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0521372909 - The Three Crowns: Structures of Communal Politics in Early
Rabbinic Jewry

Stuart A. Cohen

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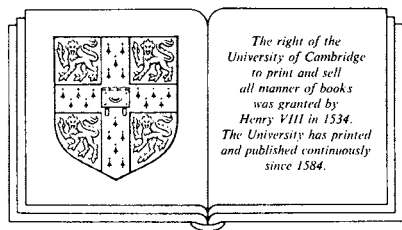
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For

Amichai, Tzachi, Yonatan and Avner-Pinchas

Isaiah 54:13

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As will be apparent from references throughout the following pages, this work relies heavily on the learning of others. It does not claim to have uncovered new sources; rather it proposes merely a political re-interpretation of materials rigorously scrutinised for their theological and juridical meanings by several generations of scholars, the vast majority of whom approached the rabbinic corpus as sacred texts whose elucidation is a religious duty of supreme significance. To signify the contribution of their labours is not, of course, to burden them with responsibility for shortcomings which remain mine alone. I wish only to acknowledge the enormous part which they have played in guiding me to and through literature which, since I am not a trained talmudist in either the traditional or modern senses, would otherwise have remained largely inaccessible and impenetrable.

My professional interest in the academic analysis of Jewish political behaviour, past and present, was first aroused over a decade ago by Professor Daniel Elazar. Throughout the intervening period, he has proved a constant source of advice, inspiration and support; above all, he has been a true friend and colleague in every sense of those terms. It is therefore a pleasure as well as a duty to record my thanks both to him personally and to the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs which, under his direction, has established itself in the very vanguard of this exciting field of intellectual endeavour.

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civilised discussion of Jewish political affairs in their various manifestations. At a formative stage of research, it was also my good fortune to enjoy a sabbatical at the Center for Jewish Studies, Harvard University, where Professor Isadore Twersky profoundly influenced my thinking in ways both formal and otherwise. Indeed, it is impossible to quantify how much this work owes to his impeccable courtesy and learned counsel.

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Bar-Ilan University, Israel

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A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

In transliterating Hebrew words, citations and names (other than those for which a common English equivalent exists), I have adopted the phonetic guidelines suggested by Cambridge University Press as used, for instance, in: *Published Material from the Cambridge Genizah Collections: A Bibliography, 1896–1980* (ed. S. C. Reif; Cambridge, 1989).

Translation presents more daunting problems. As Rabbi Judah was long ago reported to have said: ‘He who translates a verse like its form [i.e. literally] – lo, he is a liar; and he who adds [to clarify the context] – lo, he is a blasphemer’ (*Tosefta*, *Megilah* 3:41). In an attempt to minimise both dangers, I have occasionally had recourse to the standard English-language editions of rabbinic works. Where these are not cited, the translations are my own.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AJS *Association for Jewish Studies*
 ANRW *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der Neueren Forschung.*
 Series 1, *Republic*
 Series 2, *Principate*
 (eds. H. Temporini & W. Haase; Berlin 1972 etc.).
 BASOR *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*
 CCAR *Central Conference of American Rabbis*
 HThR *Harvard Theological Review*
 HUCA *Hebrew Union College Annual*
 IEJ *Israel Exploration Journal*
 JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*
 JJS *Journal of Jewish Studies*
 JQR *Jewish Quarterly Review*
 JSJ *Journal for the Study of Judaism*
 JTS *Journal of Theological Studies*
 PAAJR *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*
 REJ *Revue des Etudes Juifs*
 SBL *Society of Biblical Literature*
 VT *Vetus Testamentum*
 WCJS *World Congress of Jewish Studies*
 ZAW *Zeitschrift fuer die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*