A

Aaron is the brother of *Moses and *Miriam; he speaks for Moses and performs signs on his behalf before the Exodus from *Egypt (Exod 4:10–17, 27–31; 7:19; 8:1; 8:12). Aaron is also the father of the levitical *priesthood (Exod 28:1); Leviticus 8–10 describes the ordination of Aaron and his sons as the priests (*kohanim*) of the *Tabernacle. Nadab and Abihu, two of Aaron's sons, die in the course of this event (Lev 10:1–3), apparently because they disobey God by incorporating foreign elements into the cultic service. Numbers 18 affirms the primacy of the priestly roles of Aaron and his direct descendants: They alone are responsible for maintaining the purity of the sanctuary (18:1), while the other members of the tribe of Levi are to provide support services and "do the work of the Tent of Meeting" (Num 18:2–7). Aaron sometimes challenges his brother's leadership. When Moses ascends Mount Sinai, Aaron stays behind and is persuaded to build the golden calf; he is spared, however, from the plague that strikes the idolaters (Exod 32). Numbers 12 relates that both Aaron and Miriam speak against Moses and challenge the unique nature of Moses' prophetic relationship with God. Both are verbally chastised by God, but only Miriam is punished with a skin affliction and a week's expulsion from the camp. Aaron, like Moses, is barred from entrance to *Canaan for his failure to sanctify God as commanded at the waters of Meribah (Num 20:1–13). Numbers 20:22–29 describes Aaron's death at Mt. Hor and the thirty days of communal mourning that follow. **See also DEUTERONOMY, BOOK OF; EGYPT AND ANCIENT ISRAEL; EXODUS, BOOK OF; INCENSE; LEVITICUS, BOOK OF; NUMBERS, BOOK OF; TEMPLE AND TEMPLE CULT; WORSHIP.**

ELIZABETH SHULMAN

Abarbanel: See ABRAVANEL

Abel: See ADAM; CAIN AND ABEL; EVE.

Abortion. Judaism respects the sanctity of life and of potential life and has generally prohibited abortion. When a pregnant woman's life was endangered, however, rabbinic and medieval authorities permitted abortion on the basis of Exodus 21:22–25. This text was understood to make a distinction between the actual human status of the pregnant woman and the potential human status of her fetus, which was not considered an independent entity before its birth (BT *Yevamot* 69b; BT *Ḥullin* 58a). Because the fetus is not an autonomous being, abortion is not regarded as murder. Once most of the child has emerged from the mother's body, M. *Ohalot* 7:6 rules that "it is not to be touched, for one [life] is not [to] be put aside for another." Moses *Maimonides wrote that when the mother's life was at risk the fetus should be regarded as a pursuer (*rodef*) attempting to kill her and be dealt with accordingly (*Mishneh Torah, Rotze'aḥ* 1:9).

Although most legal authorities permitted abortion when it was judged essential for a woman's physical or mental health, debate focused on permissible conditions and situations. Rabbi Jacob Emden (1697–1776), among others, permitted abortion "as long as the fetus has not emerged from the womb, even if not to save the mother's life, but only to save her from the harassment and great pain which the fetus causes her," ruling that abortion was permitted when a pregnancy resulted from *adultery or another prohibited sexual union (*She'elat Yavez* 1:43).

There is no monolithic attitude toward abortion in modern Judaism, and contemporary Jews hold diverse opinions. However, various movements have formulated denominational positions. All streams of Orthodox Judaism endorse the rabbinic position (based on Exod 21:22–25) that abortion is permitted when there is a high probability that the mother's life is at risk, whether for physical or psychological reasons (see JUDAISM, ORTHODOX: MODERN ORTHODOX; JUDAISM: ORTHODOX: ULTRA-ORTHODOX). However, most Orthodox legal authorities prohibit abortion when the fetus has a significant abnormality or a fatal genetic condition. One recent exception is Rabbi Eliezer Waldenberg (1915–2006), who allowed the first-trimester abortion of a fetus with a deformity that would cause it to suffer and permitted abortion up to the end of the second trimester of pregnancy of a fetus with a lethal defect such as Tay-Sachs disease (*Tzitz Eliezer* 9:51:3).

The position of Conservative Judaism, expressed in 1983, is that "an abortion is justifiable if a continuation of pregnancy might cause the mother severe physical or psychological harm, or when the fetus is judged by competent medical authorities to be severely defective." Conservative authorities, as well as some Orthodox rabbinic decision makers, would permit abortion when pregnancy resulted from rape or from illicit sexual relations such as adultery or incest (See JUDAISM, CONSERVATIVE).

Reform Judaism allows the option of abortion in all of the instances mentioned above, as well as for additional reasons in individual cases. In a 1967 statement approved at the 49th General Assembly, a lay policymaking body, the movement declared abortion permissible "under such circumstances as threatened disease or deformity of the embryo or fetus, threats to the physical and mental health of the mother, rape and incest and the social, economic and psychological factors that might warrant therapeutic termination of pregnancy." In a 1975 statement, passed at the 53rd General Assembly, Reform Judaism expressed confidence in the right and ability of a woman to exercise her ethical and religious judgment in making her own decision (See JUDAISM, REFORM: NORTH AMERICA).

In Israel, the 1977 penal code permits legal abortions by appropriately trained physicians in medical facilities that are "specifically and publicly recognized" as providers of abortions. A termination committee must approve abortion requests. Acceptable grounds include the following: a pregnant woman younger than seventeen, the legal age for marriage; physical, emotional, or psychological damage to

the mother; a pregnancy resulting from irregular circumstances (rape, incest, pregnancy outside of marriage); and the probability that the fetus is severely disabled or otherwise unlikely to live a normal life. The committee approves almost all requests. Liberal political parties in Israel favor legalized abortions on the basis of a woman's right to choose; Orthodox political parties and other traditionally oriented and right-wing groups argue that, except for rare cases, abortion should not be permitted in a Jewish state.

For further reading, see ETHICS: MEDICAL; and R. Biale, *Women and Jewish Law* (1984); A. L. Mackler, *Life and Death Responsibilities in Jewish Biomedical Ethics* (2000); and D. Schiff, *Abortion in Judaism* (2002).   JUDITH R. BASKIN

Abraham is the ancestral father of the Jewish people through *Isaac, his son with his wife *Sarah, and of the Arabs through *Ishmael, his son with the Egyptian maidservant, *Hagar. Abraham's origins are in *Mesopotamia in Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen 11:28); later he settles with his father Terah, his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot in Haran. According to Genesis 12, Abraham set out with his wife and nephew for the land of *Canaan in obedience to a divine mandate; there, *God promised, his progeny would become a great people. Abraham's relationship with God progresses through a series of *covenants in which Abraham's faith is tested in various ways. These covenants require transformations, including the change of name from Abram to Abraham (and Sarai to Sarah) and the institution of male *circumcision (*berit milah*) within Abraham's household (Gen 17). Abraham is characterized by his obedience to God's commands, yet he also questions divine decisions, as in his bargaining with God to save the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction (Gen 18). Abraham is also portrayed as less than admirable in certain circumstances; one example is when he yields his wife Sarah to another man to save his own life (Gen 20).

Despite the divine promises of untold numbers of descendants who would inherit the land of Canaan, Abraham and his wife Sarah remain childless for many years, another test of Abraham's devotion to God. The less patient Sarah attempts to provide her husband with an heir by giving him her maidservant, Hagar (Gen 16); however, after Hagar conceives and gives birth to *Ishmael, tensions escalate within the household, ultimately leading to the expulsion of Hagar and her son (Gen 21). Finally, when Sarah is beyond the normal age of pregnancy, divine promises (Gen 18) are fulfilled with the birth of Isaac (Gen 21). This biblical motif of female *infertility overcome by divine intervention also appears in other narratives about the births of important figures such as *Jacob, *Joseph, and *Samuel.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to Abraham's faith is the divine commandment to sacrifice Isaac in Genesis 22. The binding of Isaac (*akedah*), a literary masterpiece of concision and terror, establishes indisputably both the depth of Abraham's devotion and the kind of faith that God demands. This biblical episode is followed by Sarah's death and Abraham's purchase of a family burial place at Machpelah (Gen 23). In his old age, Abraham marries Keturah (Gen 25) and fathers six more sons, although Isaac remains his sole heir (25:5–6).

Scholars who advocate some level of historicity to the figure of Abraham point out that place names associated with the Syro-Mesopotamian (Amorite) region that are found in Mesopotamian literature of the late second and early first millennium BCE correspond to names in Abraham's ancestry. Nevertheless, most would agree that the Genesis narratives about Abraham should be understood as ancestral narratives that developed over a long period of time and were shaped to express themes that were important to Israelite religion and culture. **See also BIBLE: ANCESTRAL NARRATIVES; GENESIS, BOOK OF. Map 1**   JUDITH R. BASKIN

Abraham bar Ḥiyya (ca. 1065–ca. 1140), mathematician, philosopher, and astrologer, was born in Barcelona and died in Provence. In an epistle he reports that he was held in high esteem by grandees and kings and that he was engrossed from youth in learning, dealing with, and teaching the so-called science of the stars. Bar Ḥiyya's reference to grandees and kings is borne out by his appellation, *Savasorda*, a corruption of *sahib al-shurta* (chief of the guard). Abraham Bar Ḥiyya's work has a scientific and encyclopedic character; it is written entirely in Hebrew, an indication that he developed his career principally among Jews.

His *Yesodei ha-Tevuna u-Migdal ha-'Emuna* (Foundations of Understanding and Tower of Faith) is the first medieval Hebrew encyclopaedia of science (it was edited by J. M. M. Vallicrosa in 1952). *Ḥibbur ha-Meshiḥah veha-Tishboret* (Treatise on Mensuration and Calculation*)* is a mathematical work intended for the use of landholders and judges (ed. M. Guttman [1913]). Bar Ḥiyya described *Surat ha-'Aretz* (The Shape of the Earth) as presenting the "shape of the configuration of the heavens and the earth, and the order of the motion visible in the skies and in the stars" (ed. Munster [1546]). He drew up a set of planetary tables called *Luḥot ha-Nasi* (Tables of the Prince), the canons of which appear in *Ḥeshbon Mahalakhot ha-Kokhavim* (Computation of the Motions of Stars; ed. J. M. M. Vallicrosa [1959]). As for the Jewish *calendar, Bar Ḥiyya wrote *Sefer ha-'Ibbur* (Book of Intercalation), which was in all likelihood the first Hebrew work of this type. This treatise also includes vigorous polemics and rich astronomical materials (ed. T. Philipowsky [1851]).

Megillat ha-Megalleh (Scroll of the Revealer) is devoted to foretelling the exact date of the coming of the *messiah, mainly by means of scriptural data (ed. J. Guttmann [1924]). Its fifth chapter, the largest in the entire work, includes a voluminous and impressive Jewish and universal astrological history. He also wrote a long, apologetic epistle to Rabbi Judah Barzilai of Barcelona, justifying the study and use of a specific astrological approach (ed. Z. Schwarz in *Festschrift Adolf Schwarz*, ed. S. Kraus [1917]), and see S. Sela, "Abraham Bar Hiyya's Astrological Work and Thought," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 12 (2005): 1–31. Abraham Bar Ḥiyya expounded his Neoplatonic philosophy in *Hegyon ha-Nefesh ha-Atzuvah* (Meditation of the Sad Soul; ed. E. Freimann [1860]).

See also ASTROLOGY; SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS: MIDDLE AGES AND EARLY MODERN PERIOD.

SHLOMO SELA

Abraham ben David of Posquières (ca. 1125–1198), also known by the acronym Rabad, was a halakhic authority in southern *France. Born in Narbonne, Rabad received most of his talmudic education from Moses b. Joseph and Meshullam b. Jacob of Lunel. Rabad used some of his significant wealth, possibly acquired through dealings in textiles,

to establish and direct an important school in Posquières. A number of his students, including his son *Isaac the Blind, went on to become major scholars. Rabad's commentaries on rabbinic texts and his *responsa were particularly influential. So, too, were his annotations (*hassagot*) to *Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*; they were frequently published together, beginning in 1509. In his *hassagot*, Rabad expands and reconstructs many of Maimonides' halakhic arguments; he is critical of Maimonides both for excluding the references and explanations from earlier sources that informed his legal decisions and for some of his philosophical views. Rabad left no mystical writings, but is known to have transmitted kabbalistic teachings to his sons (see KABBALAH). **See also FRANCE, SOUTHERN: MIDDLE AGES; ISAAC THE BLIND; MONEYLENDING: MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE.** ELIZABETH SHULMAN

Abraham ibn Daud [**ben David**] (ca. 1110–1180) was a philosopher, historian, and astrologer in *Spain; he was probably born in Cordova and is said to have died as a martyr in Toledo. The first of three scholars known by the acronym Rabad, he is sometimes designated as Rabad I. Strongly influenced by the Muslim Aristotelians, al-Farabi and Avicenna, Ibn Daud was the first to introduce the Aristotelian system and form into Jewish philosophy in *Ha-Emunah ha-Ramah* (The Exalted Faith, trans. with commentary, N. M. Samuelson [1986]), written in Arabic around 1160. The original text is no longer extant, but two fourteenth-century Hebrew translations survive. Ibn Daud's philosophical impact was overshadowed by *Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*, which appeared a few decades later. Ibn Daud's important Hebrew chronicle, *Sefer ha-Kabbalah* (Book of Tradition, trans. with commentary, G. D. Cohen [1967]), is a defense of the chain of rabbinic tradition against the *Karaites. This work, which has messianic undertones, includes the story of the "Four Captives," *Babylonian sages who established centers of learning in Spain, *North Africa, and *Egypt. **See also THOUGHT, MEDIEVAL.** KATE FRIEDMAN

Abravanel (also Abarbanel) Family. Despite their claim to *Davidic descent, members of the Abravanel family first appear in history as eminent figures at a number of medieval courts in *Spain. In additional to prominent financier-politicians and Jewish communal leaders, the family produced two illustrious scholars, **Isaac** (1437–1509) and his eldest son **Judah** (ca. 1460–c. 1521), although only the former had a significant impact on later Jewish thought and literature.

ISAAC ABRAVANEL, born in Lisbon in 1437, spent most of his life in *Portugal; he moved to Spain in 1483, nine years before Spanish Jewry's 1492 expulsion. A leader of Spanish Jewry at the time, he chose departure from Spain over conversion to Christianity and lived the rest of his life in *Italy. Abravanel was one of late medieval and early modern Judaism's most prolific and versatile Hebrew scholars. His premier work is his commentary on the *Torah; he interpreted prophetic literature and the book of *Daniel as well. Abravanel's other writings are theological tomes, although they also often took the form of commentaries. His commentary on the *Passover *haggadah* is the best known example.

Isaac Abravanel's political thought included strong opposition to monarchy. His three lengthy messianic works contain much anti-Christian argumentation. Isaac Abravanel employed Renaissance methods and ideas in both his Iberian and Italian works, attracting the attention of a wide range of Jewish scholars and many Christians, some of whom translated excerpts into Latin.

JUDAH ABRAVANEL, Isaac's son, better known as Leone Ebreo, wrote the *Dialoghi d'amore* (Dialogues of Love), a Renaissance Neoplatonic tract whose original language is a matter of dispute. After its posthumous publication in Italian in 1535, it was translated into other languages, including French and Latin. The work comprises three dialogues on love between the characters Philo and Sophia. Its style and contents bear strong affinities to literary and intellectual currents associated with contemporaneous Florentine Neoplatonist trends. Its later readership included Giordano Bruno, *Spinoza, and Friedrich Schiller. Judah's wrenching Hebrew lament to a son living in Portugal as a forced convert to Christianity also survives.

Various Abravanels continued to hold eminent positions in *Sephardic *Diaspora communities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. BENVENIDA (ca. 1473–after 1560) of Naples and later Ferarra, daughter of Jacob Abravanel (d. 1528), one of Isaac's two brothers, and wife of Isaac's son Samuel (d. 1547), was one of the most influential and wealthy Jewish women in early modern Italy. A supporter of the *messianic pretender David Reuveni (d. 1538), Benvenida had close ties with Eleanor of Toledo, who became the wife of Cosimo the Great of the Medici family. The Abravanel family's contemporary descendants live on several continents and many proudly identify with the family motto: "*Basta mi nombre que es Abravanel*" (It is enough that my name is Abravanel).

For further reading, see E. Lawee, *Isaac Abarbanel's Stance toward Tradition* (2001); and B. Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel* (5th ed., 1998). ERIC LAWEE

Abulafia, Abraham (1240–ca. 1291) was one of the greatest mystics among medieval Jewish *kabbalists. He developed an intensely individual type of mystical contemplation based on a mystical attitude toward language. Born in *Spain, Abulafia wandered in several countries, reaching Acre in 1260; he lived and taught in *Sicily, *Greece, and *Italy. Gershom *Scholem characterized his work as "ecstatic" or "prophetic" *kabbalah; indeed, Abulafia sometimes described himself as a "prophet," and the aim of his mystical contemplation was the achievement of *prophecy. Abulafia rejected the prevalent kabbalistic set of symbols describing the ten divine attributes, the *sefirot*, as personalized elements of the divine pleroma. To assist in achieving perception of the divine, he developed mystical methodologies, including some physical exercises, a rare element among Jewish mystics.

Abulafia was versed in rationalistic philosophy, but in *Sitrei Torah* (The Secrets of the Torah), a commentary he wrote on *Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*, he attributes kabbalistic ideas to Maimonides. He wrote more than a score of treatises, among them a commentary on the divine name of seventy-two letters, *Sefer ha-Shem* (The Book of the Name); commentaries on the ancient *Sefer Yetzirah* (Book of Creation); and polemical works against his opponents (who

included Solomon ben Adret). In 1280 Abulafia was sentenced to death in Rome after he attempted to meet the Pope, Nicholas III, to convince him to be more tolerant toward the Jews; he was saved by the Pope's death. Messianic elements became dominant in his activities in his last years, and he was accused of pretending to be the *Messiah.

Abulafia's writings influenced some of the Christian kabbalists of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, especially Pico della Mirandola and Johannes Reuchlin. Some of the *Safed kabbalists of the sixteenth century made use of his works, and several later Jewish mystics derived ideas from his writings.

For further reading, see G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1954); M. Idel, *Mystical Experiences of Abraham Abulafia* (1988); and idem, *Language, Torah and Hermeneutics in Abraham Abulafia* (1989).   JOSEPH DAN

Academy for Jewish Religion (AJR), with campuses in metropolitan New York (*www.ajrsem.org*) and Los Angeles, California (*www.ajrca.org*), trains and ordains rabbis and cantors to serve across denominations, as well as in unaffiliated synagogues and community organizations. AJR's flexible scheduling allows part-time extended study and attracts many mature and second-career students.

AJR was founded in 1956 as an independent rabbinical seminary after the nondenominational Jewish Institute of Religion merged with Hebrew Union College (Reform). AJR pioneered in promoting a pluralistic and spiritual view of Judaism, while its curriculum remained grounded in text and tradition. A cantorial school was added in 1992. In 2002, a campus was opened in Los Angeles, which currently operates independently of the New York campus while maintaining the same ethos.   SHOHAMA WIENER

Adam is the name of the first human being in the Eden narrative of Genesis 2–3. Because the Hebrew word *'adam* can be a collective noun meaning a generic "human being" (as in Gen 1:26–28), its use in Genesis 2:7 to describe the first human can be understood as denoting a genderless or androgynous being. When God divides the first human being by removing one "side" (rather than "rib"), both "woman" (*'ishah*) and "man" (*'ish*) are created as gendered beings (Gen 2:23). Throughout the narrative (except Gen 2:5) until the divine surgery, *'adam* is used with the definite article and should be understood as "*the* human." The proper name Adam appears unambiguously in 3:17, when Adam is told that he must undertake difficult labor to grow crops. Adam names his wife *Eve in 3:20; she gives birth to three sons, *Cain and Abel (Gen: 4:1-2), and Seth (Gen 4:25). The hard life of Israelite farmers, as well as the reunion of male and female in *marriage, is explained in this etiological narrative.   CAROL MEYERS

Adam Kadmon (literally "primordial man," *anthropos*) is a kabbalistic term that came to represent, in the *Kabbalah of the thirteenth century and later, the concept of the uppermost, hidden essence of the totality of divine powers – the pleroma – when it is conceived in anthropomorphic terms. It is a counterpart to the ancient term *shiur komah*, which expresses the concept of divinity in *hekhalot* *mysticism (both terms coexisted within the Kabbalah). The term became a potent mystical symbol in the *Zohar, and especially in the *Lurianic myth of the late sixteenth century, in

which it is described as the first emanation from the eternal divine light. *Adam Kadmon* often designates the highest stages in the divine hierarchy of powers and appears mostly in cosmogonic contexts. This concept expresses the kabbalistic perception of the different divine powers as limbs of an enormous, mystical anthropomorphic entity. For further reading, see G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1954); and idem, *Kabbalah* (1974).   JOSEPH DAN

Adar is the twelfth month of the Jewish calendar; it is equivalent to February or March on the Gregorian calendar. In the process called intercalation, which maintains synchronization between the festivals and their appropriate seasons, a leap month is added to the calendar seven times in a nineteen-year cycle. In the years when this leap month is added, it follows Adar and is called Adar II (Adar Bet). In leap years the festival of *Purim (Adar 14) takes place in Adar II (M. *Megillah* 1:4). **See also CALENDAR and CALENDAR: MONTHS OF THE YEAR.**

Adler, Cyrus (1863–1940) was an academic administrator and communal leader. The first American-trained PhD in Semitics (1887), Adler was librarian of the Smithsonian Institution (1892) and its assistant secretary (1905). Adler helped found the *Jewish Publication Society of America (1888), the American Jewish Historical Society (1892), and the *American Jewish Committee (1906). In 1908 Adler became president of Dropsie College, an institution devoted to advanced Judaic and Semitic scholarship; in 1915, he succeeded *Solomon Schechter as president of the *Jewish Theological Seminary while retaining his presidency of Dropsie. He remained president of both institutions until his death. Adler helped found both the *Jewish Welfare Board and the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and chaired the committee that produced the Jewish Publication Society translation of the Hebrew Bible (1917). In 1919, he represented the American Jewish Committee at the Versailles Peace Conference and participated in negotiations for an enlarged Jewish Agency for *Palestine. He went on to serve as president of its council and chair of its administrative committee (1930–31). **See also ORGANIZATIONS: NORTH AMERICA; UNITED STATES: MILITARY CHAPLAINCY.**
                IRA ROBINSON

Adoption. Historically, there has been no process of adoption in Jewish law because identity in the traditional Jewish community is determined by lineage and bloodlines. A male whose birth father is of priestly descent is also a *priest, regardless of the status of the adoptive father; an adopted son cannot become a priest even if his adoptive father is of priestly descent. The status of the birth mother is also crucial: A child born of a Jewish mother is a Jew. However, a child born from an illicit sexual relationship such as incest or *adultery (i.e., the mother's husband is not the father of her child) is a *mamzer ("illegitimate") and is permanently limited in his or her standing and marital options in the traditional Jewish community.

An individual may be appointed a guardian (*apotropos*) who assumes permanent responsibility for a child's well-being, undertaking all obligations that natural parents have toward their offspring. Jewish tradition teaches that a person who raises an orphan is equivalent to a natural parent (BT *Sanhedrin* 19b and BT *Megillah* 13a). Legal sources addressing

the guardian include BT *Ketubbot* 101b; *Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Ishut* 23:17–18; and *Karo, *Shulḥan Arukh, Even Ha-Ezer* 114 and *Ḥoshen Mishpat* 60:2–5; 207:20–21.

In contemporary Jewish life, adoption of children according to the laws of the country of residence occurs frequently; perhaps 3% of contemporary Jewish families are formed by adoption. Halakhic concerns focus on the child's Jewish status, because any uncertainty may affect the child's ability to marry into the traditional Jewish community. Adoptive parents are often advised to obtain documentation on the natural parents' backgrounds and marital status. Proof of the birth mother's Jewish status is also necessary should the child move to Israel and/or wish to be married there; it is also important to know if a Jewish father was of priestly descent. To avoid many of these complexities, potential adoptive parents may choose to adopt a Gentile infant who can then be formally converted to Judaism, although conversions of adopted children may also raise halakhic questions.

Until 1998, all adoptions in *Israel were handled by the Adoption Service of Israel's Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and had to be approved by both secular and rabbinical courts. Court-sanctioned adoptions remove all family ties with the natural parents and create family ties with the adoptive parents equivalent to those between natural parents and their child. In recognition of *halakhah*, however, adoption does not affect the consequences of the blood relationship between the adoptee and his or her birth parents: Prohibitions and permissions regarding marriage and divorce based on the child's bloodlines continue to apply. Only Israeli citizens may adopt Israeli infants and the process is difficult. Few healthy Jewish infants are available and adoption requirements are stringent. Israeli legislation as of 1998 allows adoptions from other countries if arranged by private, licensed, nonprofit agencies. Foreign adoptees need not have Jewish parentage or be converted to Judaism after adoption. For further reading, see M. Gold, *And Hannah Wept: Infertility, Adoption, and the Jewish Couple* (1988); and S. K. Rosenberg, *Adoption and the Jewish Family* (1998).

JUDITH R. BASKIN

Adultery. In Judaism, adultery refers to sexual relations between a man, married or single, and a married woman (or a woman bound in some other way by *halakhah* to a particular man). A married man's sexual involvement with a single woman, Jewish or Gentile, although morally problematic, is not adulterous. This gender inequity reflects the patriarchal contexts of biblical and rabbinic Judaism, as well as the importance placed on purity of lineage; a man wanted to be sure that his wife's children were also his own. Fear of adultery led to rabbinic strictures on women's free movement beyond the home, the expectation that modest women would be veiled outside the house, and efforts to restrict women's contacts with men beyond the family circle.

In medieval Muslim environments Jewish religious and community ideals continued to dictate that women should remain at home. Although *marriages were often unhappy and *divorce was not uncommon, accusations of adultery against wives rarely appear in sources from this milieu. In Germany and elsewhere in Northern Europe, where women were far less sequestered than in the Muslim world, concern with adultery was more frequent. The *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*, the pietistic authors of the twelfth-century *Sefer Ḥasidim*

(Book of the Pious), are preoccupied with illicit encounters, whether real or imagined, in which Jewish men have sexual contact with single and married Jewish women (both minors and adults), Jewish and Christian maidservants, and other Christian women. These encounters are presented as temptations of everyday life, and the pietistic response is to set up as many barriers as possible to men's contacts with women, including women of their own families. The *responsa of R. *Meir of Rothenburg (d. 1293) contains a number of queries in which men accuse their wives of adultery, sometimes with Jews and sometimes with Gentiles; in at least one case a wife admits adultery. In almost every instance, R. Meir rejects the veracity of the evidence and rules against the right of the husband to divorce his wife without returning her *ketubbah* (contracted financial settlement), even in a case where a woman bore a child twelve months after her husband's departure on a business trip. R. Meir's evident motivations were to preserve the public sanctity of the family, to deter men from making false accusations in order to rid themselves of unloved wives without significant expense, and to discourage women from engaging in or pretending to engage in adulterous behavior to instigate a divorce to escape an unhappy marriage.

In *Spain and *Italy, sexual mores, particularly among wealthy acculturated Jews, were often far from halakhic ideals; archival records indicate that both men and women were involved in adulterous relationships. Accusations of adultery also figure in divorce cases in early modern and modern Eastern Europe, although here, too, they may have reflected other family tensions and anxieties (Freeze, 182).

The theme of adultery appears frequently in modern Jewish literature, often symbolizing social and historical crises affecting individuals and communities. Examples include I. J. Singer's *Yoshe Kalb* (Yiddish, 1932), set in a Ḥasidic court; I. B. Singer's short stories and novels; S. Y. Agnon's novel *Shira* (Hebrew, 1971), set in 1930s Palestine; the late-twentieth-century American novels of Saul Bellow and Philip Roth; and novels of Israeli writers Amos Oz (*My Michael*) and A. B. Yehoshua (*The Lover*), among others.

For further reading see Y. Assis, "Sexual Behaviour in Mediaeval Hispano-Jewish Society," in *Jewish History: Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky* (1988) 25–59; J. R. Baskin, "From Separation to Displacement: The Problem of Women in *Sefer Hasidim*," *AJS Review* 19 (1994): 1–18; D. Biale, *Eros and the Jews* (1992); C. Y. Freeze, *Jewish Marriage and Divorce in Imperial Russia* (2002); S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 3: *The Family* (1978); and A. Grossman, *Pious and Rebellious: Jewish Women in Medieval Europe* (2004).

JUDITH R. BASKIN

Aesthetics. Unlike *ethics and epistemology, the central role played by aesthetics in modern Jewish *thought remains little studied. Despite its low reputation (identified with pleasure, subjectivism, relativism, and pagan idolatry), aesthetics was central to the actual practice of modern Jewish thought, starting in the eighteenth century with Moses *Mendelssohn. Once the arbiters of Jewish law lost the political power to coerce communal conformity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the expression of Jewish life and thought (its conception of *God, law, ethics, and community) turned into a type of applied art. Understood broadly, aesthetics refers not just to the disinterested, autonomous

study of art, poetry, and beauty. Rather, it calls for sustained attention to the full gamut of *aesthesis*, showing how sensation and sign organize subjects and objects into visual, sonic, and dramatic patterns. Viewed through a holistic prism, a fundamental connection is presumed between aesthetics, ethics, and truth. These signs and the patterns they shape are constituted by physical acts, mental images, and intellectual forms.

ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION: Modern Jewish intellectual history has been particularly unsympathetic to visual aesthetics. The notion that Judaism is fundamentally aniconic and hostile to visual expression reflects a German philosophical cliché in which *poetry and time were privileged over plastic art and space. This conception began with Lessing, Kant, and Hegel, but liberal German-Jewish historians and philosophers such as Heinrich *Graetz and Hermann *Cohen identified it with Judaism as well. It enters into the arts and theory of German modernism via Arnold Schoenberg and Theodor Adorno. However, the notion of an aniconic Judaism is out of step with Jewish scholarship of the twenty-first century. Historians of Jewish *art have convincingly demonstrated that the ban on idolatry in the second of the *Ten Commandments (Exod 20:4–5) applies only to graphic representation of God and the use of images in *worship and does not comprehensively prohibit all figurative expression. That Judaism lacks an extensive fine arts tradition has less to do with the second commandment than with political realities and social exclusions unique to Jewish history and to the practice of art in Christian Europe (see also entries under ART).

AESTHETICS AND RITUAL: The ritual act was the first and primary figure that preoccupied modern Jewish thought at its inception in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Having lost its law-based, coercive character, "*Torah" became "ceremonial." As ceremony, the force of "law" is no longer legal. Its authority is as much, if not more, aesthetic as it is cognitive and moral. According to Mendelssohn (*Jerusalem*, *Philosophical Writings*), language is a system of signs, first oral and then written, that forms knowledge out of sense impression. The sign sets an object, phenomenon, or other characteristic apart from the surrounding mass of sense impressions into which it would otherwise vanish. Understood as a living script composed of visible signs, the ceremonial law points the mind to reflect on universal philosophical truths. For Cohen (*Religion of Reason*), Judaism is a pure pattern (*Gebild*). Despite his own excoriation of art, he compared the Mosaic law to the fine detail of Persian miniature painting. The notion that law constituted an allusive pattern for the cultivation of spiritual and ethical goods continued into the twentieth century in works by Franz *Rosenzweig (*The Star of Redemption*) and Abraham Joshua *Heschel (*Man Is Not Alone*; *God in Search of Man*). The Orthodox thinker Joseph *Soloveitchik (*Halakhic Man*; *The Halakhic Mind*) does not reject aesthetic rapture as much as he founds it on halakhic cognition, referring repeatedly to the beauty of *mitzvot* (commandments) and of the behavior of those who study and uphold them. For Soloveitchik, the value of *mitzvah* was not instrumental, but rather innate (*l'shma*), enjoying the same autonomy as a Modernist work of art.

GOD: As a figure of thought, *God was the subject of the most radical aestheticization in early-twentieth-century Jewish thought. Straining against the second commandment, Martin *Buber (*I and Thou*) and Franz Rosenzweig (*The Star of Redemption*) evoked the visual character of religious experience with words. The key word is *Gestalt*. For Buber, God is the Eternal You, eluding all the limited and limiting categories of language and instrumental reason. And yet, Buber made clear that the revelation of an evanescent, shapeless presence creates its own form in time and space: The living forms of God known through the history of religions are an index to a divine reality that transcends their own historical nature. These forms are the product of the human image-making power in response to *revelation and are subject to generation, decay, and regeneration in concrete human situations. For Rosenzweig, Jewish and Christian ritual practice constellate into a meta-cosmos, in which six figures (God, world, "man," creation, revelation, and *redemption) assemble into an integrated star-shaped figure. At the end of Rosenzweig's system, a now visible manifestation of God's face, a palpable image of absolute truth, confronts the soul at death's border and ushers it back into life. In short, despite the divine resistance to representation, some simulacral appearance (or discourse about such an appearance) is present in twentieth-century Jewish thought.

EMBODIMENT: Physical sensation and the physical body, and the images and ideas that shape them, are the heart and soul of aesthetics. In classical Jewish thought, God's presence is inseparable from *covenant and human community. Philosophically, modern Jewish thought's emphasis on peoplehood and bodies results from the decline of idealism and metaphysics in twentieth-century western philosophy. The body of Israel is a central figure from the work of Buber, Rosenzweig, and Leo Baeck to post-Holocaust thinkers (Richard *Rubenstein, Eliezer *Berkovits, Emil *Fackenheim, Arthur Cohen), and Michael Wyschogrod, Arthur Green, and *feminist thinkers (Judith Plaskow and Rachel Adler [see JUDAISM, FEMINIST]). Contemporary Jewish thought cannot be imagined apart from the creation of *personae:* the biblical *prophet, Judah *Halevi, the *Ḥasidic sage, the Israeli, the Jewish *woman.

The self-conscious attention to aesthetics in modern Jewish thought signals an increasingly expansive view of human culture and Jewish community, in tandem with an increasingly expansive view of human reason. For this tradition, committed to *reason, but not bound by it, aesthetics provides an embodied notion of human intelligence that is thoroughly imbricated in human sensation and imagination and, more broadly, in community, tradition, and politics. As an aesthetic practice, modern Jewish thought creates out of Judaism an image space from which to think about the interface among God, Torah, and Israel.

For further reading, see Z. Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation: Aesthetics and Modern Jewish Thought* (2007); and THOUGHT, MODERN.   ZACHARY BRAITERMAN

Afterlife: Hebrew *Bible and *Second Temple Period. Ancient Israelite thought made no strict distinction between body and soul; the idea that something of importance could survive death is not prominent in biblical writings. The Hebrew word *nefesh,* often translated as "soul," did not pertain to something that could be separated from the body. The word might be better translated as "person," because although *Adam is called

a living soul, a corpse is described as a dead soul (Lev 21:11; Num 6:6). The life-sustaining essence of creatures was normally understood to be their blood, as the *dietary laws demonstrate. Yet the disappearance of breath was also observed as a characteristic of dying, abetting the idea of the spirit (*ruaḥ*, "wind" or "breath") of the dead. No sense of reward or desirability was attached to the idea of becoming a spirit. According to various passages in the Hebrew Bible, the dead reside together in a dark and silent underworld called Sheol, in greatly attenuated form (Gen 37:36; 1 Sam 28:7–20). Sheol is not equivalent to heaven or hell; rather it is the grave itself, a place of weakness and estrangement from God.

Ancient Israelite society generally did not believe that there would be life after death. According to *Ecclesiastes 3:19, "For the fate of the son of man and the fate of the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts; for all is ephemeral." *Job 14:14 asks directly whether human beings live again after they die and answers that there is nothing else (14:20–22). Job 19:25–27, a passage that has suffered in transmission, is often read as a prediction of Job's *resurrection. However, the passage only affirms that Job wants to be vindicated while still alive in a heavenly court by a heavenly advocate or lawyer, as the logical outcome of his challenge to the justice of *God. In fact, the book of Job appears to argue against any simple pietistic notion of immortality.

Some intimations of immortality do appear in the Hebrew Bible. In the later prophetic books especially, the *Canaanite mythological battle between Death and *Baal is used as a metaphor for God's power. *Isaiah 25:8 says, "God will swallow up death forever." Isaiah 26 and *Ezekiel 37 speak of the restoration of the people as a resurrection of buried bones. Yet these verses do not imply the expectation of a literal resurrection; rather, resurrection is a metaphor for the people's national and spiritual rebirth under the influence of *prophecy. The first indubitable reference to physical resurrection in biblical literature comes from the visions in the book of *Daniel, which date to the period of the *Maccabean revolt. Daniel 12:2–3 states, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever." These verses do not articulate any general theory of immortality, only the resurrection of the many, which satisfies the Israelite concept of justice. Those who suffered and died while remaining true to God's *Torah will be vindicated. The reference to the saved as "those who sleep in the dust" may be a reinterpretation of Isaiah 26:19. Those who persecuted the righteous of God will also be resurrected so that they can be punished.

Second Temple Judaism evidently developed this doctrine of resurrection in response to the problem of righteous suffering and *martyrdom. Resurrection of this type, the most frequent type in Jewish thought, focuses on rebirth in this world at a time when present injustices have been righted and removed. Another aspect of the tradition of resurrection is the theme of ascension to the eternal, deathless heaven where the most deserving and righteous go. The story of the seven martyred sons in 2 Maccabees 7 clarifies the

importance of this idea (see MACCABEES, BOOKS OF). Several of the sons, who are tortured because they will not eat pork, report that after their short time of pain and suffering on earth they expect to be transported to heaven as an eternal reward for their martyrdom.

In none of these stories is the journey to heaven itself an important motif. However, the heavenly journey motif is central in I *Enoch and other *apocalyptic and *pseudepigraphical writings (see ESCHATOLOGY: SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD). In most cases, a journey to heaven is assumed to take place at death, for paradise and hell are both located in one of the several heavens. Great personages or mystics could undertake heavenly ascent during life by means of an ecstatic trance or other extracorporeal experiences. Mystical techniques appear in some Jewish *apocalyptic texts, and the resulting heavenly journey functions as verification for the eschatological beliefs of the community. Once a credible *prophet has visited heaven and seen the ultimate rewards there, he vividly communicates these notions of eternal life and compensation to the community.

In the first century CE, the concept of resurrection was very much debated. The *Sadducees rejected it entirely, but the *Pharisees accepted the idea, as did early Christians (see CHRISTIANITY AND SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM). In ensuing centuries, resurrection became a general belief in both rabbinic Judaism and *Christianity. For further reading, see A. F. Segal, *Life After Death: A History of the Afterlife in Western Religion* (2004), and see also MYSTICISM: *HEKHALOT* AND *MERKAVAH* LITERATURE.   ALAN F. SEGAL

Aggadah (plural: *aggadot*; variant: *haggadah*; Aramaic: *aggad'ta*, from the Hebrew *nagad*, "to tell, relate") refers in the broadest sense to nonlegal rabbinic traditions. This term, in Hebrew and *Aramaic, appears in early rabbinic works as distinct from or in contrast to *Mishnah, *Talmud, and *halakhah. *Aggadah* describes a broad variety of literary forms. Much of *aggadah* can also be categorized as *midrash, exegesis of scripture. This type of *aggadah* seeks to explain the meaning of biblical verses, usually focusing on those portions of the *Bible that are nonlegal in nature. The term is also used to describe expansions of *biblical narratives: Rabbinic stories that focus on the lives of biblical characters are characterized as *aggadah*, even when they do not cite specific biblical verses. There is also a fair amount of aggadic material that is unrelated to the biblical text. Accounts of historical events, stories about rabbis, folktales, maxims, and ethical aphorisms – all of these fall under the rubric of *aggadah*. It is the wide variety of genres within *aggadah* that has led some scholars to assert that whatever cannot be categorized as *halakhah* should be considered *aggadah*.

Many *aggadot* may have originated in folk traditions, but the *versions* found in *rabbinic literature have been shaped and reworked by the Rabbis. The willingness not only to transmit stories but also to revise them to function in new contexts is evident when we compare multiple versions of the same story within a rabbinic work or in several rabbinic works. Although individual *Tannaim and *Amoraim are often credited with both halakhic and aggadic teachings, some Rabbis were associated primarily with *aggadah*. Several rabbinic texts identify individuals as *ba'alei aggadah*, "masters of *aggadah*." Popular affection for *aggadah* is evident in a story about two sages who came to a town to teach; the one

who offered a halakhic lecture found himself alone, while crowds flocked to hear his colleague give an aggadic presentation (BT *Sotah* 40a). One tradition identifies *halakhah* as the "essence of *Torah" and *aggadah* as that which appeals to the heart (*Sifre Deuteronomy, Ha'azinu*).

Aggadah can be found in all the major works of classical rabbinic literature. Even "legal" texts like the *Mishnah and *Tosefta contain aggadic material. Although the Palestinian Amoraim are more closely associated with *aggadah* than their Babylonian counterparts, the Babylonian *Talmud contains significant amounts of *aggadah*. There are also works that are almost exclusively aggadic in nature; these include the major collections of amoraic midrash such as *Genesis Rabbah* and *Exodus Rabbah*.

Aggadah and *halakhah* were recognized as distinct by the early Rabbis but they should not be read in isolation in those texts in which both appear. The Mishnah, the most "legal" of rabbinic works, uses aggadic accounts of individuals' behavior to support or challenge legal rulings. *Aggadah* may serve to highlight a problem with a law or to commend behavior that goes beyond the letter of the law. A talmudic story is best understood in the context of the larger unit (*sugya*) of which it is a part, a unit that is likely to include legal material as well. Post-talmudic authorities often expressed discomfort with the fluidity and creativity of *aggadah* and with the willingness of creators and redactors to generate and preserve multiple meanings from a word or phrase without reaching a consensus. This discomfort began in the period of the *Geonim and led to a growing emphasis on *halakhah* and the publication of works that were wholly halakhic in nature, even when they were based on earlier texts that contained both *aggadah* and *halakhah*.

For further reading, see J. Heinemann, "The Nature of Aggadah," and J. Goldin, "The Freedom and Restraint of Haggadah," both in *Midrash and Literature*, ed. G. H. Hartman and S. Budick (1986); J. Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories* (1999); G. Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature* (2000); and A. Shinan, *The World of the Aggadah* (1990).   DVORA E. WEISBERG

Agnon, S. Y. (1888–1970) was the most celebrated Hebrew prose writer of the twentieth century and the recipient of the 1966 Nobel Prize for Literature. Agnon is renowned for fiction that combines thematic scrutiny of modern crisis with abundant echoes of traditional Jewish sources. He produced numerous novels and short stories, and his daughter Emuna Yaron has published many posthumous volumes of his work, including letters, sketches, legends, and the unfinished novel, *Shira* (1971).

Born Shmuel Yosef Czaczkes in *Galicia, he moved to *Palestine in 1907; he spent periods of his life in *Germany, but from 1924 on lived in *Jerusalem. Agnon's writing memorializes Buczacz, his hometown, and laments its destruction during the *Holocaust; he also recounts stories of Jewish life in Germany between the world wars (in, for example, *A Guest for the Night* [1938]) and portrays the *Yishuv* in the early days of *Zionist settlement (importantly, in *Only Yesterday* [1945]). His art displays probing psychological realism; highly symbolic, dreamlike sequences; and elements of folktale and the picaresque. Yet these generically diverse narratives are all tied to a central concern with loss, especially communal collapse, and *redemption. Agnon cultivated a distinct prose style, closer to rabbinic language than to modern spoken Hebrew. Notable for its musicality and allusive richness, his writing is also suffused with ironies. The author rebelled against Orthodoxy in his youth but later returned to it, along the way fashioning a sophisticated literary wit that slyly plays religious and secular perspectives against one another. As a young man Agnon also published in *Yiddish.

In his lifetime Agnon became an iconic figure. After his death, his house in Jerusalem became a museum; an Agnon archive was established at Israel's National Library, his picture appeared on Israeli currency, and streets are named after him throughout *Israel. He himself promoted his image as the master storyteller of modern Jewish upheaval and continuity. The name he invented for himself, Agnon, testifies to that self-construction. It is based on the title of an early story, "*Agunot*," which describes Jews who are both anchored in community and alienated from it.
                                        NAOMI SOKOLOFF

Agricultural Settlements: See BARON DE HIRSCH FUND; CANADA; FILM: LATIN AMERICA; ISRAEL: AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS; LATIN AMERICA; UNITED STATES: AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS

Agudat Israel (also *AGUDAS ISRAEL*; *AGUDAH*) is a worldwide movement of *Orthodox Jewry founded in 1912. Branches were established in most countries of Europe, as well as in the *United States and *British Mandate *Palestine. *Agudat Israel* reached its apogee of political achievement and institutional development in interwar Eastern Europe, electing representatives to national parliaments in *Poland, Latvia, and *Romania; to city councils and Jewish communal boards and boards administering educational systems; and to youth and workers' movements. The initiative for the founding of *Agudat Israel* (and several of its important ideologues) came from the separatist Orthodox community of *Germany, which tried to enlist Eastern European Orthodoxy and its leaders in the fight against *Zionism and *Reform Judaism. This effort coincided with the first steps by Orthodox Jews in Eastern Europe toward political organization. The supreme body of *Agudat Israel* is the *Kenessiah Gedolah*, the movement's grand assembly, first convened in 1923. In *Agudah*'s ideology, however, the movement is ultimately guided and legitimated by its Council of Torah Sages (*Moetzet Gedolei Ha-Torah*), which determines policy on all matters political, social, or educational. In the post-*Holocaust era, this doctrine of rabbinic authority, known as *Da'at Torah* (first popularized in the interwar period by rabbis and *Ḥasidic rebbes associated with *Agudat Israel* in Eastern Europe), became widespread in Orthodox Jewry. Another innovation adopted and developed by *Agudah* was the *Beis Yaakov* schools (see SCHENIRER, SARAH), offering formal religious education for young women. After World War II, *Israel and the *United States became the main centers for the movement. In Israel, *Agudat Israel* continues to function as a political party, offering a joint list of parliamentary candidates with another religious party, *Degel ha-Torah*, under the rubric "United Torah Judaism." In the eighteenth Knesset (elected 2009), United Torah Judaism won five seats. In the United States, *Agudah* serves as an effective lobbying

group, uniting much of Ḥasidic and non-Ḥasidic non-Zionist Orthodoxy under its banner.   GERSHON BACON

Agunah. The designation *agunah* ("anchored" or "chained" woman) applies to women in several situations, including a married woman whose husband has disappeared but whose death cannot be proven for lack of physical remains or witnesses to his death. Such a woman may never remarry according to Jewish law. A woman whose estranged husband refuses to give her a *get* (divorce document), either out of malice or in an effort to extort funds from the woman or her family, is in a similar predicament, because *divorce has always been a prerogative restricted to men in Jewish law (*halakhah). A third instance occurs in the case of the levirate widow (see MARRIAGE, LEVIRATE). Even though levirate marriages virtually never occur in the contemporary era, Orthodox Judaism (see JUDAISM, ORTHODOX) requires a childless widow to undergo the ceremony of *ḥalitzah* to be free to remarry. If her brother-in-law refuses to cooperate or makes exorbitant financial demands, this woman may also find herself an *agunah*. Should an *agunah* make a civil marriage or become involved with a man outside of marriage, any children of this union will be considered illegitimate (*mamzerim*) according to *halakhah*. This is a permanent disability; the *mamzer* may only marry another Jew of similar "illegitimate" status. Contemporary Orthodox communities attempt to resolve the situation of the *agunah* on a case-by-case basis and by exerting pressure on the reluctant men involved, but many thousands of women remain in this situation of significant disability. In recent years, a number of Orthodox advocacy groups have been established to address the plight of the "chained woman."   JUDITH R. BASKIN

Ahab, king of *Israel in the ninth century BCE, succeeded his father Omri and ruled for twenty-two years (1 Kgs 16:29). He was a contemporary of the prophet *Elijah. Ahab's alliances with *Judah (to the south), *Phoenicia (to the north), and particularly with Tyre, through his marriage to Jezebel, the king's daughter, resulted in periods of significant economic prosperity. Ahab was killed in an effort to recover Ramoth-Gilead from the Arameans (1 Kgs 22) ca. 850 BCE and was succeeded by his son Ahaziah (1 Kgs 22:40). Despite his accomplishments, Ahab is admonished for doing "what was displeasing in the eyes of God, more than all who had preceded him" (1 Kgs 16:30 and 22:25–26), a reference to his support of Jezebel's introduction of widespread worship of *Baal (16:31–33). 1 *Kings 22 recounts how Jezebel arranged the death of the innocent Naboth so that Ahab could possess his vineyard. Confronted by Elijah, who predicted the disasters that would befall his house, Ahab repented (22:27–29), delaying the fulfillment of Elijah's prophesies. **Map 2**   KATE FRIEDMAN

Aḥad Ha-Am (1856–1927) is the pen name of Hebrew essayist and Zionist ideologue Asher Ginzberg; the name means "one of the people." An austere master of Hebrew prose, Aḥad Ha-Am wrote expositions on morality and politics in the vein of Herbert Spencer or the Russian populist intellectual Piotr Lavrov. These essays, mostly rather brief, remain among the most influential Hebrew works of their kind. Aḥad Ha-Am was also the father of "cultural *Zionism"; he believed that Jews must carve out for themselves a national state where, because of Jewish values more fundamental than those of *theology, the requirements of decency would forever overshadow those of pragmatism. He was the founding editor of the most important Hebrew periodical of its time, *Ha-Shiloaḥ*, and led a semi-secret group within the Zionist movement, the *B'nei Moshe*. Aḥad Ha-Am's best known essays include "The Truth from the Land of Israel" and "The Supremacy of Reason." He was one of the first important Zionists to call attention to the primacy of the Arab question. For further reading see RUSSIA; ZIONISM; and S. J. Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha'am and the Origins of Zionism* (1993).   STEVEN J. ZIPPERSTEIN

Akedah ("Binding" of Isaac): See ABRAHAM; ISAAC

Akiva ben Joseph (ca. 45–135 CE) was a third-generation *Tanna and one of the most influential rabbinic sages. Rabbinic tradition holds that he spent his early life as a shepherd and remained uneducated until the age of forty; subsequently he devoted himself to study with the support of his wife Rachel. Akiva developed a method of biblical *hermeneutics in which every word, sign, orthographic variation, and grammatical peculiarity had a significance that could be used to make *halakhic decisions (see RABBINIC HERMENEUTICS). He defended the holiness of the biblical book *Song of Songs, which he interpreted as an allegory of the relationship between *God and the people of Israel, and he supported its canonization. Akiva appears to have originated the organization of rabbinic legal teachings by subject matter, a method later used in the *Mishnah. Among his students were many of the leading fourth-generation Tannaim. An avid Jewish nationalist, Akiva traveled to *Rome in an attempt to reverse Domitian's legislation against Jews, and he is said to have been an enthusiastic supporter of *Bar Kokhba's revolt and of his messianic claims. Akiva was arrested for defying the Emperor Hadrian's decree against the study of *Torah and was one of the ten Rabbis martyred by the Romans at Caesarea. **See also** *AVOT DE RABBI NATAN*; **CAPITAL PUNISHMENT; FOLKTALES; JEWISH WAR, SECOND; MYSTICISM:** *HEKHALOT* **AND** *MERKAVAH* **LITERATURE; LOVE; MARTYRDOM; REDEMPTION; TRIBES, TEN LOST.**   ELIZABETH SHULMAN

Alexander the Great. The son of Philip II and Olympias, Alexander III (356–323 BCE) became king of Macedon in 336 after the assassination of his father. Seeking revenge on the Persians for their earlier wars against the Greeks, Alexander embarked on a ten-year campaign in which he conquered Asia Minor, the Levant, *Egypt, and *Mesopotamia while establishing footholds in Bactria and the Indus River valley. Between his victories over Darius III at Issus (333) and Gaugamela (331), Alexander marched through *Phoenicia to Egypt, where the oracle of Amon confirmed his claims of divine ancestry. Bolstered by his military victories and a growing confidence in his status as the son of Zeus, Alexander sought to incorporate the heritage of the Greeks into the cultures of the East. This emerging syncretism had a profound impact on Jewish life and would polarize later generations of Jews. Not surprisingly, Jewish literature treats Alexander in an ambivalent manner. Both 1 *Maccabees (1:1–8) and *Daniel (7:7; 8:5–7, 20–22; 11:3) highlight his military ruthlessness, with the latter text placing his empire within an apocalyptic framework. Yet *Josephus (*Antiquities* 11.321–347) and the Babylonian

*Talmud (*Yoma* 69a) describe Jews and *Samaritans contending with one another for Alexander's patronage. Josephus' longer account has Alexander visit *Jerusalem, where he offered sacrifices to the Jewish God and conferred economic privileges on the Jews after learning that their scripture (attributed anachronistically to *Daniel) prophesied his victory over the Persians. Still other talmudic sources (BT *Tamid* 32a–b) contain legendary stories about the king, a phenomenon that reflects late antiquity's interest in romanticizing Alexander's life. See also HELLENISM; NEAR EAST, ANCIENT; PERSIA, ANCIENT; PTOLEMIES; SELEUCIDS.

DAVID M. REIS

Alexandria, Ancient. Founded by *Alexander the Great in 331 BCE, Alexandria became the dominant city in the Mediterranean world. Its location at the Nile's outlet to the sea made it the point of departure to the wider world for the agricultural riches of *Egypt, while the *Ptolemies' passion for gathering great scholars and literature in the city made it the cultural capital of the *Hellenistic world. Thus, Alexandria was a magnet for émigrés from around the region, including Judeans who came there from the Levant, *Mesopotamia, and even Asia Minor.

In fact, Judeans appear to have been among the earliest settlers of Alexander's city; *Aramaic burial inscriptions have been found in the city's east necropolis from as early as the beginning of the third century BCE. If *Josephus is to be believed, Alexander himself settled some Judeans there (*War* 2.487; *Apion* 2.35); others may have arrived as slaves taken in war (*Letter of *Aristeas* 12–13) or as economic immigrants from both outside of Egypt and from existing Jewish settlements in Egypt such as Elephantine. Although the evidence is ambiguous, Jews in Alexandria were apparently given the right to form a *politeuma*, which offered limited form of self-government (cf. *Letter of Aristeas* 310; *Corpus papyrorum judaicarum* 2.143), during the reign of Philometor (d. ca. 145 BCE). By the end of the Hellenistic period, *Philo reports that Jews in Egypt numbered around one million (*Against Flaccus* 43); even allowing for hyperbole, the Jewish population in Alexandria must have been considerable. Josephus (*Antiquities* 14.117) quotes the Greek geographer Strabo (d. ca. 24 CE) to the effect that the Jews were (favorably) quartered in a single portion of the city, although Philo's report that Jews were not confined to a single part of Alexandria during the disturbances in 38 CE seems to contradict this (*Against Flaccus* 54–56). In any case, by all accounts the period of Hellenistic rule over Alexandria was a mostly peaceful time when Jews prospered and experienced socioeconomic mobility, in large part through military service.

Roman hegemony brought unwelcome changes to Jews living in Alexandria. Almost immediately *Rome rescinded many privileges enjoyed by the Jews and instituted the *laographia* (a tax on native Egyptians and other non-Greeks) in 24/23 BCE. In 38 CE, Rome mismanaged a dispute that broke out between Jews and Greeks, and the ensuing rioting and violence continued on and off until 41, when Claudius issued an edict that stabilized Jewish rights in the city. An uneasy peace prevailed until 66 when Tiberius Alexander, Philo's apostate nephew, put down a revolt with force (*War* 3.487–498). Both violent interludes diminished Jewish prospects in Alexandria; further unrest broke out in 115, leading to the virtual destruction of the Jewish presence in the city in 117. Jews returned to live in the city in the fourth century CE, but only under tense conditions. In 415, violence against the Jews instigated by the Christian Patriarch of the city, Cyril of Alexandria, once more essentially ended the Jewish presence there. See PTOLEMIES: IMPACT ON JEWISH CULTURE AND THOUGHT; SEPTUAGINT. Map 4

ROBERT KUGLER

Algeria: See NORTH AFRICA

Aliyah: See ISRAEL, STATE OF: IMMIGRATION entries; TORAH READING

Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU) is an organization formed in 1860 in *France to help Jews in other countries gain civil rights and *emancipation. Its establishment was prompted by outrage at the 1840 *Damascus blood libel and the 1858 *Mortara Affair. The AIU established a network of schools that extended from Morocco to *Iran, brought talented young men and women from their home communities to be trained as teachers in France, and provided academic, religious, and vocational training to tens of thousands of Jewish young people. Alliance schools provided late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Jews of the Middle East and *North Africa with a modern education and fluency in French and other European languages, as well as technical skills. Through these advantages, Jews achieved a new and unprecedented mobility in the economic life of the Muslim world that was far out of proportion to their numbers or their traditional social status. For further reading, see ARGENTINA; FRANCE: 1789–1939; IRAN; IRAQ; NORTH AFRICA; and A. Rodrigue, *Images of Sephardi and Eastern Jewries in Transition: The Teachers of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, 1860–1939* (1993).

Almohads (Arabic: *al-Mowahhidum*) were a *North African Berber sectarian reform movement started by Muhammad ibn Tumart (d. 1128) at the beginning of the twelfth century. Tumart's successor, Abd al-Mumin (d. 1163), expanded the dynasty's political power to *Egypt and *Spain, and in 1170 the Almohads established Seville as their capital city. Intolerant of all non-Muslims, the Almohads offered Jews and Christians in Spain the choice of conversion, exile, or death; many Jews fled to Christian *Spain or more tolerant locations in the Muslim world. In 1212, an alliance of Castille, Aragon, Navarre, and *Portugal decisively stopped further Almohad expansion on the Iberian Peninsula. The impact of Almohad rule on Jews in *North Africa, where many adopted *Islam outwardly and practiced Judaism secretly, was devastating and long lasting. Map 6   KATE FRIEDMAN

Almoravids were a Berber dynasty from the southwest Sahara that adopted a fundamentalist form of *Islam in 1080 and established a capital at Marrakesh in Morocco. The Almoravids conquered parts of *North Africa. In 1086, Muslims in *Spain invited the Almoravids to help defend them against the invasion of Alfonso VI, the Christian king of Castile. The successful Almoravids remained in Muslim Spain, assuming power by 1090. Almoravid rulers appear to have been tolerant of Jews in both North Africa and in Spain, although the situation may have deteriorated somewhat by the mid-twelfth century in North Africa. Jewish soldiers, diplomats, and physicians commonly served Almoravid rulers. Maps 5, 6   KATE FRIEDMAN