature produced by critical

2. He was able to publish this work on the orders of *Zeraim*, *Moed* and *Nezikin*. Tractate *Ḥullin*, which Rabbinovicz had begun, was completed by Heinrich Ehrentreu (Munich, 1897).

3. R. Abraham Isaiah Karelitz (the Ḥazon Ish) would later offer a theological justification for the widespread neglect of Rabbinovicz's work, claiming that the accepted talmudic text is the one that God intended to be used. Alternate readings were removed from circulation by divine providence and should, with few exceptions, not be rescued from obscurity. See my *Between the Yeshiva World and Modern Orthodoxy* (London, 1999), p. 196.

4. As Daniel Sperber has shown, it is indeed sometimes important to know what the sages wore, even when trying to understand talmudic *halakhah*. See Sperber, 'On the Legitimacy, or Indeed Necessity, of Scientific Disciplines for True 'Learning' of the Talmud,' in Shalom Carmy, ed., *Modern Scholarship in the Study of Torah: Contributions and Limitations* (Northvale, N. J., 1996), pp. 197–225.

scholars such as Jacob Levy (1819–1892), Alexander Kohut (1842–1894), and Marcus Jastrow (1829–1903).

Though it is impossible in this short essay to even touch on all of the important figures and achievements in critical Talmud scholarship,[5] something must be said about higher criticism of the Talmud, noted in the last paragraph. If one wants to pick a work that shows the temper of the critical scholar, and contains the assumptions that have been present in modern scholarship ever since, it is Hirsch Mendel Pineles' (1805–1870) *Darkhah shel Torah*, published in 1861. The subtitle describes this book as a defense of the Mishnah. Readers first picking it up no doubt wondered against which apostate or Christian anti-Semite Pineles was defending the Mishnah. Yet the book is actually a defense of the Mishnah against the interpretations of it offered in the Talmud.

One does not need to be a critical scholar to recognize that often the interpretations of the Mishnah offered in the Talmud do not reflect the Mishnah's straightforward meaning. Maimonides himself at times interpreted the Mishnah differently than the Talmud, and R. Yom Tov Lippman Heller (1579–1654) famously justifies doing so by stating that as long as one's interpretations do not affect practical Jewish law, there is no harm in them.[6] R. Elijah Gaon did likewise, explaining that just as there is *peshat* and *derash* in Torah, so too in Mishnah interpretation.[7]

Yet Pineles' approach was fundamentally different. He did not simply claim that one could interpret the Mishnah differently than the Talmud in a few places; he posited a fundamental principle arguing that the Talmud often *misinterprets* the Mishnah. This assertion, that the *amoraim* made errors in their interpretations, was something that traditionalists could not accept, and many even regarded it as heretical. Pineles' own brother-in-law, Moses Waldberg, wrote a refutation of *Darkhah shel Torah* entitled *Kakh Hi Darkhah shel Torah,*[8] the subtitle of which describes the book as a defense of the rabbis. Yet Pineles' assumption— that the Mishnah must be regarded as an independent work and its interpretation need not align with the amoraic understanding(s)— became an important part of critical study of the Talmud. Later scholars would use this critical sense to reveal that the Talmud itself contains numerous, even contradictory, layers. In other words, "it emerges that the meaning of this text is not as it appears to the untrained eye (i.e., classical exegesis), but that it has several discrete messages, commensurate with the number of sources, which may or may not coalesce."[9]

Critical Talmud study had a place in all of the rabbinical seminaries founded before World War I.[10] Allow me to mention some of the most prominent scholars of these institutions, men whose works are still vital to talmudic scholarship. Zechariah Frankel (1801–1875), author of important studies on the Mishnah and Jerusalem Talmud, and Israel Lewy (1841–1917), whose few publications remain extremely valuable, worked at the Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar in Breslau. Jacob Naḥum Epstein (1878–1952), whose introduction to the Mishnah is a classic and who later trained a generation of scholars at the Hebrew University, was among the great

5. See Jacob Neusner, ed., *The Formation of the Babylonian Talmud: Studies in the Achievements of Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Historical and Literary-Critical Research* (Leiden, 1973), idem, ed., *The Modern Study of the Mishnah* (Leiden, 1973).

6. Commentary to *Nazir* 5:5.

7. See Benjamin Rivlin, *Gevi'i Gevia ha-Kesef* (Warsaw, 1898), p. 23b; Yitzhak Barzilay, *Manasseh of Ilya: Precursor of Modernity Among the Jews of Eastern Europe* (Jerusalem, 1999), p. 177.

8. Moses Waldberg, *Kakh Hi Darkhah shel Torah* (vol. 1, Lemberg, 1864; vol. 2, Jassy, 1868)

9. Haim Zalman Dimitrovsky, "From Commentary to Scholarship," in Elijah J. Schochet and Solomon Spiro, *Saul Lieberman: The Man and His Work* (New York, 2005), p. 286.

10. With only a few exceptions, such as in Cambridge, Giessen, and the Hebrew University, talmudic studies were not part of the curriculum of universities before World War II.

scholars at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin. Ḥanokh Albeck (1890–1972), whose edition of the Mishnah and numerous studies of rabbinic literature remain valuable, also served on the Hochschule faculty. The Orthodox Rabbinical Seminary of Berlin was home to David Tzvi Hoffmann (1843–1921), whose important studies on the Mishnah were not surprisingly regarded with suspicion in some Orthodox circles, and Jeḥiel Jacob Weinberg (1884–1966), who authored a volume entitled *Meḥkarim ba-Talmud,* which attempted to combine traditional *yeshivah* learning with the insights of modern, critical scholarship. The Rabbinical Seminary in Vienna had Adolph Schwarz (1846–1931) and Samuel Krauss (1866–1948), and the Seminary in Budapest had Wilhelm Bacher (1850–1913), Ludwig Blau (1861–1936), and Michael Guttmann (1872–1942), all of whom left lasting works in various areas of talmudic scholarship. Across the Atlantic, Abraham Weiss (1895–1970) at Yeshiva University, Solomon Schechter (1847–1915), Louis Ginzberg (1873–1953), and Saul Lieberman (1898–1983) of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and Jacob Z. Lauterbach (1873–1942) at Hebrew Union College, to name just a few, contributed enormously to the study of the Talmud. All of this guaranteed that many of the world's future rabbis would be exposed to modern approaches in Talmud study.

In addition, it is of interest that the years before World War II saw the beginnings of serious talmudic study by gentiles. Notable figures, who incidentally had absolutely no anti-Semitic motives, include Hermann Leberecht Strack (1848–1922), whose *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* is a standard reference work that has recently been published in a revised edition, Robert Travers Herford (1860–1950), author of the classic *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash,* and Herbert Danby (1889–1953), who produced the first English translation of the Mishnah.

Special mention should also be made of R. Joseph Tzvi Duenner (1833–1911), if only because he is so little noted by modern scholars. He was one of the few strictly Orthodox scholars who engaged in critical Talmud study. In addition to directing the rabbinical seminary in Amsterdam, he served as chief rabbi there from 1874 until his death. He wrote glosses on much of the Talmud, operating on the assumption that one could offer interpretations that diverged from what the *amoraim* said and that this had no impact on practical Jewish law.[11] He was also daring in that he claimed that there were passages in the Talmud that in actuality had been inserted by those intending to mock the rabbis.[12] Not surprisingly, Duenner's Orthodox colleagues regarded his assertions as too radical. After all, he was claiming that all of the great sages who had taken these passages seriously, and even wrote novellae based on them, were the victims of a cruel hoax.

Duenner was able to combine in himself both traditional learning and critical scholarship, something that was very rare. Yet one finds another fascinating case where both traditional and critical scholars found themselves in unison. This was when the mysterious Solomon Friedlaender (ca. 1860–1924) published, in 1907 and 1909, his edition of what he claimed was the long lost order of *Kodashim* of the Jerusalem Talmud. A number of critical scholars, including Solomon Schechter (1847–1915), accepted the authenticity of the book. The same was true for traditionalists, and the outstanding talmudist, R. Shalom Mordecai Schvadron (1835–1911), even authored novellae on it. Much as both critical and traditionalist scholars were taken in by Friedlaender, it was the efforts of both

11. *Ḥiddushei ha-Ritzad* (Jerusalem, 1981).

12. See Mayer Herskovics, ed., *Parnas le-Doro* (Hoboken, 1992), pp. 405–408.

critical and traditionalist scholars, including Bacher, Victor Aptowitzer (1871–1942), R. Dov Ritter (1855–1935), and R. Meir Don Plotzki (1867–1928), that exposed the forgery.[13]

Nineteenth-century talmudic scholarship was not only significant in the realm of critical Talmud study. R. Ḥayyim Soloveitchik (1853–1918) and his students developed a new conceptual method of study, referred to by some modern scholars as the analytic approach and by those in *yeshivot* as the Brisker method.[14] Though R. Ḥayyim did not create this method *ex nihilo*, he was the major force behind its development and it reached its most polished state under his direction. Without exaggeration it is possible to say that R. Ḥayyim raised the quality of Talmud study to a level not seen since the days of the tosafists. In his hands the argumentation of the Talmud and of the *rishonim* (especially Maimonides) assumed a "scientific" character in which all aspects of it were systematized and conceptualized, without parallel in previous generations.

As is to be expected with anything new, the approach of R. Ḥayyim met with opposition among many scholars. This was not only because they had a natural conservative response to anything new, but also because they believed that R. Ḥayyim's approach endangered the dominant tradition of Talmud study. Among the leading opponents of the analytic approach was R. Jacob David Willowski (1845–1913), known for his monumental commentary on the Jerusalem Talmud. In the introduction to his responsa, *Beit Ridbaz* (Jerusalem, 1908), Willowski writes as follows:

> A certain rabbi invented the "chemical" method of study. Those in the know now refer to it as "chemistry," but many speak of it as "logic." This proved to be of great harm to us for it is a foreign spirit from without that they have brought in to the oral Torah. This is not the Torah delivered to us by Moses from the mouth of the Omnipresent. This method of study has spread among the *yeshivah* students who still hold a Gemara in their hands. In no way does this type of Torah study bring men to purity. From the day this method spread abroad this kind of Torah has had no power to protect its students. . . . It is better to have no *rosh yeshivah* than to have one who studies with the "chemical" method.[15]

In his ethical will, printed at the end of his responsa, Willowski returns to this criticism and directs his sons: "Be careful, and keep far away from the new method of study that has in recent years spread through Lithuania and Zamut."[16]

Another scholar who opposed the new method of study was R. Aryeh Karlin. It is worth quoting at length from the introduction to his *Lev Aryeh* (Tel Aviv, 1938), because of its importance in helping us understand the motivations of R. Ḥayyim's critics:

> New times have come, numerous "methods" proliferate in the world of the Torah students. The *halakhah* does not, however, follow a "method." They lay claim to being pioneers and revolu-

13. See Baruch Oberlander's series of articles in *Or Yisrael* nos. 8, 11–15 (1997, 1998–1999), and Shlomo Sprecher's introduction to Plotzki, *Shaalu Shelom Yerushalayim* (New York, 1991).

14. R. Ḥayyim served as rabbi in Brisk for many years. See Norman Solomon, *The Analytic Movement: Ḥayyim Soloveitchik and his Circle* (Atlanta, 1993); Moshe Lichtenstein, "What Hath Brisk Wrought: The Brisker Derekh Revisited," *Torah U-Madda Journal* 9 (2000), pp. 1–18; and my "The Brisker Method Reconsidered," *Tradition* 31 (Spring, 1997), pp. 78–102 (from which much of the following is taken).

15. Most of this translation, and that of *Lev Aryeh,* below, is taken from Louis Jacobs, *A Tree of Life* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 59–60.

16. For some reason, the ethical will was omitted from the Mossad ha-Rav Kook 1995 edition of *Beit Ridbaz*. See also his comment as recorded in R. Shlomo Yosef Zevin, *Soferim u-Sefarim* (Tel Aviv, 1959), vol. 2, p. 53. It is not surprising that R. Tzvi Simeon Album, in his polemic against Willowski, *Divrei Emet* (Chicago, 1912), vol. 2, p. 45, points to Willowski's words as proof that the latter had contempt for the Torah scholars of eastern Europe.

> lutionaries, the creators of the world of logical method in the study of the Torah. One must strongly protest against this. These methods have altered the whole face of halakhic studies. The "Telzer" method and "the method of R. Ḥayyim," which are now widespread in the *yeshivah* world have done far more harm than good. . . . [The sages in years past] did not content themselves with only the words of Maimonides and Rabad, as is now customary in *yeshivot*. The *roshei yeshivah* teach that only Maimonides and Rabad are the basis for logic and the study of Torah, and all discussion concerns them; as if without Maimonides there is no *ḥiddush* in Torah and there is no need to explain and elaborate the talmudic opinions themselves and the contradictions [in them] that are difficult to understand.[17]

The opposition aroused by R. Ḥayyim's approach was not able to hold its ground, and the new method quickly conquered the Lithuanian *yeshivah* world. What was the nature of this method and why did it achieve such popularity? One of R. Ḥayyim's students, R. Judah Leib Don Yiḥye, described the *shiurim* of R. Ḥayyim as follows:

> He would approach every talmudic theme as a surgeon. He would first search out the logical elements of every *sugya,* showing the strengths of one side and then the other. After the logical basis was clear to all listeners, he would then focus on the dispute in the Talmud or between Maimonides and Rabad, and explain it in accordance with two [divergent] logical approaches.[18]

Another reason, perhaps the most important, for the popularity of R. Ḥayyim's method is that he took the *halakhah*, which until then had been studied in all its details in order to enable its performance in the real world, and turned it into an ideal structure. This facet is best expressed by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik: "Suddenly the pots and the pans, the eggs and the onions disappeared from the laws of meat and milk; the salt, the blood and the spit disappeared from the laws of salting. The laws of *kashrut* were taken out of the kitchen and removed to an ideal halakhic world . . . constructed out of complexes of abstract concepts."[19]

Since the novellae of R. Ḥayyim were not published in his lifetime, his fame was due to the students who attended his *shiurim*. These *shiurim* were considered "logical" and far removed from *pilpul,* which had been subject to the attacks of the *maskilim*. From the time of R. Ḥayyim, *roshei yeshivah* generally stopped writing commentaries on the Talmud in the traditional fashion, that is, page after page. Instead, they began to write on themes or *sugyot*, and their *ḥiddushim* contained the major points of their *shiurim.*[20]

The fame of the Lithuanian *yeshivot* drew many students from other countries. Rabbi Issachar Dov Teichtal (1885–1945), a well-known Hungarian talmudist, was among those who sent his son to study in Lithuania in the 1930's. A letter from his son describes the high level of Torah study he found there, and illustrates the great intellectual power and attraction of the analytic approach. He writes that even if one would spend a thousand years in Slobodka, he would still be able to grow intel-

17. See also R. Aaron Isaac Zaslansky, *Kovetz al Yad* (Jerusalem, 1957), vol. 2, pp. 186–193, and R. Shlomo Yosef Zevin's response in his unpaginated introduction to this volume.

18. This passage is quoted in Shaul Stampfer, *Ha-Yeshivah ha-Litait be-Hithavutah* (Jerusalem, 2005), p. 121.

19. Pinḥas Peli, ed., *Be-Sod ha-Yaḥid ve-ha-Yaḥad* (Jerusalem, 1976), p. 227 (translation in Lawrence Kaplan, "Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's Philosophy of Halakhah," *Jewish Law Annual* 7 [1988], p. 150). For further discussion of this theme, see Kaplan's essay as well as the articles of R. Aharon Lichtenstein and R. Mosheh Lichtenstein in *Alon Shevut: Bogrim* (Nisan, 5754), pp. 105–132.

20. See Yaakov Ariel, "Megamot Ḥadashot be-Sifrut ha-Toranit," *Ha-Maayan* 35 (Tishrei, 5755), p. 3.

lectually. In other words, the *yeshivah* is an inexhaustible font of learning. "And with literally every breath I praise God who brought me to this place and virtually took me out of a spiritual Egypt and brought me to Mount Sinai, that is, to the center of Torah in Slobodka, and enabled me to receive the Torah anew."[21]

Until now what has been discussed relates either to traditional Talmud study or to the more critical approach found in the rabbinical seminaries and universities. Well into the twentieth century, these areas were the province of a small elite that was able to devote itself to years of advanced study. Were it not for the vision of R. Meir Shapiro (1887–1933), head of the *Ḥakhmei Lublin Yeshivah*, Talmud study might have remained the focus of these elites. At the Agudath Israel convention in Vienna in August 1923, he proposed that there be an international effort to study one complete page (i. e., both sides) of the Babylonian Talmud each day.[22] This would bind the entire Orthodox Jewish world together, both scholars and laymen, particularly at the completion of the Talmud, which would be celebrated every seven years.[23]

Today *Daf Yomi* is quite prevalent, with classes in every city that has a significant Jewish population. Various tapes and internet sites are also available for those who are unable to attend a *shiur*. This has created a revolution in Talmud study among Jewish men, with huge gatherings, some numbering in the tens of thousands, for the celebration at the completion of the seven-year cycle. Yet in the years before World War II, and even as recently as twenty years ago, the numbers of those participating in *Daf Yomi* were significantly smaller. In fact, when it was first adopted, there was even opposition voiced against the *Daf Yomi* program. This opposition did not stem from earlier expressed views that if one had a limited time to study it should be devoted to practical *halakhah*.[24] Though pedagogic concerns were voiced, the opposition was primarily politically based.

While *Daf Yomi* immediately became an important part of Agudath Israel's program, there was an entire community of Hungarian *ḥasidim* that was strongly opposed to Agudath Israel. This was primarily because of what was viewed as the Agudah's compromises with Zionism and its willingness, even in Poland, to permit some secular education in schools under its influence. The outstanding opponent of both of these "sins" in pre-World War II Europe was therefore, not surprisingly, also an outspoken opponent of *Daf Yomi*. In R. Ḥayyim Eleazar Shapira's (1872–1937) mind the *Daf Yomi* program was simply ridiculous, "For how can one learn a page every day when the pages almost always end in the middle of a subject."[25] Elsewhere, Shapira explained that the great danger in joining a *Daf Yomi* group is that one might be led to adopt the Agudah ideology.[26] He also accused the Agudah of initiating the *Daf Yomi* in order to have at its disposal ready-made groups that could be used to colonize the Land of Israel.[27]

21. *Tel Talpiot* 2 (2001), p. 54.

22. In order to complete the order of *Moed*, Shapiro included tractate *Shekalim* from the Jerusalem Talmud in the *Daf Yomi* cycle, since this tractate has no Gemara in the Bavli.

23. See Yehoshua Baumol, *A Blaze in the Darkening Gloom: The Life of Rav Meir Shapiro* (Spring Valley, 1994), ch. 20. Yet contrary to popular belief, Shapiro was not the first to advocate the *Daf Yomi* concept. See Eliezer Katzman, "Nitzotzei Or ha-Meir: Parshiyot Bilti Yeduot be-Inyan Daf ha-Yomi," in Shlomo Gottesman, ed., *Ha-Meir le-Olam* (New York, 2005), pp. 375–423.

24. See e. g., *Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh Deah* 246: 4, with the commentaries of *Shakh* and *Taz*.

25. *Divrei Torah* (Brooklyn, 1998), VI, no. 82.

26. Berish Weinberger, ed., *Iggerot Shapirin* (Brooklyn, 1983), p. 319.

27. *Shaar Yissakhar* (Brooklyn, 1992), p. 382. For other examples of rabbinic opposition to *Daf Yomi*, due to its association with the Agudah, see *Tikkun Olam* (Munkacz, 1936), p. 106; Aharon Rosenberg, ed., *Mishkenot ha-Roim* (New York, 1987), vol. 3, pp. 901–902; *Nitzotzei Or* 3 (Elul, 5758), pp. 33-41. While I don't think that R. Joseph B. Soloveitchik can be called an opponent of *Daf Yomi*, I was present at a *shiur* in the summer of 1985 where he expressed his dismay that due to the growing popularity of *Daf Yomi*, people were no longer studying all six orders of the Mishnah, much of which has no Talmud and is thus not included in the *Daf Yomi* cycle. (For reasons that are unclear, *Middot* and *Kinnim* are the only tractates of Mishnah included in *Daf Yomi*.)

With the rise of Stalin in Russia and the decimation caused by World War II, the great centers of Jewish learning in eastern and central Europe were destroyed. The many great *yeshivot* of eastern Europe, as well as the centers of academic Jewish scholarship in Berlin, Breslau, Vienna, and Warsaw, were finished. The Seminary in Budapest was able to survive, but it remained a shadow of its former self. The centers that survived in North America and in the Land of Israel were left untouched, and they worked actively to save scholars from the clutches of the Nazis and the Communists. These scholars, representing the spectrum of Jewish life, brought new energy to Talmud study during the latter twentieth century. The inclusion of women in the community of Talmud study, in America as well as in Israel, among liberals and conservatives, has been a major boon to the life of Torah over the last twenty-five or so years. The academic study of the Talmud has also burgeoned, as rabbinic literature has been accepted as a pillar of western thought throughout the academy. Finally, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, Torah study and academic Jewish studies have even returned to eastern Europe, enriching the lives and minds of Jews everywhere. Across the globe, among all Jewish denominations, liberals, and non-Jews, the glory of the Talmud has reasserted itself during the half-century since the Holocaust.