



Emissaries from the Holy Land: The Sephardic Diaspora and the Practice of Pan-Judaism in the Eighteenth Century (Stanford Studies in Jewish History and C)

Matthias Lehmann

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For Jews in every corner of the world, the Holy Land has always been central. But that conviction was put to the test in the eighteenth century when Jewish leaders in Palestine and their allies in Istanbul sent rabbinic emissaries on global fundraising missions. From the shores of the Mediterranean to the port cities of the Atlantic seaboard, from the Caribbean to India, these emissaries solicited donations for the impoverished of Israel's homeland.

Emissaries from the Holy Land explores how this eighteenth century philanthropic network was organized and how relations of trust and solidarity were built across vast geographic differences. It looks at how the emissaries and their supporters understood the relationship between the Jewish Diaspora and the Land of Israel, and it shows how cross-cultural encounters and competing claims for financial support involving Sephardic, Ashkenazi, and North African emissaries and communities contributed to the transformation of Jewish identity from 1720 to 1820.

Solidarity among Jews and the centrality of the Holy Land in traditional Jewish society are often taken for granted. Lehmann challenges such assumptions and provides a critical, historical perspective on the question of how Jews in the early modern period encountered one another, how they related to Jerusalem and the land of Israel, and how the early modern period changed perceptions of Jewish unity and solidarity. Based on original archival research as well as multiple little-known and rarely studied sources, *Emissaries from the Holy Land* offers a fresh perspective on early modern Jewish society and culture and the relationship between the Jewish Diaspora and Palestine in the eighteenth century.

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