

Emancipation, Reform, and Multicultural Nationalism
in Malbim's Bucharest

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
of the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Honors Program

Yeshiva College
Yeshiva University
August 2022

David P. Tanner

Mentors: Rabbi Shalom Carmy, Jewish Studies
Rabbi Dr. Dov Lerner, Jewish Studies

Acknowledgements: With appreciation to my grandparents, Gerda Marie Rose and Israel Tanner, for their assistance in translating German and Romanian texts for this thesis.

Abstract: Malbim's status as one of the most prolific and original Biblical commentators is well known, and the role his writings played in combating the then-new Reform movement has been documented by scholars. However, an area of Malbim's struggle with Reform that is lesser known is his tenure as Chief Rabbi of Romania from 1858–1864. Due to the political climate in Bucharest during the time Malbim resided there, he was forced to deal not only with Reform but also with the interrelated issues of Jewish emancipation and the potential conflict between traditional Judaism and a Romanian national identity. Drawing on the scarce material we have indicating Malbim's positions on these questions, I show how Malbim's ideas developed and were applied to the Romanian context. I also draw parallels to the views of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, and suggest that Malbim's insistence that Orthodox Jews could be patriotic Romanians anticipated the modern notion of multicultural nationalism.

Rabbi Meir Leibush Weiser (1809–1879), commonly known as Malbim, was an Orthodox Jewish Biblical commentator who was “one of the most industrious biblical exegetes in Jewish history.”¹ Malbim was recognized by such luminaries as Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk as having “commanded the reverence due to one of the *rishonim*”² and was an important historical figure in the clash between Orthodoxy and new anti-traditional movements. Malbim lived in an era where significant religious changes were taking place in Germany, which had a ripple effect on Eastern Europe as well. These were the spread of the *haskalah* or “Jewish Enlightenment,” which “sought to develop a rational conception of Jewish beliefs in the spirit of

¹ Dov Lerner, “Dark Matter: Malbim's Exegetical Pedagogy” (PhD. diss.: University of Chicago, 2021), vi, doi: 10.6082/uchicago.2938. Regarding Malbim's commentary on the Bible, see Lerner; Michel Dal, *Parshanut Ortodoksit la-Torah be-Idan Shel Temurot: ha-Pulmus be-Peirusheihen Shel Rav Y. Z. Mecklenburg ve-Malbim* (PhD. diss.: Bar Ilan University, 2008), <https://asif.co.il/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/137.pdf>; Sh. Zvi Schaechter, *Mishnato Shel ha-Malbim* (PhD. diss.: Hebrew University, 1983); and the works of Berger and Rosenbloom cited hereinafter.

² R. Mayer Twersky, “A Glimpse of the Rav,” *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought* 30, no. 4 (Summer 1996): 96, <https://jstor.org/stable/23261238>.

the philosophy of the time”³ and “alter the nature of Jewish learning and society.”⁴ Malbim looked at these changes as “perversions not only of faith but also of intellect.”⁵ Additionally, Orthodoxy was challenged by the nascent Reform movement, one of whose formative moments was the Rabbinical Conference of Braunschweig (Brunswick) in 1844, whose attendees, Malbim wrote, “gathered to abolish religion and law.”⁶

Malbim served as rabbi in a number of European communities. Though Romania had an extraordinarily bad track record in terms of retaining its chief rabbis—in the years preceding Malbim’s tenure, the holder of the position had been removed from his post no fewer than six times⁷—Malbim agreed in 1858 to leave his rabbinical position in the Prussian city of Kempen, where he had lived comfortably and gotten along very well with the city’s inhabitants,⁸ to become Romania’s chief rabbi. He later explained his decision as follows: “Whatever shall result, I shall go and see these scattered ones, for are they not the scattered ones of Israel, did they not emerge from the womb of Judah? Perhaps I shall remove the precious souls from among the evildoers,⁹ perhaps I shall succeed and turn them back from their difficult path and the evil of

³ Immanuel Etkes, “Haskalah” (YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe, October 27, 2010), <https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Haskalah>.

⁴ Lerner, “Dark Matter,” 18.

⁵ David Berger, “Malbim’s Secular Knowledge and His Relationship to the Spirit of the Haskalah,” in *Cultures in Collision and Conversation: Essays in the Intellectual History of the Jews* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2011), 174, doi: 10.2307/j.ctt21h4xrd.

⁶ Meir Leibush Malbim, *ha-Torah veha-Mitzvah* (Bnei Brak: 2000), 4–5. Translation by Lerner, 113.

⁷ Ya’akov Geller, *ha-Malbim: Ma’avako ba-Haskalah uva-Reformah be-Bucharest (818–624, 1858–1864): Al-Pi Kitvei-Yad ve-Te’udot she-Terem Pursemu* (Lod: Orot Yahadut ha-Magrev, 2000), 46–48.

⁸ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 37.

⁹ A reference to Jeremiah 15:19; see Malbim’s comments there.

their deeds.”¹⁰ Despite his high hopes, Malbim met with fierce opposition from the local reformers, and was eventually expelled from Bucharest by the Romanian government at their behest in March 1864.¹¹

During his tenure as Chief Rabbi of Romania and its capital, Bucharest, from 1858–1864,¹² the issue of Jewish emancipation was of primary importance for many Jews, including local leading reformers. The issues of emancipation and reform, while seemingly unrelated, became intricately connected in the Romanian context. An examination of the historical events informing the development of Malbim’s opinions on these issues will make his nuanced and balanced approach easier to define.

The Breslau Dispute

At the age of 28, Malbim traveled throughout Europe (primarily Western Europe) to secure approbations for his first work to be published, a commentary on the first chapters of *Shulchan Aruch* titled *Artzot ha-Chaim*.¹³ In August of 1837, he received an approbation from Rabbi Solomon (Zalman) Tiktin, rabbi of the city of Breslau (modern day Wrocław). Rabbi

¹⁰ Meir Leibush Malbim, “Shenat ha-Yovel,” in *Sefer Malbim: Me’ah Shanah le-Petirato, Rosh ha-Shanah 5640–5740*, ed. Yehezkel Rotenberg (Bnei Brak: Netzach, 1979), 103. Unattributed translations are my own.

¹¹ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 114–17.

¹² Ya’akov Geller, “New Documents on the Malbim Affair and His Struggle with the Maskilim,” in *The History of the Jews in Romania: The Nineteenth Century*, eds. Carol Iancu, Liviu Rothman, and Raphael Vago (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University, 2005), 232, 237.

¹³ Noah H. Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim: Parshanut, Filosofyah, Mada u-Mistorin be-Kitvei ha-Rav Me’ir Leibush Malbim* (Yerushalayim: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1988), 19–23.

Tiktin's approbation mentions that Malbim stayed in Breslau for a full year, and praises him lavishly.¹⁴

While Wrocław is now a city in Poland, at the time it was an important Prussian city, and it served as the battleground for a key dispute between the emerging Reform movement and traditional Judaism. Rosenbloom notes that by the time Malbim resided in Breslau, division had already started to form. The Reform movement had rapidly spread through Prussia and members of the Breslau community who supported reform wanted to appoint a Reform rabbi to lead the community, which had until then been led by supporters of traditional Judaism such as Rabbi Tiktin.¹⁵ Abraham Geiger, a leading figure in the Reform movement, was elected to be assistant rabbi of the community in July 1838.¹⁶ Orthodox residents of Breslau tried to prevent Geiger from filling the position by petitioning the government to withhold Prussian citizenship from him, claiming "that the election was not properly conducted and that, according to Prussian law, religious innovation, such as that represented by Geiger, was unlawful."¹⁷ They were, however, unsuccessful, and Geiger assumed the position of assistant rabbi in 1840.

¹⁴ Meir Leibush Malbim, approbations to *Artzot ha-Chaim* (Warsaw: 1860); Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, 21–22. Rosenbloom regards as baseless and chronologically impossible the claim made by Moshe Meir Yashar in *ha-Gaon Malbim: Chayav, Mishnato, Ma'avakav u-Mifalav* (Yerushalayim: Hod, 1980), 38–42 that Malbim personally confronted Abraham Geiger, Rabbi Tiktin's antagonist, during his year-long stay in Breslau.

¹⁵ Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, 22.

¹⁶ Michael A. Meyer, "Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin and the Orthodox Segment of the Breslau Community, 1845–1854," *Michael: On the History of the Jews in the Diaspora* 2 (1973): 92. <https://jstor.org/stable/23493774>.

¹⁷ Meyer, "Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin," 92.

Despite Geiger's appointment as assistant rabbi, he "was relegated to second or junior rabbi with no authority to rule on Jewish law for the entire community,"¹⁸ effectively making him "the rabbi of the Liberal element only rather than (sic) the spiritual leader of the [community]."¹⁹ Over the next decade and a half, the dispute between supporters of Rabbi Tiktin and Geiger continued unabated. When Rabbi Tiktin died in 1843, the Orthodox constituency of Breslau chose his son, Gedaliah, to serve in his stead. However, this appointment was not recognized by the Prussian government.²⁰

Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin then became rabbi of a "smaller fraternal organizations supporting a synagogue"²¹ rather than accept the position of assistant rabbi alongside then-Chief Rabbi Geiger. Though the government initially denied the junior Rabbi Tiktin the right to preach or "exercise official rabbinical functions,"²² upon petition to the Prussian king he was allowed to serve the Orthodox community. In November 1851, King Friedrich Wilhelm IV granted Rabbi Tiktin the title of "Königlicher Land-Rabbiner in Schlesien" (Royal State Rabbi in Silesia), explaining, "Although he has no right to the title, I am inclined to give him the title I have in mind, so that the direction he represents may honor a reinforcement that is desirable for political

¹⁸ Adam S. Ferziger, "Abraham Geiger and the Denominational Approach to Jewish Religious Life," in *Jüdische Existenz in der Moderne: Abraham Geiger und die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, eds. Christian Wiese, Walter Homolka and Thomas Brechenmacher (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2013), 185, doi: 10.1515/9783110247596.179.

¹⁹ Max Wiener, "Biography of Abraham Geiger," in *Abraham Geiger and Liberal Judaism: The Challenge of the Nineteenth Century*, compiled with a biographical introduction by Max Wiener, trans. Ernst J. Schlochauer (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1962), 22, quoted in Ferziger, "Abraham Geiger," 185.

²⁰ Meyer, "Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin," 93.

²¹ Meyer, "Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin," 94.

²² Meyer, "Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin," 94.

reasons.”²³ In 1856, Rabbi Tiktin was officially appointed rabbi of the community alongside Geiger, with each tasked with ministering to his respective denomination.²⁴

In the summer of 1839, toward the beginning of the dispute, Malbim sent a letter to Rabbi Zalman Tiktin (included by Rosenbloom as an appendix to his biography of Malbim) expressing his dismay about the spread of the Reform movement, declaring its proponents worse than the Karaites, and suggesting that all of the reforms enacted by the new movement be dispatched to halachic authorities to evaluate the status in Jewish law of those who suggested them. Malbim suggests that the proponents of reform, like the Karaites, be considered in the eyes of halacha “separated from the community,” and that it should be “forbidden to intermarry with them and to associate with them in any matter.”²⁵ He scathingly refers to Geiger, whom he called “*tzoreir ha-Yehudim*” (oppressor of the Jews; a term used in Esther 8:1 for the evil Haman), and Michael Creizenach, whom he blasts for authoring a new “*Shulchan Aruch*” rejecting many of the Torah’s commandments.²⁶ He makes reference to the work *Naftulei Niftalti*, written in Oldenburg around 1838 “to refute the rationales presented in Reform Jewish literature.”²⁷ This work was authored by none other than Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, later known for his struggle against Reform during his tenure in Frankfurt.²⁸

²³ Meyer, “Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin,” 94–95.

²⁴ Meyer, “Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin,” 95.

²⁵ Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, 406.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, *ha-Malbim*, 404. Both of them receive the epithet “*yemach shemo*” (may his name be blotted out).

²⁷ Samson Raphael Hirsch, *The Collected Writings: Volume IX* (New York, Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers, 2012), 1

²⁸ Hirsch, *Collected Writings IX*, 1.

In his letter, Malbim suggests that exchanging letters with the great halachic authorities of the generation on the topic of the halachic status of the reformers would help the Orthodox cause politically as well. He notes that unlike previous reforms such as the use of organs in the synagogue, which were more mild in nature and allowed the people initiating them plausible deniability as to their true intentions, these newer reforms denying the validity of the commandments struck at the core of Judaism and clearly demonstrated the heretical nature of their proponents. Malbim thus suggests that the reformers' own words prove they should be considered "neither Jews nor Karaites,²⁹ and not Christians, rather idol worshippers (pagans),³⁰ or another religion, whatever they are, they are not Jews..."³¹ Malbim writes that upon clearly proving their deviations from traditional Judaism, it would be possible "to stop the burning fire, for the royalty as well, when they see all the sages of Israel" opposing Reform and declaring it a new religion, would deem it illegal under secular law, since creating new religions was prohibited by Prussian law,³² and "pursue [the reformers] unto destruction."³³

Malbim's passionate letter reveals a great deal about his perspective on how to fight the Reform movement. Malbim was clearly aware of the Prussian interdiction against creating new religions, and believed it could be used to support the fight against Reform. He was not hesitant to use political means, including involving the secular authorities, to further Orthodoxy's cause.

²⁹ For as he notes, Karaites denied only the Oral Torah, while Reform went so far as to reject explicit teachings of the Written Torah as well.

³⁰ Malbim uses the German word "Heiden," written in Hebrew characters as *היידען*.

³¹ Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, 405–6.

³² See Jacob Katz, *ha-Kera she-Lo Nit'acha: Perishat ha-Ortodoksim Michlal ha-Kehillot be-Hungaryah uve-Germanyah* (Yerushalayim: Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-Toldot Yisra'el, 1995), 29.

³³ Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, 406.

Rosenbloom notes that we have no record of Rabbi Tiktin's response. Malbim's proposal of collecting rabbinic rejections of the Reform movement to present to the Prussian government does not seem to have been carried out, and the Prussian government allowed Geiger to assume the role of assistant rabbi despite the argument that he represented a deviance from traditional Judaism. However, the fact that the title of Royal State Rabbi in Silesia was granted to Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin in 1851 for political reasons shows that Malbim was correct that, at least in certain circumstances, Orthodoxy could be the beneficiary of governmental policy and political motives.

The Issue of Jewish Emancipation

The Approach of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch

As Rosenbloom notes, Malbim's letter makes clear that he was aware of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, then rabbi of Oldenburg, and his anti-Reform polemical work *Naftulei Niftalti*.³⁴ Rav Hirsch's views on emancipation and loyalty to the state may be instructive, not only due to the possibility that Malbim was aware of them but, more simply, because of their remarkable similarity to those of Malbim. In Rav Hirsch's *The Nineteen Letters about Judaism*, he addresses the question of emancipation head-on. He first cites Jeremiah 29:5–7, in which the prophet tells the newly exiled Jews to settle in Babylon, build houses, plant gardens, marry, have children, seek the peace of the place of their exile, and pray on its behalf. From these verses, Rav Hirsch derives that “rejection and confinement to a narrow way of life are not essential conditions of the *galus*.”³⁵ Rather, it is our duty to ally ourselves as closely as possible with the state that has

³⁴ Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, 403.

³⁵ Hebrew for exile.

accepted us, to further its aims, and not to think of our own welfare as being independent from that of the state.”³⁶

Rav Hirsch goes on to explain his theological concept of the way exile is meant to take place. After remarking that equal treatment of Jews in previous eras would have been “a source of light and strength,” he puts forth the following:

It would appear, however, that a harsh and oppressive *galus* had to come first, in order to train Yisrael to live under milder *galus* conditions. Only after *galus* is understood and accepted as it should be—when even in a time of suffering God and the Torah are seen as the sole task in life, when material abundance is sought only as a means and when God is served even in misery—only then is Yisrael perhaps ready for the even greater test of a life of ease and good fortune while it is dispersed in *galus*.³⁷

Rav Hirsch continues with an endorsement of emancipation, writing that “it is certainly the duty of the community as a whole to seize any opportunity provided by the law to obtain the civil rights needed to improve its conditions of existence,” but qualifies this endorsement by writing “I bless emancipation only if Yisrael regards it not as the goal of its mission but merely as a new aspect of it, a new test, infinitely more difficult than the test posed by oppression,” and not “the ultimate aim of its historic mission.”³⁸ Elsewhere in his writings, Rav Hirsch expands on this idea, warning against the “enticing voices” proclaiming “you cannot become free and equal as long as you cling to the old Judaism.”³⁹ He forcefully rejects this view, noting that throughout generations of persecution, Jews did not abandon “their duties toward God” in exchange for “equality on earth.”⁴⁰ According to Rav Hirsch, Jews are enjoined to always seek the welfare of

³⁶ Samson Raphael Hirsch, *The Nineteen Letters about Judaism*, trans. Karen Paritsky, revised and commentary by Joseph Elias (Jerusalem, New York: Feldheim Publishers, 1996), 223–24.

³⁷ Hirsch, *Nineteen Letters*, 225.

³⁸ Hirsch, *Nineteen Letters*, 225–26.

³⁹ Hirsch, *Collected Writings IX*, 197.

⁴⁰ Hirsch, *Collected Writings IX*, 197.

the states in which they reside in exile, and to approach emancipation with no lessening of religious observance.

Reform, Emancipation and Romanian Nationalism

Having explored Rav Hirsch's views on Jewish loyalty to the state and his attitude toward emancipation, we now turn to sources that may shed light on Malbim's views on these subjects. During Malbim's tenure as Chief Rabbi of Romania, Romania's political situation underwent drastic changes. In 1859, the two Romanian principalities of Wallachia and Moldova, officially still under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, joined together as the "United Principalities" under the rule of Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza.⁴¹ At the time, Jews were not considered citizens, and were denied legal and civil rights.⁴² Many Jews, and "the first Romanian-language Jewish journal of Bucharest," supported Romanian unification.⁴³

In particular, one of the most outspoken proponents of Jewish emancipation was Dr. Iuliu Barasch, one of the leading reformers in Bucharest and opponents of Malbim.⁴⁴ Barasch was involved with planning the building of a Choral Temple in Bucharest, which would feature an

⁴¹ David Moshe Rosen, "Perek mi-Parashat Malbim be-Bucharest," in *Hagut Ivrit be-Eiropa*, eds. Menahem Zohori and Aryeh Tartakower (Tel Aviv: Berit Ivrit Olamit Al Yedei Yavneh, 1969), 394, 396, 398.

⁴² Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 17.

⁴³ Carol Iancu, "The Struggle for the Emancipation of Romanian Jewry and Its International Ramifications," in *The History of the Jews in Romania: The Nineteenth Century*, eds. Carol Iancu, Liviu Rothman, and Raphael Vago (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University, 2005), 115–16.

⁴⁴ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 20–21.

organ and choir,⁴⁵ and promoted “the first secular school in Bucharest”⁴⁶ for Jewish children; in so doing, he “brought to Romania the reformist tendency that was spreading throughout central and Western Europe.”⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 20–21.

⁴⁶ Emanuela Costantini, “Neither Foreigners, Nor Citizens: Romanian Jews’ Long Road to Citizenship,” in *The Jews and the Nation-States of Southeastern Europe from 19th Century to the Great Depression: Combining Viewpoints on a Controversial Story*, eds. Tullia Catalan and Marco Dogo (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 8, <http://hdl.handle.net/11391/1383620>.

⁴⁷ Costantini, “Neither Foreigners,” 8.



(Clockwise from top left) Fig. 1: Dr. Iuliu Barasch. Fig. 2: Malbim (In Jewish Encyclopedia). Fig. 3: Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (In National Archives of Romania.)

The influence Barasch and other reformers had within Bucharest is evidenced by the fact that in 1852 they appointed Israel Pick, a Reform rabbi who would later convert to Lutheranism, as preacher of the Great Synagogue of Bucharest and principal of the new modern Jewish school.⁴⁸ In 1861, Barasch published an essay in France demanding equal rights for Jews and portraying Romania as behind its counterparts in Germany, France, Italy, and England in granting Jews emancipation.⁴⁹

During his years as Chief Rabbi of Romania, Malbim delivered a number of annual sermons in Bucharest's Great Synagogue on the 24th of January, the day the "United Principalities" were formed. Rabbi Moshe Rosen notes that although these sermons were in all likelihood once written in Hebrew, all that remains are two accounts of sermons written in Romanian and a short news item about a third sermon.⁵⁰ In 1863, Malbim's sermon was reported in *Monitorul*, the official government newspaper. The report, written by six leaders of the Jewish community, says that Malbim "addressed a thank you prayer to the Almighty for the realization of the great wish of the Romanians, achieved on January 24."⁵¹ Though Malbim's sermon is not recorded, the report notes that after it was delivered, Malbim led another prayer wishing the leader and his wife a long life, and then removed a Torah scroll from the ark from which he read the Ten Commandments. The short article concludes that "the whole Israelite community

⁴⁸ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 48; Lucian-Zeev Herşcovici, "The Maskilim of Romania and the Question of Identity: 'The Romanian Israelites,'" *Annals of the University of Bucharest / Political Science Series* 1 (2018): 8. <https://ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/73989>.

⁴⁹ Iancu, "Emancipation of Romanian Jewry," 116–17.

⁵⁰ Rosen, "Parashat Malbim," 394.

⁵¹ Rosen, "Parashat Malbim," 394.

thanked their religious leader for this event, promising to celebrate the day of 24th of January as one of the most important holidays of the Israelite rite.”⁵²

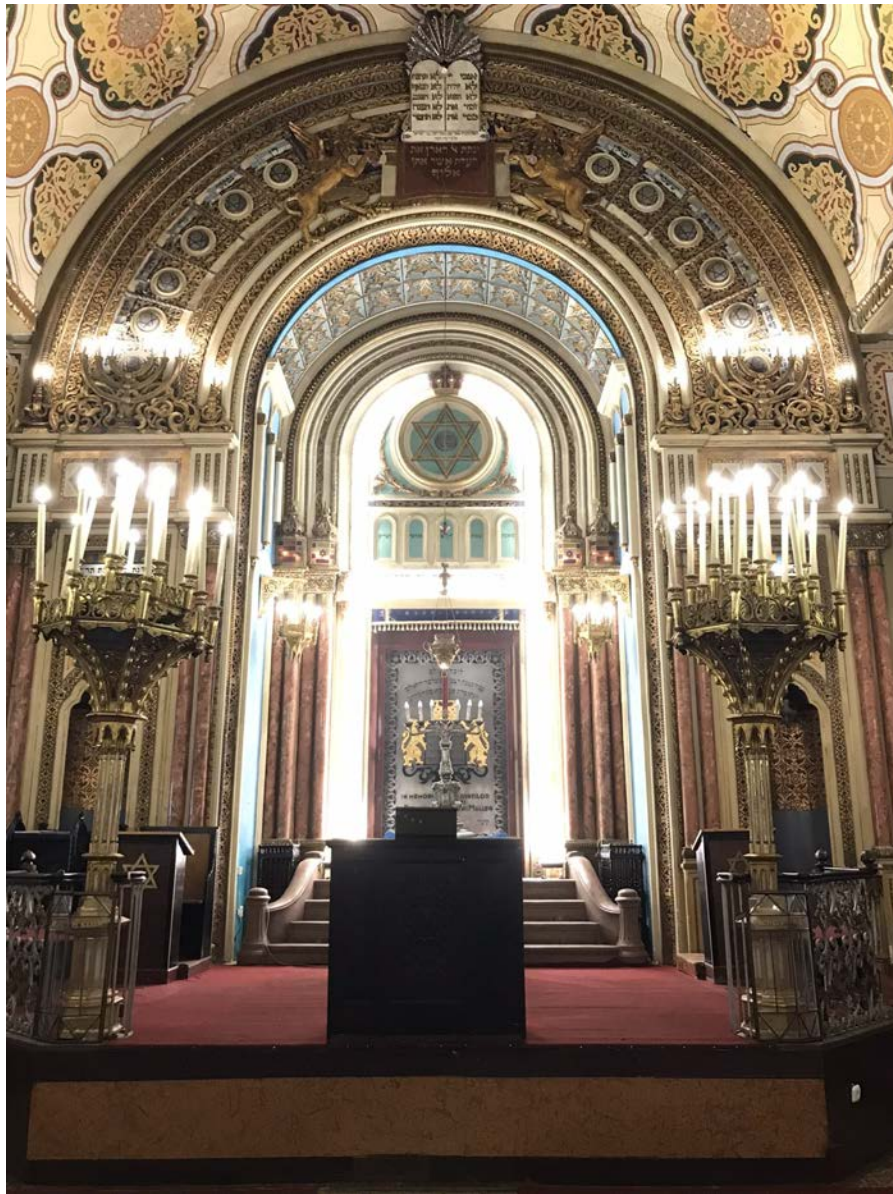


Fig. 4: Bucharest's Great Synagogue (Sinagoga Mare), where Malbim delivered his annual 24th of January sermons in honor of the unification of Wallachia and Moldova, in 2022 (Photograph by author.)

⁵² Rosen, "Parashat Malbim," 395.

The only one of Malbim's annual sermons which Rabbi Rosen reproduces in full is that of January 24th, 1864, the same year Malbim was driven out of Romania. Rabbi Rosen encapsulates the essence of Malbim's sermon:

In the beginning of his sermon he speaks about the prophetic vision (Ezekiel 37:15–28) of the unification of the kingdoms of Judah and Ephraim, and after finishing his praise of “the homeland he chose” and Prince Cuza, he says with enthusiasm: “A miracle like this, of the unification of two trees, occurred also in our land, when in the year 1859 two sisters, Romania and Moldova, unified to become one kingdom with one king for the two of them.” Later the rabbi calls to join with all activities of donations for the sake of protecting the country from enemies, for “this is our homeland and on its behalf we are prepared to sacrifice our lives.” At the conclusion of his sermon he calls again to the Jews of Bucharest to fortify themselves with patience in regards to receiving equal rights, “for that time will surely also come.”⁵³

Malbim's January 24th sermons—which were, at least on one occasion, attended by a Romanian government official⁵⁴—were markedly different in tone from the insistent demands of Barasch and other Jewish reformers in regards to the matter of Jewish citizenship. In place of Barasch's demands for emancipation, Malbim urged complacency on the part of the Jewish community, saying “I also think it necessary to give you the following advice: do not insist to be compensated for your deeds, do not ask for the right to become citizens either, nor for equality before the law. Do not force the moment. Our kindhearted ruler and his counselors wish you well. When time will come for the extension of your rights, be sure that the ruler will give them to you.”⁵⁵

Aside from praising Prince Cuza and calling on the Jewish community to be patriotic, a secondary theme present throughout Malbim's 1864 sermon is a seeming criticism of the

⁵³ Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 398..

⁵⁴ See Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 396, about the 1862 sermon: “Among those present were the chief of police of the capital, Bucharest, whom the rabbi greeted with blessings at the beginning of his sermon.”

⁵⁵ Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 405.

wealthy, which seems inappropriate for the context. Immediately following his request that the Jewish community be patient on the matter of citizenship, Malbim addressed what the future emancipation should look like. “Make sure that the emancipation gift does not end up in blasphemy or orgy; privileges should not be granted only to the rich ones while the fate of pariah awaits the poor who get their daily bread with sweat but in honor...either all shall have rights or none.” Then, in a seeming tangent, Malbim remarked “Very often people spend lots of money on inviting their friends to luxurious feasts, procuring the most delicious wines without feeling sorry about enormous sums of money that disappear in vanity, often naturally resulting in bitter disappointment; the money spent could have been used for public service and it would have been more profitable and useful for everybody.”⁵⁶

Malbim’s words may be better understood in light of his autobiographical “Shenat ha-Yovel,” first published in serial form in the Hebrew language journal *ha-Levanon* in 1865 after his departure from Bucharest. In “Shenat ha-Yovel,” Malbim derisively depicts the corruption of the official community leadership, known as the *Epitropi*.⁵⁷ He describes the *Epitropi* taking part of the wages as well as free meat from the *shochtim* (ritual slaughterers), in exchange for the leadership’s ignoring the fact that the *shochtim* fixed the price of meat; taking bribes from the teachers of the Jewish school in exchange for not interfering with the subpar education they were providing; and taking money from foreigners to procure false documents attesting that they were born in Romania, in addition to many other types of forged documentation.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 405.

⁵⁷ See Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 40.

⁵⁸ Malbim, “Shenat ha-Yovel,” 100–101.

Another potential source of information regarding Malbim's views of the Bucharest community leadership is Malbim's dramatic work, *Mashal u-Melitzah*, which Professor David Berger suggested is "the result of Bucharest," serving as "a poetic expression of the ideas of the unfinished 'Shenat HaYovel.'"⁵⁹ The basic synopsis of *Mashal u-Melitzah*, as described in the beginning of the drama, is a parable about a rich man who loved Wisdom and "betrothed her to him faithfully," only to abandon her for the seductive, unfaithful Success. Success then betrayed her beloved, "feeding him gall and wormwood, poverty and destitution in her burning wrath." The parable's moral lesson is that "whomever neglects the Torah out of wealth is destined to neglect it out of poverty,⁶⁰ and that honey drips from the lips of the "foreign woman" [symbolizing monetary success], yet her end is bitter like wormwood."⁶¹ In Rosenbloom's estimation, Malbim intended *Mashal u-Melitzah* to rebuke the *maskilim*, who greatly appreciated the dramatic form, for "pursuing wealth and wisdom while despising fear of heaven."⁶²

In light of the above, it is highly likely that Malbim's derogatory references to the rich in his 1864 sermon were lightly veiled attacks on the corrupt community leadership. In decrying the mistreatment of the poor and improper emphasis on wealth and materialism, Malbim may also have been referencing an incident he recounts in "Shenat ha-Yovel." In a sordid attempt to enrich himself and his fellow community leaders, the head of the Epitropi (who is left unnamed) informed the Romanian government that many Jews had illegally immigrated to Romania from 1846 onwards, and that he would soon provide them with a list of Jews who should be expelled. He then spread the word to the Jewish community, but made it known that for the right price he

⁵⁹ Berger, "Malbim's Secular Knowledge," 174.

⁶⁰ This phrase is taken from Pirkei Avot 4:9.

⁶¹ Meir Leibush Malbim, *Mashal u-Melitzah* (Warsaw: 1877), 4.

⁶² Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, נב.

would provide a certificate attesting that the holder was born in Romania. As a result, the wealthy Jews quickly obtained the necessary documentation, while “the poor and destitute, clean and free of sin, who had nothing to bring [as a bribe], were imprisoned, iron shackles placed on their necks, and sent in the hands of cruel people outside of the country. Most of them died on the way...”⁶³

Parenthetically, Malbim was not the only fighter of Reform to make the connection between insistence on emancipation and an inappropriate relationship to wealth. In an allusion to Jewish emancipation in *Horeb*, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch decries the young generation which treats emancipation as reason to assimilate, “behav[ing] as if Israel had been separated from other nations to march through history along a course peculiar to itself only in order to be submerged in the nations worshipping mammon.”⁶⁴ In the Romanian context, even the Romanian prime minister acknowledged that some Jews seeking rights “wish nothing else but to make money.”⁶⁵

Despite Malbim’s warnings about the risk of emancipation being applied unequally and exhortation that Jews not demand their rights too insistently, his sermon does appear to view the granting of Jewish rights as a positive thing. Part of his praise of Prince Cuza in his 1864 sermon is that he “distributes justice equally to all,”⁶⁶ and he repeatedly makes reference to Cuza’s

⁶³ Malbim, “Shenat ha-Yovel,” 111–112.

⁶⁴ Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Horeb: A Philosophy of Jewish Laws and Observances*, trans. Isidor Grunfeld (London: The Soncino Press, 1962), 1:146. *Mammon* is Hebrew for money.

⁶⁵ *Cestiunea Israelită Înaintea Adunărei Generale A României Din 1864. Desbaterile Legii Comonale. Extrase Din Edițiunea Oficială A Buletinului Adunărei Generale A României Din 1864. Ședințele Din 5–6 Martie* (Bucharest: Tipografia Statului, 1879), 18–19, cited in Constantin Iordachi, “The Jewish Question: the Exclusion of Jews from Citizenship,” in *Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities: The Making of Romanian Citizenship, c. 1750–1918* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 288, doi:10.1163/9789004401112_009.

⁶⁶ Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 403.

promises to improve the Jews' situation.⁶⁷ This raises the question of how positively Malbim viewed emancipation. While Berger notes that Malbim's "practical attitude toward emancipation is not quite clear,"⁶⁸ one passage in Malbim's *Eretz Chemdah* (published posthumously) is quite similar to Rav Hirsch's depiction of emancipation as a second stage of exile, a test even greater than that of oppression. In Berger's words, Malbim "plac[es] emancipation within the framework of a religious philosophy of history."⁶⁹

Like Rav Hirsch, Malbim notes the great difference in the experience of exile in his day as contrasted to earlier times (his point of comparison is the Jews' enslavement in Egypt). He asks why God has orchestrated events such that "many states have given Jews the rights of citizens (Buergerrecht), and their fortune and honor have risen to the extent that there is no difference between the period of exile and the time of redemption except observance of the commandments connected with the land of Israel and the Temple. Why has God done that in this last generation?"⁷⁰ To quote Berger's paraphrase of Malbim's answer, "it is a test to determine whether the desire to return to the land of Israel and to repent is based only upon suffering. If the Jews are wise, they will not be satisfied with the temporal good to be obtained in exile; if they are foolish and remain content, God may leave them in exile indefinitely."⁷¹

⁶⁷ Regarding Cuza's unrealized intention to grant Jews full rights, see Iancu, "Emancipation of Romanian Jewry," 117–18.

⁶⁸ Berger, "Malbim's Secular Knowledge," 182.

⁶⁹ Berger, "Malbim's Secular Knowledge," 182. Berger does not draw the parallel to Rav Hirsch's comments.

⁷⁰ Meir Leibush Malbim, *Eretz Chemdah* (Bnei Brak: Mishor, 1990), 252–53. Translation by Berger.

⁷¹ Berger, "Malbim's Secular Knowledge," 182–83.

The Relationship between Emancipation and Reform

Given Malbim's at least moderately positive approach toward emancipation, it is striking that his 1864 sermon is so insistent on Jewish complacency. Rabbi Hirsch, too, expressed his serious concerns about how Jews would respond to the challenges of emancipation, yet they did not prevent him from producing "many pamphlets and published circular letters, addressed both to his co-religionists and his non-Jewish fellow-citizens, on the subject of equal citizenship and equality before the law," together with "fiery speeches... against the unjust treatment of the Jews while he was a member of the Moravian Parliament."⁷² In contrast, Malbim's insistence that Jews rely on the positive disposition of their "kindhearted ruler and his counselors"⁷³ would appear to be a form of quietism surprising for someone with the fearlessness Malbim exhibited in other contexts, such as his conflict with the Reform movement.

Let us consider the factors which would have critically influenced the way Malbim saw the political situation in Bucharest in 1864. The conflicts between Malbim and the majority of the Bucharest community which accepted his authority and opposed Reform, and the community leaders (Epitropi) who overwhelmingly supported Reform, had only grown in the six years since Malbim had been appointed as Chief Rabbi. Malbim had been involved in a major dispute with several *shochtim*⁷⁴ and delivered fiery sermons encouraging religious observance and denouncing the *maskilim*.⁷⁵ Attempts to remove Malbim from his post started as early as 1859, when 20 wealthy, leading *maskilim* petitioned the Romanian Ministry of Education and Religions to

⁷² Hirsch, *Horeb*, 1:145 ft. 1.

⁷³ Rosen, "Parashat Malbim," 405.

⁷⁴ See Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 79–88.

⁷⁵ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 64.

remove him from his post, claiming that he was not fit to serve as their rabbi due to his lacking secular academic credentials and knowledge of foreign languages and for not being sufficiently progressive.⁷⁶ In that same year, a pamphlet denigrating Malbim titled “Advancement and Impediment, or, The Practices of the Middle Ages in the Modern Period” was anonymously published in Romanian by one of Barasch’s followers.⁷⁷

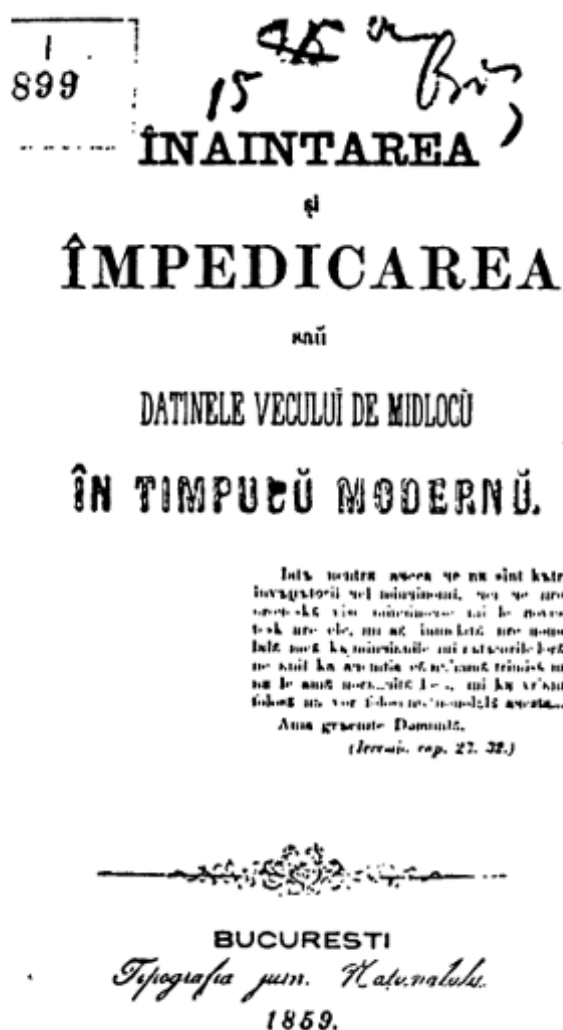


Fig. 5: Title Page of *Advancement and Impediment, or, The Practices of the Middle Ages in the Modern Period*. (In Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 113.)

⁷⁶ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 111.

⁷⁷ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 113.

In 1861, another group of Bucharest *maskilim* turned to the mayor of Bucharest, requesting his help in having Malbim dismissed from his post. These efforts developed into a major rift between Malbim's supporters and detractors,⁷⁸ and led to Malbim being stripped of both governmental recognition of his position as Chief Rabbi and the right to address the community in the Great Synagogue. In 1862, things took an even more drastic turn, as the government decided (in a decision approved by Prince Cuza) to remove their official recognition of all Jewish communities in Romania, citing the intercommunal conflicts and proclaiming their lack of interest in interfering in community affairs any longer.⁷⁹ Finally, on Friday, March 18th, 1864 (less than two months after he had delivered what was to be his last January 24th sermon), Malbim was suddenly forced by the police to board a wagon which left the country, expelling him from Bucharest and Romania.⁸⁰

With this background in hand, let us return to the question of Malbim's seeming quietism on the matter of Jewish emancipation. From Malbim's letter to Rabbi Zalman Tiktin dating back to 1839, we know that Malbim was more than willing to use the political authorities in his battle against Reform. From the same letter, we also know that Malbim felt that Orthodoxy, as the traditional form of Judaism, would be seen as safer from the government's perspective; Reform, with its numerous deviations from tradition, would be seen as a dangerously innovative form of Judaism. Malbim must have been well aware that in the tense struggle between himself and the reformers, his January 24th sermons were his best opportunity to attempt to influence the Romanian government's position. The fact that previous sermons had been both attended by a

⁷⁸ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 114–17.

⁷⁹ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 114–17.

⁸⁰ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 135.

government officer and published in the official government newspaper made this proposition realistic

In order to fight the reformers, then, Malbim would look to convince the government that Orthodoxy was in fact the more loyal and trustworthy version of Judaism. In the Romanian context, the most pressing Jewish question of the day was the issue of emancipation. As we have seen, Jewish reformers such as Iuliu Barasch were unflinching in their public demands for equal rights, something which would continue long after Malbim's departure from Bucharest; by 1919, the number of published demands for emancipation was almost 300.⁸¹ Malbim must have therefore seen emancipation as a crucial political issue with which to distinguish himself and the Orthodoxy he represented from the reformers. While not ignoring the need for equal treatment (and indeed praising Prince Cuza for his efforts to that end), Malbim's public addresses emphasized loyalty to the state and its sovereign above all else. Equal rights, he declared, would come soon enough; in the meantime, the focal point for Romanian Jews would be to prove that they could be good citizens.⁸²

So far, I have shown how Malbim's sermon of January 24th, 1864 was designed to convey to the Romanian government that Orthodox Jews were loyal and did not agitate for rights, unlike their Reform counterparts. However, it appears that this sermon, along with all the other January 24th sermons had another, equally important message, this one addressed to Malbim's primary audience: the Jewish community of Bucharest. By placing his calls for loyalty to the state and its sovereign in an overtly religious context, Malbim framed ostensibly political

⁸¹ Iancu, "Emancipation of Romanian Jewry," 117.

⁸² This is not to suggest that Malbim's calls for loyalty were insincere and nothing more than a political ploy. As we have seen, Rav Hirsch, who was more outspoken than Malbim in calling for emancipation, also emphasized this point, citing Jeremiah 29:5–7. However, I am suggesting that the political situation is what caused Malbim's quietism insofar as actively demanding emancipation from the Romanian government.

issues as religious ones. Malbim bolstered the religious nature of the January 24th celebrations by personally composing special prayers, delivering sermons from the pulpit of the Great Synagogue, and (on at least one occasion) reading the Ten Commandments from a Torah scroll. The celebrations were portrayed as religious in nature in the aforementioned news article printed in the official government newspaper, *Monitorul*, after the January 24th, 1863 celebration.⁸³

By almost ostentatiously sacralizing the date the United Principalities were formed, Malbim may have been doing more than show the Romanian government his patriotism. Rosenbloom notes that Reform intended to blur the lines between Jews and non-Jews in the interests of modernization and integration into the dominant culture,⁸⁴ and indeed many of the criticisms leveraged against Malbim claimed that his adherence to traditional Judaism prevented Romanian Jews from joining together with their Romanian compatriots. This was a charge Malbim felt necessary to dispel both in his 24th of January sermon in 1862,⁸⁵ in which he dramatically declared “Was it not me, the poor one, who removed the veil of darkness from your eyes, in order for you to see in all of my sermons the relationship of brotherhood that ought to exist between Jews and Christians, for one God created us,”⁸⁶ and in the letter he sent Prince Cuza after his expulsion, in which he noted that he always preached “the love of all people without distinction of religion.”⁸⁷ By giving Romania’s unification holiday a religious character, Malbim may have been combatting the reformers’ claim that tradition conflicted with positive

⁸³ Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 395.

⁸⁴ Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, 82.

⁸⁵ Due to ongoing controversy over Malbim’s position, this sermon was only delivered much later, on May 12th. See Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 396.

⁸⁶ Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 397.

⁸⁷ Rosen, “Parashat Malbim,” 381.

relations between Jewish and Christian Romanians. On the contrary, Malbim used his famous mastery of the Bible to make Biblical parallels between the unification of Wallachia and Moldova and the unification of Judah and Ephraim,⁸⁸ and drew on Biblical language in the poetic prayers he composed in honor of the day.⁸⁹

If this was in fact Malbim's intention, it would help explain Malbim's extremely poetic language in the prayers he composed. As noted by Rosenbloom,⁹⁰ Malbim's commentary on the Bible, which Malbim began writing in response to the Reform Rabbinical Conference of Braunschweig (Brunswick),⁹¹ may have been written primarily for the more moderate *maskilim*, who did not necessarily seek to reform Judaism so much as incorporate within it the value of literary and secular knowledge. Rosenbloom argues that since these *maskilim* greatly appreciated a rich and clear Hebrew style, Malbim made sure to produce his Biblical commentary defending tradition in such a style.⁹² While it is difficult to bring proof to such an argument, it is possible that Malbim had the same aims in his rich, poetic prayers on behalf of Prince Cuza and the Romanian state—to use his literary prowess to win over *maskilim* skeptical about traditional Judaism's capability to appreciate the modern demands of patriotism and national identity.

Placing patriotism in a religious context also directly contradicted a view popular among Romanian political figures of the time: that without assimilation and integration into the broader Romanian culture, Jews could not be good Romanian citizens and did not deserve emancipation. Romanian Prime Minister Mihail Kogălniceanu worked tirelessly to convince Jews to abandon

⁸⁸ Rosen, "Parashat Malbim," 398.

⁸⁹ Rosen, "Parashat Malbim," 407–09.

⁹⁰ Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, נד.

⁹¹ Malbim, *ha-Torah veva-Mitzvah*, 4–5

⁹² Rosenbloom, *ha-Malbim*, נד.

their traditional way of dress, send their children to Romanian-language schools and join the national army, finding common cause with Bucharest reformers.⁹³ As a matter of governmental policy, he “firmly conditioned the granting of legal equality on the Jews’ full cultural integration.”⁹⁴ Malbim’s abundant patriotism and support of Prince Cuza’s authority portrayed a different type of national belonging, one intimately familiar today to Orthodox Jewry worldwide, in which national belonging is not dependent on cultural assimilation. In essence, Malbim was arguing for a form of multicultural nationalism, recently defined by Tariq Modood as an approach to national identity which respects group differences. Though it “recognizes the legitimacy of majority culture,” it still “denies the majority the right to refuse the accommodation of minorities simply because that accommodation runs counter to majority culture.”⁹⁵ In fact, in giving an example of a discriminatory practice which runs afoul of multicultural nationalism, Modood cites a Quebec ban on wearing religiously symbolic clothing in public spaces.

Though it appears that the argument between Malbim and Kogălniceanu as to the nature of national identity continues to be a matter of debate a century and a half later, history has supported Malbim’s side of the argument. Jews have achieved emancipation, both in Romania, throughout Europe and worldwide, without usually needing to give up their religious practice nor their Jewish cultural identity (nor, indeed, their traditional mode of dress). One need only look to

⁹³ Iordachi, “The Jewish Question,” 274–76.

⁹⁴ Iordachi, “The Jewish Question,” 280.

⁹⁵ Modood, “A Multicultural Nationalism?” *Brown Journal of World Affairs* XXV no. 2 (2019): 236, <https://bjwa.brown.edu/25-2/a-multicultural-nationalism/>.

numerous Hasidim, sporters of the sidelocks and wearers of the traditional garb Kogălniceanu so denigrated,⁹⁶ who have achieved political office in the United States today.

Expulsion Approved, Emancipation Denied

Tragically, Malbim's efforts to win over the Romanian government to the side of Orthodoxy were to no avail. The reformers' repeated petitions to the Romanian government targeting Malbim as an impediment to progress were more powerful than Malbim's January 24th sermons, no matter how patriotic. In a terrible irony noted by Rabbi Moshe Rosen, the Reform demands for Malbim's expulsion were themselves cited by Kogălniceanu, in a session of the Romanian Parliament, as a reason to continue denying Jews equal rights:

Today I had to give a decree of expulsion against a rabbi, boorish and brazen like all the rabbis of Moldavia, who went far-off and dared publicize libelous documents against those who eat meat from whatever butchershop; who preached against the the vision of progress and freedom! This is the state of the Jews of Bucharest⁹⁷ and Iași.⁹⁸—Is there, indeed, reason to grant rights to these Jews of Bucharest?...Is the rabbi of this community not the sworn enemy of progress?⁹⁹

In fact, Romanian Jews would not receive equal rights until 1919.¹⁰⁰

Taking Stock

Unfortunately, during his lifetime, Malbim appeared to have failed in his relentless battle against Reform. He continued to suffer from conflicts with reformers even after his expulsion from Romania, and he ultimately died in 1879 in Kyiv on the way to assume a new rabbinical

⁹⁶ E.g. Iordachi, "The Jewish Question," 275.

⁹⁷ Then the capital of Wallachia.

⁹⁸ Then the capital of Moldova.

⁹⁹ Rosen, "Parashat Malbim," 389.

¹⁰⁰ Costantini, "Neither Foreigners," 23; Iancu, "Emancipation of Romanian Jewry," 145–49.

position in Kremenchuk.¹⁰¹ However, Geller notes that during Malbim's six years in Romania he made a significant contribution to the development of religious life in Bucharest, such as by establishing its first Hebrew printing press and opening its first *beit midrash* (religious study hall). Malbim's writings have also withstood the test of time, becoming classics; many modern printings of the Bible with commentaries include that of Malbim alongside indispensable medieval commentators such as Rashi and Ramban.

Beyond these accomplishments, the arguments Malbim made in his January 24th sermons have been vindicated by history. Jewish emancipation has not proven to be a contradiction in any way to religious life or Jewish culture, and it has been demonstrated that religious Jews can be deeply engaged, committed, and loyal citizens of the countries they live in. According to Malbim (and Rav Hirsch), the challenge facing Jews post-Emancipation is one of great significance: will they rise above the comforts accompanying the full granting of civil rights, living as faithful Jews who await the messianic era regardless of the physical comfort they have already attained? Or will they commit the fatal error of mistaking emancipation for redemption, substituting physical fulfillment and societal acceptance for spiritual mission and a sense of moral duty? The writings and life of Malbim can guide us, teaching us to be perseverant even against considerable adversity and morally steadfast against the winds of the zeitgeist.

¹⁰¹ Geller, *ha-Malbim*, 161.

Bibliography

- Berger, David. "Malbim's Secular Knowledge and His Relationship to the Spirit of the Haskalah." In *Cultures in Collision and Conversation: Essays in the Intellectual History of the Jews*, 167–189. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2011. doi: 10.2307/j.ctt21h4xrd.
- Costantini, Emanuela. "Neither Foreigners, Nor Citizens: Romanian Jews' Long Road to Citizenship." In *The Jews and the Nation-States of Southeastern Europe from 19th Century to the Great Depression: Combining Viewpoints on a Controversial Story*, edited by Tullia Catalan and Marco Dogo, 2–22. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016. <http://hdl.handle.net/11391/1383620>.
- Dal, Michel. *Parshanut Ortodoksit la-Torah be-Idan Shel Temurot: ha-Pulmus be-Peirusheihen Shel Rav Y. Z. Mecklenburg ve-Malbim*. PhD. diss.: Bar Ilan University, 2008. <https://asif.co.il/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/137.pdf>
- Etkes, Immanuel. "Haskalah." YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe, October 27, 2010. <https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Haskalah>.
- Ferziger, Adam S. "Abraham Geiger and the Denominational Approach to Jewish Religious Life." In *Jüdische Existenz In Der Moderne: Abraham Geiger Und Die Wissenschaft Des Judentums*, edited by Christian Wiese, Walter Homolka, and Thomas Brechenmacher, 179–192. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2013. doi: 10.1515/9783110247596.179.
- Geller, Ya'akov. *ha-Malbim: Ma'avako ba-Haskalah uva-Reformah be-Bucharest (818–624, 1858–1864): Al-Pi Kitvei-Yad ve-Te'udot she-Terem Pursemu*. Lod: Orot Yahadut ha-Magrev, 2000.
- Geller, Ya'akov. "New Documents on the Malbim Affair and His Struggle with the Maskilim." In *The History of the Jews in Romania: The Nineteenth Century*, edited by Carol Iancu, Liviu Rotman, and Raphael Vago, 231–258. Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University, 2005.
- Herşcovici, Lucian-Zeev. "The Maskilim of Romania and the Question of Identity: 'The Romanian Israelites.'" *Annals of the University of Bucharest / Political Science Series 1* (2018): 5–26. <https://ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/73989>.
- Hirsch, Samson Raphael. *Horeb: A Philosophy of Jewish Laws and Observances*. Translated by Isidor Grunfeld. London: The Soncino Press, 1962.
- Hirsch, Samson Raphael. *The Collected Writings: Volume IX*. New York, Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers, 2012.

- Hirsch, Samson Raphael. *The Nineteen Letters about Judaism*. Translated by Karen Paritsky, revised and commentary by Joseph Elias. Jerusalem, New York: Feldheim Publishers, 1996.
- Iancu, Carol. "The Struggle for the Emancipation of Romanian Jewry and Its International Ramifications." In *The History of the Jews in Romania: The Nineteenth Century*, edited by Carol Iancu, Liviu Rothman, and Raphael Vago, 111–149. Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University, 2005.
- Iordachi, Constantin. "The Jewish Question: the Exclusion of Jews from Citizenship." In *Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities: The Making of Romanian Citizenship, c. 1750–1918*, 265–305. Leiden: Brill, 2019. doi:10.1163/9789004401112_009.
- Katz, Jacob. *ha-Kera she-Lo Nit'acha: Perishat ha-Ortodoksim Michlal ha-Kehillot be-Hungaryah uve-Germanyah*. Yerushalayim: Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-Toldot Yisra'el, 1995.
- Lerner, Dov. "Dark Matter: Malbim's Exegetical Pedagogy." PhD. diss.: University of Chicago, 2021. doi: 10.6082/uchicago.2938.
- Macht, David. "Malbim, The Man and his Work." 1912?, Reprinted from Jewish Comment (Baltimore, February 9–16, 1912).
- Meyer, Michael A. "Rabbi Gedaliah Tiktin and the Orthodox Segment of the Breslau Community, 1845–1854." *Michael: On the History of the Jews in the Diaspora* 2 (1973): 92–107. <https://jstor.org/stable/23493774>.
- Malbim, Meir Leibush. *Artzot ha-Chaim*. Warsaw: 1860.
- Malbim, Meir Leibush. *Eretz Chemdah*. Bnei Brak: Mishor, 1990
- Malbim, Meir Leibush. *ha-Torah veva-Mitzvah*. Bnei Brak: 2000.
- Malbim, Meir Leibush. *Mashal u-Melitzah*. Warsaw: 1877.
- Malbim, Meir Leibush. "Shenat ha-Yovel." In *Sefer Malbim: Me'ah Shanah le-Petirato, Rosh ha-Shanah 5640–5740*, edited by Yehezkel Rotenberg, 83–114. Bnei Berak: Netzach, 1979.
- Modood, Tariq. "A Multicultural Nationalism?" *Brown Journal of World Affairs* XXV no. 2 (2019): 233–246. <https://bjwa.brown.edu/25-2/a-multicultural-nationalism>.
- Rosen, David Moshe. "Perek mi-Parashat Malbim be-Bucharest." In *Hagut Ivrit be-Eiropa*, edited by Menahem Zohori and Aryeh Tartakower, 376–410. Tel Aviv: Berit Ivrit Olamit Al Yedei Yavneh, 1969.

- Rosenbloom, Noah H. *ha-Malbim: Parshanut, Filosofyah, Mada u-Mistorin be-Kitvei ha-Rav Meir Leibush Malbim*. Yerushalayim: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1988.
- Schaechter, Sh. Zvi. *Mishnato Shel ha-Malbim*. PhD. diss.: Hebrew University, 1983.
- Sorski, Aharon. *be-Sufah uve-Se'arah: Chayei ha-Malbim*. Bnei Brak: Hotza'at Zivtanim, 1999.
- Twersky, Mayer. "A Glimpse of the Rav." *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought* 30, no. 4 (Summer 1996): 79–114. <https://jstor.org/stable/23261238>.
- Yashar, Moshe Meir. *ha-Gaon Malbim: Chayav, Mishnato, Ma'avakav u-Mifalav*. Jerusalem: Hod, 1980.