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THE ORIGINS OF ORGANIZED CHARITY IN RABBINIC JUDAISM

This book examines the origins of communal and institutional almsgiving in rabbinic Judaism. It undertakes a close reading of foundational rabbinic texts (Mishnah, Tosefta, and Tannaitic Midrashim) and places their discourses on organized giving in their second to third century C.E. contexts. Gregg E. Gardner finds that the Tannaim promoted giving through the soup kitchen (*tamhui*) and charity fund (*quppa*), which enabled anonymous and collective support for the poor. This protected the dignity of the poor and provided an alternative to begging, which benefited the community as a whole – poor and non-poor alike. By contrast, later Jewish and Christian writers would see organized charity as a means to promote their own religious authority. This book contributes to the study of Jews and Judaism, history of religions, biblical studies, and ethics.

Gregg E. Gardner is Assistant Professor and the Diamond Chair in Jewish Law and Ethics at the University of British Columbia. He earned his PhD from Princeton University and MA degrees from Princeton University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He held a Doctoral Dissertation Completion Fellowship from the Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation (2008–09), a Starr Fellowship in Judaica at the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University (2009–10), and a Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship at the Cogut Center for the Humanities at Brown University (2010–11). Gardner is the coeditor of *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World* (2008). His work has been published in such journals as *Jewish Quarterly Review*, *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, and *Journal of Biblical Literature*.

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GREGG E. GARDNER
University of British Columbia

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For my parents,

Francine Iris Gardner and Dr. Marshall Keith Gardner

"And the glory of children is their parents"

Proverbs 17:6

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All translations of rabbinic texts, unless otherwise noted, are my own and based on the following Hebrew and Aramaic editions of the primary texts: the Kaufmann manuscript of the Mishnah; Lieberman's Tosefta – where incomplete, I have used Zuckermandel's edition; Horovitz-Rabin's *Mekhilta*; Weiss's *Sifra*; Kahana's *Sifre on Numbers*, Finkelstein's *Sifre on Deuteronomy*; Schäfer's Jerusalem Talmud; and the Vilna edition of the Babylonian Talmud.[1] Unless otherwise indicated, translations of the Hebrew Bible are according to the New Jewish Publication Society Translation, with my modifications.[2] Translations of the Apocrypha and New Testament are according to the New Revised Standard Version. References to Greek and Latin sources, unless

[1] Georg Beer, ed. *Faksimile-Ausgabe des Mischnacodex Kaufmann A 50* (The Hague, 1929 [repr. Jerusalem, 1968]); Louis Finkelstein and Saul Horovitz, eds., *Sifre on Deuteronomy [Hebrew]* (2nd ed.; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1969; repr. 2001); H. S. Horovitz and I. A. Rabin, eds., *Mechilta d'Rabbi Ismael [Hebrew]* (2nd ed., 1931; repr. Jerusalem: Shalem Books, 1997); Menahem I. Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers: An Annotated Edition [Hebrew]* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2011); Saul Lieberman, *The Tosefta: According to Codex Vienna, with Variants from Codex Erfurt, Genizah Mss. and Editio Princeps [Venice 1521] [Hebrew]* (4 vols.; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1955–1988); Isaac Hirsch Weiss, *Sifra de-ve Rav hu sefer Torat kohanim [Hebrew]* (New York: Om Publishing, 1862; repr. 1946); M. S. Zuckermandel, *Tosephta: Based on the Erfurt and Vienna Codices, with Parallels and Variants, with Supplement to the Tosefta by Saul Lieberman* (Jerusalem: Wahrman, 1970; repr. 2003); and for the Yerushalmi, the Leiden manuscript as published in Peter Schäfer and Hans-Jürgen Becker, eds., *Synopse zum Talmud Yerushalmi* (TSAJ 31, 33, 35, 47, 67, 82–83; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991). I have also made use of the following electronic editions of these texts: Martin G. Abegg Jr. and Casey A. Toews, *Mishna: Based Upon the Kaufmann Manuscript* (Altamonte Springs, Fla.: Accordance 9.1 Bible Software, Oak Tree Software, Inc., 2010); *Ma'agarim: Historical Dictionary of the Academy of the Hebrew Language* (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1998); Bar Ilan University, *The Responsa Project: Version 20* (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University, 1972–2012).

[2] Jewish Publication Society, *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1985).

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otherwise noted, refer to their respective editions in the Loeb Classical Library series.

I have employed a general-purpose style of transliterating Hebrew and Aramaic words when the fully reversible style (with diacritics, etc.) is unnecessary. For common names (e.g., Judah, Shimon) and terms that appear in standard English dictionaries (e.g., midrash), I have used conventional spellings and roman type. References to rabbinic texts are abbreviated as follows: *m.* – Mishnah; *t.* – Tosefta; *y.* – Jerusalem Talmud or Yerushalmi; *b.* – Babylonian Talmud or Bavli (all followed by the name of the tractate); *Mekilta* – *Mekilta of Rabbi Ishmael*; *SifreNum* – *Sifre on Numbers*; and *SifreDeut* – *Sifre on Deuteronomy*. All other abbreviations are according to Alexander et al., *SBL Handbook of Style*, which I have also endeavored to follow for citations, spellings, and other conventions.[3]

In this book, *rabbis* and *Tannaim* refer to the editors and redactors of early rabbinic or Tannaitic compilations, as methodological difficulties limit what can be known about any particular individual or individuals depicted within the texts.[4] *Mishnah* indicates the entire corpus of six orders; each order contains about ten tractates, each tractate is divided into chapters; and each chapter consists of numerous mishnayoth (singular: mishnah) or pericopae. A pericope is divided into multiple lemmata; a lemma is defined as the smallest group of words that convey a coherent thought.[5] I have enumerated lemmata only as necessary.

[3] Patrick H. Alexander et al., eds., *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999).

[4] See H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. M. N. A. Bockmuehl; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1996), 59–62, and my discussion in Chapter 1.

[5] Martin S. Jaffee, "Rabbinic Authorship as a Collective Enterprise," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature* (ed. C. E. Fonrobert and M. S. Jaffee; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 17–37.

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