

The Effects of Modernization on Judaism

Research Question:

To what extent is the establishment and growth of Reform Judaism attributable to Jewish migration to the United States?

History

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Introduction:

The creation of Reformative Judaism differs from many other major religions. The branches of Judaism did not emerge until the late 18th and 19th centuries.¹ With the mass change in social and economic factors because of the industrial revolution, many Jews migrated to larger cities in order to find work as artisans. However, living in large European cities was difficult for many Jewish people. From 1820 to 1880 around 300,000 Jewish people immigrated to America from primarily Germany and Poland. This immigration was prompted by social disparity, economic hardship, and mass persecution.² As time went on, the immigration shifted east. Eastern European countries such as Russia, Moldova, and parts of Russian-controlled Poland began to expel Jewish people residing in those areas, forcing them to relocate to America.

Along with the beginning of World War I, over 2,000,000 Ashkenazi Jews immigrated to the United States from 1881 to 1914.³ Pogroms, “a riot or march aimed to drive out ethnic or religious groups”, were common.⁴ Most of the immigrants headed towards New York City and other large East Coast cities.⁵ The two different major waves of Immigration resulted in differing scenarios in America.

With the significant differences between Europe and America, there was a need for Jews to assimilate with American culture. Gender roles that were normalized prior to the immigration,

¹ Rivera, John. “The Three Branches of Judaism - Baltimore Sun.” *Baltimoresun.Com*, 2000. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-2000-08-16-0008160154-story.html>.

² “A Century of Immigration, 1820-1924 - From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish Life in America | Exhibitions (Library of Congress).” *Loc.Gov*, 2021. <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/haven-century.html>.

³ “Family Tree Research and Jewish History | Legacy Tree Genealogists.” *Legacytree.Com*, 2021. <https://www.legacytree.com/blog/jewish-research-tips-part-1-history-and-immigration>.

⁴ “Pogroms - HISTORY.” *History.Com*, 2021. <https://www.history.com/topics/russia/pogroms>.

⁵ Exhibitions (Library of Congress).” *Loc.Gov*, 2021.

were outdated and not common in modern American communities. Traditional garments and practices were no longer practical. There were also major differences between the Central European and the Eastern European Jewish migration. This is important to explore because many American Jewish families derive from this mass migration.

The steady reform of religion is something that can be explored in almost all theologies. However, the nature of Jewish culture and the lack of a “homeland” creates a need to assimilate into modern society and discard traditional values. As of 2016, the Jewish population in America was estimated around 5.7 million people⁶, only 12% of that population remains Orthodox today.⁷ In this paper I will be exploring the question: To what extent is the establishment and growth of Reform Judaism attributable to Jewish migration to the United States? Reformative Judaism did not evolve because of this massive immigration, it already existed in Europe. However, in which ways did the migration to America accelerate religious reform? In order to understand this branch of Judaism, it is important to research and understand the sporadic history of the Jewish people.

Jewish Population in Europe During Late 18th Century

The religion of Judaism has been present in Europe for over 2,000 years. Dating back to around 63 BC, many Jews migrated to Rome. This is known as *Pompey's conquest of Judea*.⁸ Jewish people living in Europe faced persecution and discrimination for thousands of years. This was very prominent leading up to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Due to the long history of expulsion from many different countries, Jews were very spread out throughout all of Europe

⁶ DellaPergola, Sergio, “Berman Jewish DataBank.” *Jewishdatabank.Org*, 2021.

<https://www.jewishdatabank.org/databank/search-results/study/831>

⁷ Pinker J, Edieal, “The American Jewish Community Will Look Different in 50 Years | Yale Insights.” *Insights.Som.Yale.Edu*, 2021.

<https://insights.som.yale.edu/insights/the-american-jewish-community-will-look-different-in-50-years>.

⁸ “Lesson: Understanding the Life of Shtetl Jews | Facing History.” *Facinghistory.Org*, 2021.

<https://www.facinghistory.org/sholem-aleichem/understanding-life-shtetl-jews>.

and lived in countries including Poland, Germany, Russia, Czech Republic, etc.⁹ According to the institute of Jewish policy research, around 88% of the world's Jews lived in Europe in the late 1700s and the early 1800s.¹⁰

Jewish people often resided in small communities with other Jewish people called Shtetl. These were very common in eastern Europe and were affected by poverty and disease. Shtetls were known as pious communities and they followed very orthodox practices. This was because the Jewish people living in these market towns did not have to assimilate with the outside world. They were surrounded by people with common beliefs and teachings.¹¹ This allowed them to hold on to traditional values without outside challenges.

Many of the Jewish people were artisans, devoting their life to trades in order to make a living. However, these careers often involved competition and an uncertain economic future. With the rise of the industrial revolution, trades and markets were moved to larger towns and cities. Along with the wooden homes in Shtetls catching fire and burning down, and mass overpopulation, it forced many people to leave the communities where they were able to practice their religion without judgment or persecution.

Jews moved to large cities such as Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Manchester, etc. and this forced Jewish people to adapt with the changes in lifestyle. The industrial revolution played a huge role in the transfer from traditional to modern practices. The city populations skyrocketed and resulted in massive urbanization. In 1772, the population of Manchester was around 25,000.

⁹ "Diaspora | Definition, History, & Facts | Britannica." *Britannica.Com*, 2021.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Diaspora-Judaism>.

¹⁰ Harriot Sherwood, "Europe's Jewish Population Has Dropped 60% in Last 50 Years | Judaism | The Guardian." *Theguardian.Com*, 2021.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/25/europes-jewish-population-has-dropped-60-in-last-50-years>.

¹¹ Understanding the Life of Shtetl Jews | Facing History." *Facinghistory.Org*, 2021.

This number ballooned due to the industrial revolution by over 247,000 people in 78 years.¹² Moving to larger cities resulted in difficulties for many Jews.

Beginnings of Reform Movement

The most notable change within the Jewish religion during the period of migration to cities from Shtetls was in Germany. Those who migrated to Berlin because of the industrial revolution now participated in mainstream German life such as living in German communities, attending German schools, and even participating in German worship. This massive change in everyday life for many Jewish people prompted a change in attitudes.

The idea of Reform Judaism was first introduced in 1783 when the *Ha-meassef* was published.¹³ Reform Judaism is defined by Oxford Languages as “a form of Judaism which has reformed or abandoned aspects of Orthodox Jewish worship and ritual in an attempt to adapt to modern changes in social, political, and cultural life.” The Union for Reform Judaism explains that Reform Judaism still maintains faith in God and the Torah while ever adapting to modern society.¹⁴ The *Ha’massef* was a Hebrew Magazine that was located in Königsberg, in Prussia. Several members involved with the publication of this magazine included ideas about spreading new cultures into the religion.

¹² University of Cambridge, “Manchester Infant Mortality.” *Research.Ncl.Ac.Uk*, 2021.

<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/pauperlives/ManchesterInfantMortality.htm>

¹³ Sadowski, Dirk, “Ha-Me’assef”, in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture Online*, Original German Language Edition: Enzyklopädie Jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur. Im Auftrag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig herausgegeben von Dan Diner. © J.B. Metzler, Stuttgart/Springer-Verlag GmbH Deutschland 2011–2017.. Consulted online on 14 October 2021
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-8894_ejhc_COM_0291>
First published online: 2017

¹⁴ “What is Reform Judaism?” Union for Reform Judaism, January 1, 1970.

These new ideas were not welcomed by everyone. Many Rabbis of the old school believed that this was a “death-blow to the old era”. An example of this is highlighted in the journal article *The Beginnings of the Reform Movement in Judaism* written by David Phillipson. He explains a farewell letter written by Rabbi Hirschl Levin, the chief rabbi of the Berlin community. In this letter, Levin announces that he is not an avid supporter of this movement. He believes that this change is impending and will result in the dismantling of Judaism. At the end of his missive, Rabbi Levin resigns from his position and announces his move back to the Holy Land, Jerusalem because he couldn't bear witness to these inevitable changes in Jewish culture. In a Journal article written by David Phillipson called *Dr. Phillipson's History of Reform Judaism*, he explains many rabbis' objections to the new ideology: “Wary, inert old age shook its disapproving head, preferring the then familiar bondage to a long-forgotten freedom, and fearing to expose its dark-adjusted eyes to the glare of an unknown light.”¹⁵ In this passage, Dr. Phillipson articulates how many rabbis did not believe that the religion should be changed as they had grown so accustomed to being outsiders that they didn't feel the need to assimilate. These rabbis believed that old traditions were the only way to stay true to Judaism. The disapproval of the new ideology from influential and powerful Rabbis created a divide within the religion and resulted in the creation of the branches of Judaism.

The first Reformatory Temple officially opened in 1810 in a small town in between Hamburg and Berlin called Seesen according to the Union of Reform Judaism.¹⁶ Jewish Layman Israel Jacobson and Rabbi Abraham Gieger along with a few others used reformed ideas within their practices. They are known as the founding fathers of Reformatory Judaism. Jacobson was

¹⁵ David Phillipson, *Dr. Phillipson's History of Reform Judaism*, (1906) pg. 866, University of Pennsylvania Press

¹⁶ “History of the Reform Movement | Union for Reform Judaism.” *Uj. Org*, 2021. <https://urj.org/who-we-are/history>.

the first to hold Reform Services, attended by both children and adults. His liturgy was completely in German rather than Hebrew. Jacobson was not subtle in using popular non Jewish music such as Bach's *O Haupt Voll Blut und Wunden* within his practices.¹⁷ During his services, he encouraged mixed gender seating, and even argued for the replacement of the traditional and long-standing boys' birthday celebration: Bar Mitzvah.¹⁸

This was a massive change for the religion, but many thought that this was the only way for the Jewish religion to adapt to the rapid changes in modern society. Historian Michael Meyer explains the importance of these changes, "Taken as a whole, the structure made a social statement: Jews worship as do Christians; they are their equals in religion as in civil life. No longer Oriental, foreign faith transplanted to Europe, Judaism - like Christianity - is home-born in the accoutrements of its worship no less than in its loyalty to the state."¹⁹ This statement explains that this shift in religious practices to more acceptable and modern liturgy and ceremonies, resulted in a differing view on Judaism as a whole, that Judaism could adapt to modernization like other religions and that it was not a religion that was solely based upon traditional values.

These values spread throughout Europe to notable places such as Denmark, Vienna, Prague, and other places with a large Jewish Population.²⁰ The spread of reform Judaism was rapid and the ideologies were quickly adopted by many.

Immigration from Europe to America

¹⁷ Bruce Rubem, *Music, Liturgy and Reform Judaism in Mid-Nineteenth Century America: Rabbinic Perspectives*, pg.165-166

¹⁸ Union for Reform Judaism." *Urfj.Org*, 2021.

¹⁹ Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard: The Scared Songs of the Ashkenazi Jews* (University of Park, Pennsylvania State University, 1976) pg. 195

²⁰ "Reform Judaism | Britannica." *Britannica.Com*, 2021.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Reform-Judaism>.

Although some Jewish people residing in large European cities now had modern practices within their religious beliefs, the struggles persisted. Social factors such as antisemitism were widespread and always present. Even before the rise of Nazi Germany and the mass persecution of the Jewish people, the idea of eliminating Judaism was adopted by many. As stated in the book *Anti-semitism in Europe Before the Holocaust* by William I. Brunstien and Ryan D. King, “a popular explanation for the rise of anti-Semitism is the scapegoat theory. Proponents of the scapegoat theory posit that Jews constituted a minority group dispersed among many countries and served as convenient targets for the majority’s problems”²¹ Scapegoating this group of people shifted the blame for economic failures and created a false narrative about the Jewish people.

Economic factors were also responsible for some changes. The Jewish population residing in Central Europe were most commonly artisans due to lack of other opportunities for Jews. Artisans were advanced in trades such as tailors, weavers, silversmiths, day-laborers, and bakers.²² The industrial revolution resulted in uncertainty for these trades. Competition and larger businesses resulted in economic challenges for artisans.

These social and economic factors that came with Jews living in largely populated areas gave rise to an idea that immigration to America was essential for Jewish people to survive. America was viewed as the promised land, a place with economic and social freedom. In an 1883 poem composed by Emma Lazorus, who worked with Eastern European immigrants providing them financial aid, stated “*Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to*

²¹ William I. Brunstein, Ryan D. King, *Anti-semitism in Europe Before the Holocaust*, *International Political Science Review* (2004)
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0192512104038166>

²² “Jewish Occupations • FamilySearch.” *Familysearch.Org*, 2021.
https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Jewish_Occupations.

breathe free.”²³ This passage held great significance within the Jewish community. It spoke to the struggling Jewish population by describing a safe haven where they could experience freedom. This message about a better life outside Europe was received by many Jews and they looked to America as a place in which they could preach and practice their morals.

This mass immigration to America came in waves; Jews residing in different parts of Europe migrated at different times. The first to migrate were the Germans. Most of the population began to migrate in the 1840s and continued to do so until the outbreak of World War I. In this period, around 250,000 Jews migrated to the US mostly through sea travel because most of the immigrants were not wealthy²⁴. A miniature prayer book was published in 1842 to encourage the Jewish people leaving their homes to continue to practice Judaism.

This was the first of three different editions published from 1840-1860 called the *Tefilah mi-kol ha-shanah: Minhah Ketanah*.²⁵ These prayer books held great significance within the religion. It was a beacon of hope and allowed many to hold on to the values that they worshiped. This Jewish population mostly flocked to smaller cities, many ended up residing in Cincinnati. This city was the gateway for trade between the midwest and west and was, therefore, the landing point for thousands of German-Jews.

Reform Movement in America

The population of this city absolutely skyrocketed. According to the US census website, in 1800 the population of this small city was a mere 850. In about 70 years the census rose

²³ “A Century of Immigration, 1820-1924 - From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish Life in America | Exhibitions (Library of Congress).” *Loc.Gov*, 2021.

²⁴ “Jewish Immigration to America: Three Waves - My Jewish Learning.” *Myjewishlearning.Com*, 2021. <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-immigration-to-america-three-waves/>.

²⁵ *Tefilah mi-kol ha-shanah: Minhah Ketanah* [Prayers of the Entire Year: Minor Offering]. Fürth: Zurndorffer & Sommer, 1842. [Hebraic Section](#), Library of Congress (40)

979.9% making the population 216,239 in 1870. Within this massive migration, the idea of Reformative Judaism was brought to America. In Charleston , South Carolina, reformers transformed a former orthodox synagogue into the first US Reform Congregation. In 1938, Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Synagogue, burnt down. However this synagogue was rebuilt in 1940 and quickly became a large congregation for Reformative Jews in America, totaling up to 500 members in 1941, It continued to grow and held ceremonies very similar to those in Germany, including choir, mixed gender seating, and liturgy involving both German, Hebrew, and English.²⁶

Although reforming Judaism was a common idea, many practices and ideology differed among various Jewish groups. There were no set values that needed to be followed so everyone practiced differently. This resulted in practices that were not unified. Some practices were more traditional and others were more relaxed, The Reformative branch of Judaism lacked central authority that was able to guide the practice. Isaac Mayer Wise was a Czech Rabbi who migrated to Cincinnati in 1846. He was a very influential person in the creation of a unified branch of reform Judaism and dedicated his life to the formation of order within the religion. He preached the values of moderate reform which resulted in both praise and criticism.

The immigration from Germany made it so the Jewish population no longer consisted of communities as they previously existed. Much of the population who came to America did not have an established local synagogue or a common practice. Living in America provided Jewish people with economic freedom and religious freedom, but the state of Judaism became fragile with differing opinions on the future of the religion. Many people began to perform their

²⁶ *Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Synagogue (U.S. National Park Service)*. (2021). Nps.Gov. <https://www.nps.gov/places/kahal-kadosh-beth-elohim-synagogue.htm>

practices in lackadaisical fashion, with little to no intent on following prior rules in their religion.

According to the sacred text of Judaism, Jews are to follow the orders of the Torah. These involve rules about diet, clothing and gender roles. The dietary requirement is known as the *Kashrut* and comes from a section from the Torah guiding its followers on the correct dietary practices. It explains that Jews should not consume unclean food such as; pork, mixtures of meat and milk, particular fats from animals, any limb of an animal, fruit during the first three years after a fruit tree was planted, plants grown together, etc.²⁷ Following the Kashrut is called a Kosher diet and is essential for those who practice orthodox Judaism. Kosher is following correct dietary practices of Jewish law. Living in America really affected the ability to follow the Kashrut or keep Kosher. Almost all of the food prepared in America came directly from American recipes and sources with no regard to specific Jewish dietary needs. In addition, Kosher ingredients that were available were expensive. These factors made it very difficult for those who tried to strictly follow the orthodox diet resulting in the more reformative practices.

Another major part of the Jewish culture that was reformed in America was traditional clothing. An article published by My Jewish Learning explaining the importance of these clothing practices it states, “Clothing has reflected religious identification, social status, emotional state, and even the Jews’ relation with the outside world”²⁸. Although clothing is not mentioned as much within the Torah, there are several passages demonstrating a need for the correct garments to be worn. Rules about dress are practiced by orthodox followers. According

²⁷ *Judaism 101: Kashrut: Jewish Dietary Laws*. (2021). Jewfaq.Org. <https://www.jewfaq.org/kashrut.htm>

²⁸ “Jewish Clothing,” My Jewish Learning, June 7, 2021, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-clothing/>.

to the Torah (Leviticus 19:19), apparel should not include the mixing of Linen and Wool.²⁹ This is analogous to the passage explaining the concerns of the mixing of certain foods.

Specific clothing is ordered to be worn during certain traditions, practices, and prayers. My Jewish Learning explains, “Jews are recognizable by their distinctive garments worn for reasons of ritual, tradition or modesty. In particular, Orthodox (and some non-Orthodox) men cover their heads with kippot, and some cover these with black hats or a shtreimel , a type of fur hat.”³⁰ Kippot is the head covering worn in Synagogues and shows that you are fit to participate in prayer. Within the sacred text of the Talmud (the central text of Rabbinic Judaism) it states, “While they are clothed in the priestly garments, they are clothed in the priesthood; but when they are not wearing the garments, the priesthood is not upon them”³¹ The practicality of these garments faltered in US society. Being restricted to outfits and accessories limited the ability to assimilate into life and allow Jews to experience the opportunity that America promised. By reforming the requirements around dress, Jews could be more easily accepted into American society.

Traditionally, equality between men and women was accepted in Jewish communities. Women played a significant economic role in European communities, Women worked alongside men as artisans and sold wares and produce in local marketplaces and equally responsible for supporting their families.³² In America, Jews were subjected to American gender roles and

²⁹ *Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Synagogue (U.S. National Park Service)*. (2021). Nps.Gov. <https://www.nps.gov/places/kahal-kadosh-beth-elohim-synagogue.htm>

³⁰ My Jewish Learning, June 7, 2021

³¹ *Zevachim 17b:1*. (2021). Sefaria.Org. <https://www.sefaria.org/Zevachim.17b.1?lang=bi>

³² Hyman, Paula E.. "Eastern European Immigrants in the United States." *Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*. 31 December 1999. Jewish Women's Archive. (Viewed on December 6, 2021) <<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/eastern-european-immigrants-in-united-states>>.

division of labor. In the 19th century, gender roles in America were set in stone with the women seen as inferior to men. To fit in Jews needed to again reform their traditional culture.

Second Wave of Immigration

In the late 18th century, immigration trends began to shift east towards Eastern Europe. Immigrants began to flock to America from Russia, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and other Eastern European countries. This immigration was primarily the result of the expulsion of Jews due to anti semitism. In Germany, many Jews resided in big cities prior to their migration, but in Eastern Europe, smaller Jewish communities were still normal. Jews remained in Shtetls until they moved out of Eastern Europe.

This population of Jews differed from the Jewish people that resided in Central Europe because they were not the overwhelming minority. According to the essay *Eastern European Immigrants in the United States* by Paula E. Hyman, “In the northwest section of Russia’s Pale of Settlement, the western provinces to which Jews were restricted, they accounted for 58 percent of the total urban population. In the Pale as a whole, Jews constituted thirty-eight percent of those living in cities or towns.”³³ The larger number of Jews practicing the same religion normalized the more orthodox practices.

The word of a new land spread throughout Jewish communities. This land promised to eliminate antisemitic treatment and allow economic freedom. In 1880, around two million Polish-Russian Jews immigrated to poorer areas in large cities such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc. ³⁴ They worked as laborers in large manufacturing plants. During this migration, Jews resided in neighborhoods that were predominantly Jewish. This allowed

³³Hyman, Paula E.. Jewish Women's Archive. (Viewed on December 6, 2021)

³⁴ From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish Life in America
A Century of Immigration, 1820-1924

them to hold on to Orthodox and Kosher practices. Many Askanazi Jews refused the idea of Reform and instead preached the importance of holding onto traditional values. This was evident when many Jewish women started organizing kosher meat boycotts in an attempt to lower the price of traditional dietary needs for Judaism.³⁵ The sense of community in America empowered Eastern European Jews to maintain their traditions, even if they differed from the mainstream.

Although this population of immigrants tried to hold onto traditional values more than the first migration, certain social standards were still unacceptable in America. Similar to the prior migration, a change in Jewish traditions was essential to try and fit into modern American Society. As stated earlier, Women often had a large role in providing financially for their families. In some households in Russia, women were the only adults that worked, while the men devoted their lives to studying the teachings of the Torah.³⁶ However, it was difficult for women to find employment in America. Less extended family to assist with domestic responsibilities along with lower wages for women prevented women from working outside their homes.³⁷ Women began to work at home more, similar to typical American family dynamics at the time. Holding onto traditional values in America was simply too difficult. In order for this group of immigrants to fit into American life, reform was necessary.

Conclusion

The mass immigration of Jewish people into America was impactful to the entire religion. This idea that the Jewish religion needed to adapt to modern times was not created in America. This idea was introduced as a result of the industrialization of Europe and the changes in social

³⁵Michael Feldburg, *Jews in America: The Kosher Meat Boycott (1902)* Jewish Virtual Lab, Accessed 6, December, 2021 <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-kosher-meat-boycott-of-1902>

³⁶ Hyman, Paula E.. Jewish Women's Archive. (Viewed on December 5, 2021)

³⁷ Hyman, Paula E.. Jewish Women's Archive.

and economic factors. When relocating to industrial areas, the need to assimilate into society was essential for most Jews. The replacement of conservative traditions with more secular reform began before immigration. This was demonstrated in the Hebrew Magazine published in 1783 called the Ha'Massef by several early reformers .

Reform was not completely accepted into the Jewish community with several important Rabbis speaking out against this ideology. The rabbis explained that eliminating traditional values would lead to the destruction of Judaism as a whole. However, several influential names such as Jewish Layman Israel Jacobson and Rabbi Abraham Gieger preached the importance of adapting the religion of Judaism to modern times. They began to hold ceremonies and practice this new ideology of Reform. This was just the beginning of the reform movement. When the immigration from Germany began, this idea carried over. During the mass immigration from Germany many did not arrive with a community forcing them to assimilate directly into US culture. This resulted in more relaxed practices among Jews. Gender roles, garment traditions, and dietary practices were reformed to adapt to American norms.

In Europe, the practice of traditional religious rituals were semi-normal and mostly accepted into society. In America, many did not exercise orthodox beliefs and people practicing these traditions had a difficult time fitting into modern day American society.

In the late 19th century, Jewish immigration shifted to Eastern Europe in a new wave of immigration. The US opened the gate to Jews and many flocked to America. This wave of immigrants differed from the first wave. The newer immigrant communities allowed many Jewish people to retain prior Orthodox practices and limited the need to assimilate into America. Many newer immigrants tried to hold onto their traditional values. For example, some participated in the Kosher meat boycott. However, it simply was not practical in America for

Jews to avoid change. It was difficult for families to assimilate into society with the lack of availability of Kosher meat, traditional garments, and limited wages for women. As time moved forward, the number of Orthodox Jews decreased drastically.

Although the two waves of immigration initially looked different, reform Judaism is now the most practiced form of Judaism in America. Reform Judaism was inevitable in the evolution of religion in a modern industrialized society. However assimilation into a entirely new culture accelerated this process immensely.

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