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ISRAELIS WITH A RUSSIAN ACCENT

Fran Markowitz

I came to Israel in October 1987 as a post-doctoral research fellow at the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to conduct an ethnographic study of ethnic identity and community formation among Russian *olim* (immigrants). I had recently completed research on Soviet Jewish immigrants in New York and I was eager to compare the post-migration experience of Soviet Jews who had resettled in Israel with my New York findings. In the 1980s in New York, about 50,000 formerly Soviet Jews were linked into an unintended, previously unimagined community which is emotionally strong but institutionally weak.[1] Its members shared the experience of having lived in and left the Soviet Union as Jews; and now that they were in the United States, they used the knowledge gained from that experience as a basis for adjusting to a new social setting which could often challenge the core of an immigrant's identity.[2]

My parallel research in Israel was aimed at learning whether resettlement there exerted a similar effect in reshaping the individual and social identity of Soviet Jews. Now in the early 1990s, as an unprecedentedly large number of Jews from the former Soviet Union have made Israel their new home,[3] it is timely to examine the position of the *olim russim lo-hadashim* (not-so-new Russian immigrants)[4] in present-day Israel and to explore the nature of their identity as Israelis.

This paper seeks to explicate what seem to be inconsistencies in the *olim*'s long-term adaptation process. On the one hand, they declare: 'We are Israelis, completely and absolutely at home', while on the other, they remain primary speakers of Russian and avid followers of political events and cultural developments in the Soviet Union.[5] Further, and just as puzzling, at the same time as they conduct their personal lives almost exclusively in Russian within their migration cohort, they embrace Israel assimilationism by refusing to support an infrastructure of organizations and Russian-speaking leaders which would make them a political force to contend with in a multi-ethnic Israel. By exploring these contradictions through the intersections of

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State ideology and personal sentiments, their experience as Jews in the Soviet Union and as repatriated Russian-speaking Israelis,[6] and then by comparing their expectations of life in Israel with the realities of *aliyah*, this paper seeks to understand the two-way process of change which refashioned both former Soviet Jews and Israeli society in the 1980s.

Methodology

When I arrived in Jerusalem in 1987, I was armed with half a dozen names and addresses of Soviet *olim* (friends of friends) throughout Israel and immediately began establishing contacts with them. In addition, colleagues in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at The Hebrew University were helpful in setting up introductions to their friends and relatives.[7] By the time I left Israel at the end of September 1988, I had met several hundred *olim lo-hadashim* throughout the country and developed close relationships with a core group of twenty.

In Israel I spent my time — unequally — in Jerusalem (about 60 per cent), Netanya (35 per cent) and Beersheva (five per cent) intensely involved in 'participant-observation'. This rather scientific-sounding term usually meant animated conversations punctuated with vodka, coffee, brandy, and tea until the wee hours of the morning. My conversation partners often demanded that I answer just about as many questions as I posed. Probably the question most frequently asked of me was, 'Why aren't you staying with us in Israel? Where are you going "home" to?'. Thus, from very early on, in the stereotypically Jewish way of answering a question with a question, my hosts pointedly addressed a major theme of my research.

In addition to these conversations and taking part in the evening, weekend, and holiday life of my most hospitable hosts,[8] I also attended several public events to gain an understanding of the nature of Russian *olim* as a community[9] and its relationship to the Israeli State. Such events ranged from the *Yom Aliyah* celebration sponsored by the Jewish Agency (Sokhnut) in 1987, at which the recently-released Prisoner of Zion, Ida Nudel, was the guest of honour, to the creation on the first of May 1988 of the Soviet Jewry Zionist Forum, an umbrella organization consisting of representatives of all two dozen Soviet *olim* associations,[10] to numerous concerts and exhibitions. In addition, I spent time as a volunteer editor/translator at a major Soviet Jewry advocacy organization — that is, one which monitored and lobbied on behalf of refuseniks and disseminated information about the living conditions of Jews in the USSR — and I interviewed staff at other *olim* organizations. I closely monitored the English-language *Jerusalem Post* and the Russian press for articles by and about *olim* and Soviet Jewry. Finally, towards

the end of my stay I conducted a survey of 105 *olim russim lo-hadashim* (53 males and 52 females) in five cities[11] about their immigration experiences, political views, identity and affiliations, social circles, and leisure-time activities. The survey and virtually all my field research were conducted in Russian.

Strangers in the Motherland, at Home in Israel

One of the central tenets underlying Israel's policies for immigrant absorption[12] is that the immigration of Jews to Israel differs in all respects from most other international migrations. It is argued that unlike those who are born and grow up as the uncontestably rightful inhabitants of their homelands, Jews throughout the Diaspora spend their lives as members of a stigmatized minority group, as strangers in the lands of their birth.[13] While most migrants, forced or voluntary, start off as rooted in an identity and a place which they call home and then end up as strangers upon arrival at a new destination,[14] Jewish *aliyah* to Israel changes the stranger into a rightful citizen, a member of the majority group in his or her historical homeland.

Ideology and life history converge in the reminiscences of Russian *olim* as they stress the fact that 'Russia wasn't ours' in recounting why they had made the decision to come to Israel in the first place. Zhanna was 33 years old in 1988 and had lived in Israel for 11 years when she commented that during all the time that she had lived in the Soviet Union, she knew that the country was not hers. She then added: 'I had no personal encounters with antisemitism because I didn't look Jewish. But I would hear people calling *zhid*[15] to others, to friends of mine as I was standing there'. Lazar, also in his early thirties but in Israel only since 1981, related: 'I always knew I was going to leave. It was just a matter of time . . . because I am a Jew'. Although virtually nothing about their language, appearance, religious beliefs, and cultural practices demarcated Zhanna and Lazar from their Russian neighbours, they, and thousands like them, were aware of their otherness and its ramifications and decided to leave.[16]

Others, particularly from the newest and westernmost regions of the Soviet Union (for example, Lithuania, Latvia and West Ukraine) in which the tradition of autonomous Jewish communal life continued until its destruction in the Second World War, had indeed participated in Jewish culture since early childhood. Dora, from Vilnius, and her husband Ilya, from Kaunus, left the USSR in 1972. Their families had applied to emigrate even before the Six-Day War of 1967,[17] having decided that Israel was a more logical home than the Soviet Union for survivors of Hitler's genocidal policies.

Igor and Fima, both from Moscow, were young adolescents when they came to Israel. Both their fathers had been very successful

professionals at the centre of Soviet life; Igor's was an attorney who had gone through his law courses with Mikhail Gorbachev, and Fima's a professor at a leading Moscow university. While it appeared that these men were thoroughly assimilated Jews, they became Zionists around the time of the 1967 war. Their enthusiasm for Israel's military victory led them to establish, and participate in, Jewish study circles until they emigrated with their families in 1972. Both Igor and Fima recalled that they were happy about their parents' decision to emigrate because despite the prestigious positions of their fathers, the boys in their courtyard and at school frequently reminded them, through jeers and with fists, that they were different because they were Jews.

Still others, who had been comfortably settled in Israel for ten to fifteen years, confided that they themselves did not initiate their immigration to Israel. Some men explained that their wives were not lulled by their success — either as wealthy entrepreneurs on the black market, or as professionals with Communist Party memberships — and reminded them that no matter what they did, they and their children would forever remain vulnerable to prejudice and persecution. Finally, there were those whose impetus to emigrate came neither from within themselves nor from their family circle but from complete outsiders. A few musical and literary artists told me that their final summons from the KGB ended with the statement: 'Your kind isn't wanted', and a suggestion to submit documents for emigration. Whether or not they had planned to emigrate, the authorities had decided that these artists were dangerous alien elements, not wanted by the Soviet state.

Certainly, then, knowledge based on personal experience, derived from instances of overt discrimination, or less frequently, a tradition of Jewish culture, coupled with feelings of marginality or exclusion, led many Soviet Jews to consider themselves strangers in their native land.[18] The situation was exacerbated after the Six-Day War of 1967 by an increase of anti-Zionist (in effect, anti-Jewish) rhetoric in the media, fear for the future of their children, and the desire to be reunited with members of the family who had already emigrated — leading to a decision to leave the country and settle in Israel.[19] Thus, even before landing in Israel, Soviet Jews were predisposed towards being Jewish repatriates in a Jewish State rather than Soviet émigrés.

In fact, however, when the *olim* arrived in Israel, they did not immediately shed the skin of the stranger and become, overnight, Israelis. Some of those who had been in the country for more than a decade and were comfortable in the now-familiar surroundings of Israel, related the difficulties they had encountered after their initial period in an Absorption Centre or in a kibbutz, remembering rude bureaucrats, economic deprivation, cultural alienation, and a haunting feeling of dependency. Most of the men were conscripted into active

military service within months of their arrival, leaving their wives and mothers alone and insecure.[20] Zhenya, whose husband was on active duty for six months, not only had to face that separation, but also had to fend for herself as a result of inefficient bureaucrats: no one could find the relevant authorization for her to receive an allowance from her husband's pay. She confessed, with some reluctance: 'Those were horrifying months — I was alone with a small baby and did not have enough money to buy something to eat . . . Oh, those were very hard times. Thank God we survived them'.

Usually, the first few months in Israel were very hectic but exhilarating. The immigrants met their old friends and their relatives, studied Hebrew, looked for work, and began to acclimatize to a new, but not an alien, home. Zhanna, who came to Israel alone with her grandfather in 1977, a year before her parents and sister arrived, related that whenever she felt low she would look out of the window of her room in the Haifa Absorption Centre, and every building, every tree made her think: 'In this place there was nothing, nothing, just sand'. She added: 'We Jews had built it all, everything with our own hands. Everything I saw made me happy. Sure it was rough, being alone, being uncertain, not knowing the language, not knowing anything about this culture, how people live, work . . . It was very hard those first months. You're never sure who you are, what you are, what your future will be'.

Dora, however, expressed no ambivalence from the start. Today in her suburban Beersheva home, her family converses almost exclusively in Hebrew, and most of her friends are native Israelis or long-term residents of the country (*vatikim* or veterans). From the moment she and her husband had decided to leave the Soviet Union they planned to embrace Israel as their own country. She explained: 'When you leave one country, one way of life, you have to leave that behind. I have absolutely no nostalgia for Russia, none at all. Yes, the culture, the scenery is different there, but Israel has its own'.

I met a more recent arrival, Lena, who had left Moscow to settle in Jerusalem in 1985; she had therefore been in the country for about three years when she confided her disillusion to me. I cannot say how many of the *olim-lo-hadashim* had experienced similar discontent in their first few years and later overcame these difficulties as they adjusted to life in Israel, but since Lena's complaints echo frequently-expressed themes, I believe that her sentiments are fairly typical of newcomers in the process of adaptation. In 1980 she realized: 'This [the USSR] is their country. I have no right to expect them to be like me. I have only one choice — and that is to find my own country'. At that point she began to study Hebrew and Jewish history, preparing herself for life in Israel. 'I came to Israel because I believed that this is my country, my Jewish country, people who are cosmopolitan, who love reading and using their minds'. Now that she is in Israel, Lena is disappointed because

she believes that she is very different from most Israelis — 'When you see someone reading on the bus, it's always a "Russian"'. Like the American *olim* described by Kevin Avruch,[21] Lena is nonplussed that her Zionist vision of Israel as 'a modern country — built by European Jews with internationalist views' is daily contradicted by what she sees as the backwardness of Oriental Jews and the parochialism of 'the religious'.

Several other Russian *olim* — new as well as not-so-new — also expressed to me the view that Israel is 'the Middle East' and 'not Europe', because of its pace, the personalistic nature of its bureaucracy,[22] its architecture, its 'feel'. Some mentioned ambivalence about Israel not being completely part of the modern West; they were attracted as well as repelled by the smallness and orientalism of the country. A prominent musician, who had been in Israel since the beginning of 1972, confided: 'I am ashamed to say that I feel at home here. And as much as I love it, I hate it. Every time I come back from, say, Berlin, New York, and the airplane door opens, and in comes that hot air, I hate it and I love it. And I hate that I love it'. Others, and these were often people who were not satisfied with the position they had managed to obtain,[23] commented that it was difficult for them to identify with what they considered to be the 'Eastern soul' of the country. Still others believed that it was their personal mission to 'modernize', 'Europeanize', or 'internationalize' Israel, giving themselves a raison d'être in the Jewish State.

Unlike most of those who leave their native countries as members of the majority group and become strangers when they arrive as immigrants in a strange land, Jews in the USSR were always aware of their stigmatized minority status. They came to Israel because it was, in the early 1970s, the only place to go; some said that they simply left Russia without thinking about where they were going, while others were inspired by Zionist ideals,[24] and still others joined family members. Yet despite their desire to emigrate to a Jewish State and despite the efforts of that State to welcome and to shelter them in their initial months, reflecting back, it is quite apparent that during their first year(s) in Israel, nearly all these Russian *olim* had to struggle to feel 'at home'.

Several Years Later: Klita (Absorption), Edah (Ethnic Group), or What?

From the very beginning of their *aliyah* and throughout the 1980s, *olim* from the Soviet Union have had a multi-faceted, rather than a unitary acculturation experience. Judith Shuval noted in the early 1970s that different aspects of their adjustment-adaptation-integration proceeded at different rates.[25] Studies sponsored by Israel's Ministry of Absorption show that Russian *olim* make a remarkably rapid economic adjustment,[26] so much so that in 1986 Tamar Horowitz reported that

their average income was higher than the average of Israel's salaried employees.[27]

As regards emotional integration, Uri Farago's research of the early 1970s, published in this Journal, clearly indicated that Russian *olim* closely identified with Israel and saw themselves first and foremost as Jews and/or Israelis.[28] Yet despite these seemingly complementary indicators of integration, analysts like Shuval and Horowitz conclude that there is a disjuncture between what they view as the *olim*'s successful economic integration and a not-so-successful socio-cultural integration.[29] My own research leads to quite a different conclusion.

The intensive participant-observation in which I was involved during 1987–88 and the questionnaire I administered to 105 *olim-lo-hadashim* indicate that on all sorts of behavioural and attitudinal measures these Russian-Israelis closely portray what appear to be the norms of Israeli society. The vast majority are fully competent in Hebrew; virtually all are working and earning average or above-average salaries; more than three-fourths had voted in the 1984 elections and planned to vote again in the elections at the end of 1988. Even more interesting than their voting frequency was their party preferences; only one individual indicated a desire to vote for a (non-existent) Russian *olim* party, and despite their reputation for being right-wingers, these Russian-Israelis spanned the political spectrum from right to left — with quite a bit of movement back and forth.

Thus, in 1984, 20 individuals voted for the extreme right-wing political parties — eight for Kach and 12 for Tehiya. An additional 24 voted for the Likud, bringing the right-wing total to 44, less than 50 per cent of the sample. On the left, 16 individuals voted for Labour, and an additional four for Ratz, the Citizens' Rights Party. Two voted for the centrist party, Shenu'i (Change) and eleven for smaller parties — religious and non-religious. Nineteen respondents stated that they did not vote in the 1984 elections, and nine did not answer the question. When asked about their voting plans for 1988, 38 individuals stated that they were in favour of the rightist parties: five for Kach, 12 still supporting Tehiya, three for the new party Tsomet, and 18 remaining with Likud. On the left, 14 said that they would vote in favour of Labour, and only one voiced support for Ratz. No one mentioned Shenu'i; six would support religious parties, eight said that they were not planning to vote, and six did not anwer this question. By far the largest bloc was the undecided; by the summer months of 1988, about one-third of the respondents (32) had as yet to finalize their choice, indicating flexibility in their political positions.

Most of these *olim-lo-hadashim* are not only active voters but they are also very much aware of, and concerned about, Israel's leaders. No one mentioned any Soviet immigrant as an Israeli leader, either in our informal discussions or during the survey, despite having been given

the opportunity to write in any name they might choose. Instead, they overwhelmingly selected prominent personalities from the largest political parties as Israeli leaders, some choosing more than one. Ariel Sharon proved most popular: 21 respondents opted for him; while fellow Likudniks Yitzhak Shamir, then the party leader, drew 13, Binyamin Netanyahu 11, and Moshe Arens eight. Shimon Peres, who was the Labour party leader in 1988, attracted 18 positive responses, and Yitzhak Rabin another two. Nine individuals chose Rabbi Meyer Kahane as the Israeli leader with whom they most closely identified, eight selected Geulah Cohen, the spokesperson of Tehiya, and five selected Shulamit Aloni of Ratz. Three people wrote in the name of Menahem Begin, despite the fact that he had retired from public life since 1983, and one wrote in David Ben-Gurion — who had died in 1973. Seven chose rather obscure political hopefuls, including one who indicated himself, while the remaining 18 stated 'no one'.

By 1988, the Soviet *olim* of the 1970s, who had arrived without a clue as to the workings of Israel's political system, were not only well informed about the major issues and lines of demarcation between parties, but also actively participated in elections. It is evident that they have a good understanding of the pluralistic nature of the Israeli political system and, moreover, deplore its more socialist/communist elements. Perhaps most significant of all for an assessment of integration is the finding that the political concerns of these *olim* are not at all focused upon themselves as a special interest or ethnic group but rather on the broader questions which inform and shape the consciousness of Israeli society.[30]

Soviet *olim* just as vividly demonstrate their identification with Israeli society through their celebration of Jewish/Israeli holidays. Clearly, in the pre-*glasnost* USSR the state considered demonstrations of Jewish religiosity as regressive superstition at best and sedition at worst — with the result that those who wished to observe a Jewish festival or holy day did so privately and in secret.[31]

In Israel, of course, the main Jewish holy days are also public state holidays, and Russian *olim*, after initial unfamiliarity with these occasions, usually take an active part in the celebrations. About 60 per cent of the respondents to my survey stated that they always observed the solemn days of the Jewish calendar, such as Rosh Hashanah (59 per cent), Yom Kippur (65 per cent) and the Passover (64 per cent) while an additional 20 per cent answered that they do so sometimes.[32] Purim is also celebrated, as a happy event in Jewish history (55 per cent stated that they always took part in the festivities), but a slightly higher proportion (57 per cent) said that they always celebrate the secular New Year (31 December to 1 January), which is not a public holiday in Israel. More than half (53 per cent) stated that they always celebrated Israel's Independence Day (*Yom Ha-Atzma'ut*) with an additional

25 per cent taking part sometimes. May Day, however, holds no meaning for the overwhelming majority; not a single respondent said that he or she always celebrated that day, and only three said that sometimes they had a picnic or stayed home from work on that occasion.[33]

It is clear that as far as the secular celebrations are concerned, Soviet *olim* prefer to opt for a completely apolitical and secular celebration — 31 December, New Year's Eve. They have retained fond memories of that holiday as an escape from state-sponsored ideology and enjoy coming together to eat, sing, dance, drink, and see in the New Year.[34] In contrast, May Day in the USSR entailed a near-mandatory attendance at parades after which families would go out into the countryside for a picnic, but because of its ideological overtones the day is virtually ignored by Russian *olim*; the majority of them celebrate Israel's Independence Day at about the same rate as they do the New Year — 53 per cent always celebrate and an additional 27 per cent sometimes join in the festivities. One interesting problem about Independence Day apparently is the Israeli symbolism of the public rituals associated with it. I must admit that I myself was puzzled by the aggressive conviviality: hitting with plastic hammers and spraying everyone in sight with foam.[35] All told, the participation of *olim-lo-hadashim* in Israeli-Jewish ceremonies is high, bespeaking not only identification with the traditions of Judaism and of Israel, but also their rejection of the political culture of their native country.

Finally, I wished to make comparisons with earlier surveys of the attitudes of Russian immigrants, and I asked my hosts about how they felt in Israel: were they 'at home', or did they see themselves as 'strangers'? The answers were remarkably positive: 91 respondents (87 per cent) said that they felt completely or to a great extent at home, while only nine expressed a feeling of estrangement.[36]

In view of all these behavioural and attitudinal indicators, one could reasonably conclude that the Soviet *olim* who have been in the country some years have not only 'adapted' to Israel but indeed that they have to a great extent been 'absorbed' into Israeli mainstream society. Yet leading social analysts seem hesitant to reach such a conclusion. I believe that there are two main reasons for this reluctance to recognize successful integration. The first is the fact that Soviet *olim* generally continue to use Russian as their main language even after several years in Israel, and while they certainly do speak Hebrew, it is distinctly accented; the second is their characteristic pattern of sociability, the tendency to form friendships almost exclusively within their immigrant cohort. These tendencies come under criticism by Israelis who believe that Jews who were born and raised in the Soviet Union and who have settled in Israel should 'melt' into the Hebrew-speaking world of friends and neighbours — not only that of the market and of the place of work.

Most former Soviet Jews do indeed continue to speak Russian at home (93 per cent of my sample), and many read Russian-language periodicals.[37] None of those I interviewed, however, speak Russian exclusively or rely on Russian newspapers and magazines as their only or even primary source of information: Russian books, magazines, films, and even television programmes (via cable from Moscow) are secondary to the attention given to the Hebrew-language, Israeli media for news and for entertainment.

Moreover, the Russian which the *olim* speak is heavily Hebraicized.[38] I was confused at the beginning of my fieldwork about the meaning of many terms they used until I realized that they were Hebrew words declined according to the rules of Russian grammar. I quickly learned that *ma nishma'*? (Hebrew for: 'what do we hear? or 'what's new?') often replaces the Russian *Kak dela?* ('How are things?'); that the Hebrew *tov* and *be-seder* ('good' and 'all right') are used instead of *khorosho* and *ladno* (Russian for 'good' and 'all right'), and that people go to a *masiba* (a 'party', in Hebrew)[39] to celebrate a birthday or anniversary. I was frequently invited to eat *'uga* ('cake') not *tort* for dessert; and during a vacation or for an outing Russian *olim* go on a *tiyul* (a 'trip'), rather than for an excursion (*ekskursiia*). I noticed also that the Hebrew conjunction *aval* ('but') frequently replaces the Russian *no*, and that the Hebrew phrase, *hasva-halilah* has virtually eliminated the Russian, *ne dai Bog* ('God forbid'). Further, immigrants who in their previous lives as Soviet citizens would never have done so, now sprinkle their speech with Biblical proverbs or allusions, either in Russian or in direct quotes from the Hebrew text. New immigrants from the USSR said that they, like me, had to make adjustments when they first arrived in Israel in order to understand the Russian of their compatriots who had been settled in the country for several years.

Similarly, native Israelis must also make adjustments to understand the Hebrew of the Russian *olim*. Admittedly, there are many types of accent in the Hebrew spoken in Israel, but the variety of Hebrew spoken by 'Russians' seems to be in a category of its own. It is not only that native speakers of Russian roll their 'r' (while the Hebrew *resh* is a guttural); they also do not have the aspirated 'h' sound and may not differentiate between the Hebrew *heh* and *khet*, or, again, they may transform that sound into a 'g' — as Russians do with foreign words which include an 'h'. Thus, the Hebrew word for Jews, *yehudim*, becomes *yegudim*.

But it is the Russian phonological rule that the unstressed 'o' must be pronounced as an 'a' which most often results in misunderstandings. In one special case, an embarrassing incident occurred at work, as Zhanna told me: 'We were coming to the end of some complicated negotiations, and one of them challenged my summary of the points of our agreement. I said, "Here, let me open my *hazeh* to show you"; but

ḥazeh in Hebrew means bosom; *ḥozeh* is contract. He looked at me a little funny, and I turned red and showed him the document. I'm thinking about taking a pronunciation improvement course'.

The other area of concern to social analysts, the social circles of Soviet *olim*, should be seen not as segregation, voluntary or forced, but as a demonstration that the *olim-lo-hadashim* are comfortable with the fact that they are both Israeli-Jewish *and* Russians.[40] Inna, who was 31 years old in 1988 and worked as an employee of the Israeli army, explained, 'I came here to Israel when I was twenty years old, still young, but I had finished school there in Russia and then two years of institute. My culture is Russian culture. Here the books that children grow up on are the works of Jabotinsky, Herzl, Bialik. Sure I could read them — and I have read them. I read them and appreciate them . . . and appreciate Jewish history, the history of Israel, and Jewish culture; but it is, in some sense, outside of me . . . I feel completely at home [here], just like any Israeli. I feel this way because there are many different kinds of Israelis. I speak Hebrew completely fluently. I just feel that I have more in common with Russian *olim* — *shoresh*, roots, deep understanding, things that don't have to be explained'.

Neither Israeliness nor Jewishness is at issue. Inna, and several dozens of others with whom I spoke, were not at all defensive or unsure about their ethno-religious-political-psychological connection with these identities. What they did stress was that their experience as Jews in Soviet Russia bound them together with Russian *olim* into a closer community than with other Israelis, native-born or otherwise.

This sentiment of closeness, however, includes no anti-sabra overtones or even suggestions of separation. It is reserved for the private sphere, leisure time, relaxation after work and on weekends. Indeed, many of my *olim* hosts, like Inna quoted above, emphasized that they have 'Israeli' acquaintances with whom they socialize from time to time and whose children's Bar Mitzvahs and weddings they attend. They feel accepted and wanted by mainstream Israeli society but actively choose in-group friends for the special bonds created by a common history as Soviet-Russian Jews.[41] This history, while influencing to some extent their experiences in the present, has no relevance to their — and their children's — future as Israelis. The *olim* decry the 'Russian ghettos' of New York where many have friends and relatives and favourably compare their own residential, linguistic, and social integration in Israel to that of their American counterparts.

In the political arena, former Soviet Jews are notably reluctant to affiliate with *olim* organizations[42] or — as noted above — to endorse prominent members of their group as Israeli leaders.[43] Indeed, in the summer months of 1988, after the 1 May meeting in Jerusalem where the Soviet Jewry Zionist Forum was created under the leadership of Natan Sharansky, a slight majority of respondents to my survey (52 per

cent) indicated that there was no need for a unified *olim* organization. Further, despite the frequent press coverage of Sharansky, Joseph Begun, Ida Nudel, and other recently-arrived Prisoners of Zion, to say nothing of those activists who spearheaded the *aliyah* of Soviet Jews in the late 1960s, almost half the respondents refused to name one person as an apt representative or leader of *olim* from the USSR.[44] Instead, many told me that they have no need for 'self-appointed leaders', that Sharansky's initial statement after arriving in Israel about the need for a Palestinian state and then his turn-about, were embarrassments to them, and that 'it's better all around for people who know and understand the Israeli political process to lead it'. Rather than condoning ethnically-based interest group politics, these *olim-lo-hadashim* endorse, in their words and deeds, a one-people/one-nation model.

Israeli society is not conceived of as 'them', an objective entity outside 'us', *Russian olim*. Rather, Israel is their home, their society, their nation-state, their people. They are no longer Jewish strangers in someone else's land. One of them said that in Israel 'we are normal people living a normal life', and another: 'We are in our own country like any other people in their own country. We no longer have to be better than everyone else'. Perhaps the most thoughtful summation of the transformations former Soviet Jews have undergone is that of a Russian-language poet who has lived in Israel since 1976:

> I say now that I am not Russian, although I still write in Russian and . . . I have not learned Hebrew or English properly . . . I speak street Hebrew and pidgin English. Yes, so I am an Israeli with a Russian accent. I am just that — an Israeli, no longer a Jew. A Jew is a specific sociological type that arose in the diaspora [and] now the only future of the Jews is to become Israelis. The only other choice is to disappear . . . I am not a Zionist, and I didn't come to Israel out of Zionist motivations. This is not an ideology, just a fact. Jews will disappear unless they become Israelis — Jews who have chosen to live in Israel and all that that entails. And that is what I am.

Conclusion

During the 1970s and through the mid-1980s about 300,000 Jews left the Soviet Union. Those who chose to resettle in Israel found not only a new culture, climate, and political system, but also a new meaning for their Jewish identity. While they certainly underwent stress and faced difficulties in their initial encounters with Israeli life, in the course of time most of them have internalized and put into practice an identity that places them alongside natives of the country they chose to be their home. As Israelis, they are legitimate members of both a people and a nation-state. They have shed the stigma attached to being strangers in the land of their birth.

While Israel has changed Soviet Jews into Israelis with a Russian accent, Soviet *olim* have also changed Israel. Natan Sharansky has

recently described how the current post-Soviet wave of Russian *olim* continues the process begun in the 1970s. Side by side with the anguish born of trying to find jobs in a tight economy is a proliferation of Russian-language publications, symphony orchestras, and theatrical troupes. This new wave of Russian *olim* has increased Israel's Jewish population and bolstered the percentage of the population with university degrees.[45] Jokes now abound not of Russian Jews disembarking from airplanes holding up their fingers in the V for Victory sign to signify their desire for a villa and a Volvo,[46] but of changing Israel's national language from Hebrew to Russian.

When S. N. Eisenstadt published his path-breaking book, *The Absorption of Immigrants*, his aim was to develop a programme which would modernize Jews from traditional societies so that they could contribute to Israel's progress.[47] Over the past several decades, as the majority of Israel's Jewish population is no longer Ashkenazi but Sephardi, Israeli culture has become increasingly flexible in its embrace of ethnic attachments and more tolerant of various forms of ethnic displays.[48] By the late 1980s, Israeliness had been modified from its distinctively socialist-Zionist-European cast by incorporating Middle Eastern festivals, melodies, foods, and gestures into its repertoire. It is in this 'Levantized' socio-cultural milieu that former Soviet Jews may indeed be re-Europeanizing Israeli life.

But the presence of many tens of thousands of new Russian *olim* has reshaped Israeli society in yet another way. Now it is the 'Europeans' who are coming to Israel as new immigrants searching for jobs, and in need of housing and skills to make the country their home. While in the early 1970s, the resettlement of Soviet *olim* into newly-constructed apartments, and the great concern shown that they find well-paid jobs in their white-collar professions aroused the resentment of Middle Eastern and North African *olim* of the 1950s,[49] these same people, and their children, are in the 1990s mainstream Israelis. Maya, a middle-aged lawyer from Kharkov who came to Israel in 1988, told me that a woman approached her in the streets of Tel Aviv when she heard her speaking Russian, pressed 50 shekels into Maya's hand and said, in Hebrew, 'I too was an immigrant — many years ago — from Morocco. Welcome home'.

NOTES

[1] This unintended community contrasts with the communities delineated by Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London, 1983.

[2] See Fran Markowitz, *A Community in Spite of Itself: Soviet Jewish Emigres in New York*, Washington, DC (Smithsonian Institution Press), 1993.

[3] According to Israel's Ministry of Absorption, 344,478 Soviet Jews came to settle in Israel in 1990–92

[4] This is a terribly unwieldy label, yet one which adequately distinguishes this group from *olim* from other countries, and from Russian *olim hadashim* who have been coming to Israel in unprecedented numbers since 1989. Israel officially designates as *olim hadashim* those who have been in the country for five years or less. *Vatikim*, or veterans, is a label usually applied to those who arrived during the pre-State period and/or those who came between 1948 and 1950. There is no generally recognized label for those Israelis who arrived in the country more than five but less than 40 years ago.

[5] The data for this paper were gathered during the blossoming of *glasnost* in the USSR, and unless otherwise indicated, the ethnographic present remains 1987–88.

[6] Whereas the term *olim russim lo-hadashim* is an externally-imposed label, the phrase 'repatriated Russian-speaking Israelis' is one I frequently heard former Soviet Jews apply to themselves.

[7] Special thanks to Eyal Ben-Ari and to Anatoly Khazanov.

[8] To protect their anonymity, I am refraining from mentioning here the full names of friends who so generously opened their homes and hearts to me. I only hope that my written work does justice to the world views, sentiments, and life-styles which they were kind enough to share with me.

[9] Or non-community as the case may be. This point will be discussed in depth later in the paper.

[10] Many of these associations were created and funded by the major political parties, the Histadrut (the Labour Federation), and religious organizations in the 1970s. By 1987, the most active *olim* associations were the Soviet Jewry Information and Education Center, which received much of its financial support from Soviet Jewish advocacy groups in the United States, and the Israel Public Council for Soviet Jewry, which is connected to the Jewish Agency. Shamir, a religious group, has its own specific following. Other so-called self-help and cultural groups operate more as 'on-the-books' organizations than as actual forums for the exchange of ideas, forging of political interests, or the performance of concerts.

[11] Soviet-Russian immigrants tend to live in the largest cities of their new countries, and Israel is no exception. Respondents, who were mainly my hosts and their friends and friends of friends (in other words, a 'snowball sample' aimed at persons aged 25–55 who had been in Israel for at least five years) came from the Jerusalem metropolitan area, greater Tel-Aviv, Beersheva (including Omer), Haifa, and Netanya (including Kiryat Nordau).

[12] The Ministry of Absorption works with the Jewish Agency, to resettle newcomers. The aim is to provide newcomers with shelter, food, and linguistic and vocational skills so that they may be 'absorbed' into the 'normalcy' of Israeli society.

[13] George Simmel, 'The Stranger', in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, edited by Kurt H. Wolff, Glencoe, IL, 1950, pp. 402–08, presents the classic formulation of this phenomenon. Sander Gilman in *Jewish Self-Hatred*, Baltimore, MD, 1986, provides compelling documentation of the status of the Jew as the Other in Germany — and by extension, throughout the Western Christian world. While the contention that Diaspora Jews are quintessential strangers may be challenged for many parts of the contemporary world, I argue that it held true in the Soviet Union, the case under consideration.

[14] A large literature on migration and disorientation documents these phenomena. Of especial note are the classics: William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, abridged and edited by Eli Zaretsky, Chicago, 1987, and Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted*, 2nd enlarged edition, Boston, 1973. See also Charles Zwingmann and Maria Pfister-Ammende, eds., *Uprooting and After*, New York, 1973; Judith Shuval, 'Migration and Stress', in *Handbook of Stress*, edited by L. Goldberger and Breznitz, New York, 1982, pp. 677–91; David Haines, ed., *Refugees in the United States*, Westport, CT, 1985; Leon and Rebecca Grinberg, *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile*, New Haven, CT, 1989; and Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut, *Immigrant America*, Berkeley, 1990, Chapter 5.

[15] A Russian pejorative for Jew, equivalent to 'kike' in American English.

[16] Soviet Jews had their internal passports stamped with their nationality as Jewish: that was an identity imposed from above, whether or not the holder in fact did identify as being Jewish. The same also holds true of the Russian, Ukrainian, Estonian, Uzbek, Georgian, etc. nationality designations in the USSR except that the Jews had no national republic in the Soviet Union. Moreover, Soviet Jews were suspected of having double loyalties — Zionist as well as Soviet — and were keenly aware of the deep-seated historical tradition of Russian antisemitism.

[17] June 1967 is usually considered to be the beginning of the period when Soviet Jews started to plan seriously their emigration to Israel. Inspired by Israel's unexpected military victory, they found the courage to re-think their position in the USSR and began to file their applications to emigrate. In some cases, however, the decision to leave in order to settle in Israel had been taken before 1967, and quiet preparations to emigrate had been secretly carried out.

[18] Russia, or the Soviet Union, is referred to as one's *rodina*, literally, place of birth. *Mat' Rossia*, Mother Russia, is another affectionate term for the *rodina*. The best English translation for *rodina* is probably 'homeland', or 'motherland' but these English words do not convey the depth of feeling that *rodina* encompasses.

[19] See Zvi Gitelman, *Becoming Israelis*, New York, 1982, p. 219.

[20] More than 31,000 Soviet *olim* came to Israel in 1972, and another 33,477 in 1973. When Israel was attacked on Yom Kippur in October 1973, the entire country was mobilized, including *olim hadashim*.

[21] Kevin Avruch, *American Immigrants in Israel: Social Identities and Change*, Chicago, 1981.

[22] Max Weber's classic formulation of bureaucracy derives from two interrelated principles: (1) that modern loyalty to an office is devoted to 'impersonal and functional purposes', and (2) that the entire system of rights and duties, rewards and punishments operates via 'rational adjudication'. Weber recognized, however, that the bureaucratic systems which exist in reality usually do not correspond to the 'pure' type of rational bureaucracy he described: 'On the contrary, the great majority of empirical cases represent a combination or a state of transition among several such pure types. We shall be compelled again and again to form expressions like "patrimonial bureaucracy" . . .' — Max Weber, 'The Social Psychology of World Religions', in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, translated, edited, and with an introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, London, 1947 [*Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1922], pp. 299–300.

I use the term, 'personalistic bureaucracy' to label an essentially bureaucratic system that may substitute for rational adjudication *protektsia*, a word long used by native Israelis to refer to pressure brought to bear by friends and relatives on persons in authority to bend the rules and show them preference.

[23] Most notably, a dentist who was constantly comparing his income to that of his colleagues in the United States; and a couple of very minor artists; and an aspiring, as yet 'undiscovered' actor-director.

[24] Uri Farago, 'The Ethnic Identity of Russian Immigrant Students in Israel', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* vol. 20, no. 2, 1978, pp. 115–28 shows that while the majority of these new *olim* (70%) see themselves as either Jews (37%) or Israelis (33%), this self-ascribed identity contrasted with the way they believed Israelis viewed them — first and foremost as Russians (63%). This identity dissonance explains some of the newcomers' struggles to feel at home.

[25] Judith Shuval, Elliot J. Markus, and Judith Dotan, *Patterns of Integration over Time: Soviet Immigrants in Israel*, Israel Institute of Applied Social Research, Publication No. JS/521/E, Jerusalem, 1975.

[26] Ministry of Absorption, *Immigrants From the USSR — The First Five Years in Israel (Arrived in 1973/74)*, Ministry of Absorption, Special Publication Series No. 682, Jerusalem, 1982; Ofer Gur, Aron Vinokur, and Yehiel Bar-Haim, *The Absorption and Economic Contribution to Israel of Immigrants From the Soviet Union* (Hebrew), The Morris Falk Institute for Economic Research in Israel, Jerusalem, 1980, summarized in State of Israel-Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, *Immigrant Absorption in Israel: Current Research 1978–1983*, Ministry of Absorption, Jerusalem, 1985, pp. 25–26; and Shuval *et al.*, op. cit. in note 25 above.

[27] Tamar Ruth Horowitz, 'The Absorption of the Soviet Jews in Israel 1968–1984: Integration without Acculturation', in *Between Two Worlds: Children from the Soviet Union in Israel*, edited by Tamar Ruth Horowitz, Lanham, MD, 1986, p. 17. My 1988 survey of 105 *olim* revealed similar findings. See Fran Markowitz, '*Russkaia Druzhba*: Russian Friendship in American and Israeli Contexts', *Slavic Review*, vol. 50, no.33, Fall 1991, p. 643.

[28] See Farago, op. cit. in Note 22 above and Uri Farago, 'Changes in the Ethnic Identity of Russian Immigrant Students in Israel (1973–75)', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 21, no. 1, 1979, pp. 37–52.

[29] See Shuval, op. cit. in note 14 above and Horowitz, op. cit. in note 27 above, p. 21.

[30] See Gitelman, op. cit. in note 18 above, p. 350

[31] See Serge-Allain Rozenblum, *Être Juif en U.R.S.S.*, Revue politique et parlementaire: Diffusion, PUF, Paris, 1982; and Benjamin Fain and Martin F. Verbit, *Jewishness in the Soviet Union: Report of an Empirical Survey*, Center for Public Affairs, Jerusalem, 1984.

[32] The question in the survey was, 'Which of the following holidays do you observe/mark [Russian: *otmechaiete*]?'. A list of holidays followed: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkoth, Hanukkah, Purim, Tisha be-Av, Shavuoth, Shabbat. The possible answers to the question for each holiday were: ALWAYS — according to Jewish law; ALWAYS — like most secular Jews; SOMETIMES — according to Jewish law; SOMETIMES — like most secular Jews, and NEVER. For the purposes of this paper, I combined the religious and secular answers in the

ALWAYS and SOMETIMES categories and chose the most popular of holy days to report on. From my survey data I can make no statements about the content of the *olim*'s observances, that is, I cannot report how many respondents read the Haggadah at Passover, how many fasted the full 25 hours during Yom Kippur, and how many went to synagogue for Rosh Hashanah. The purpose of this question was to understand how the 'Russians' themselves made sense of the Jewish holy days, not to measure their way of observance against an other-imposed ideal. My personal observations and interviews, however, showed that while there is wide variation in the details of the celebrations, most families have a special meal and say some special words for Rosh Hashanah, make a *seder* for Passover, and refrain from eating, drinking and smoking for at least part of Yom Kippur, despite the fact that the vast majority of the Russian *olim-lo-hadashim* (and most Israelis) are not strictly Orthodox practitioners of Judaism.

[33] May Day is a quasi-holiday in Israel, marked by a workers' parade. Most businesses, the banks, and post offices remain open. It is one day — among a list of minor holidays — which State employees can choose to take as a day off.

[34] In conversations, several people scoffed at the Jewish religious establishment's attempts to link New Year — an event the *olim* consider to be a purely secular excuse for merry-making — to the Christian ritual calendar in order to discourage its celebration. Major Israeli hotels attract hundreds of native Israelis, as well as visiting tourists, to their gala New Year's balls.

[35] And they are far from alone! Indeed, I remain puzzled to this day by such aggressive festivities. Perhaps the fact that the children hit and spray each other and adults can be interpreted as a carnival-type reversal of the regular social order of things, a day of true independence. See also Virginia R. Dominguez, *People as Subject, People as Object: Selfhood and Peoplehood in Contemporary Israel*, Madison, WI, 1989, pp. 44–67.

[36] High as it is, my proportion of 87% for 'feeling at home' is appreciably lower than Uri Farago's finding of 96% in 1975. There are many reasons for this: the erosion of initial euphoria, disillusionment with the Zionist dream, comparison not with the USSR but with other former Soviet Jews who resettled in the US or Canada, disappointments with the reality of everyday life in Israel, and failure to attain personal goals.

[37] See Edith Rogovin Frankel, 'The Russian Press in Israel', *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1977, pp. 47–68. Virtually nothing else has been published in scholarly journals about Russian-language periodicals in Israel until Mikhail Hefetz, 'The Russian Press in Israel', *Ariel*, no. 91, 1993, pp. 32–36; he explores the relationship between what he estimates as 600,000 Israeli Russian speakers and an expanding Russian-language press.

[38] Wolf Moskovich, 'Interference of Hebrew and Russian in Israel', *Slavica Hierosolymitana*, no. 2, 1978, pp. 215–34.

[39] The Russian equivalent (*vecherinka*) for *masiba* is rarely used. Instead, Russian speakers simply say that they *sobiraiiutsa* (get together) to celebrate a birthday, etc., or *khodit' v gosti* (go to visit, to be guests) at someone's home.

[40] See Judith Shuval *et al.*, op. cit. in note 25 above; *Immigrants from the USSR* . . ., op. cit. in note 26 above; and Horowitz, op. cit. in note 27 above for negative interpretations of *olim*-only social groups.

[41] Only two former Soviet Jews I met took a different approach. Dora and Ilya who arrived from Lithuania in 1972 have a wide circle of mainly Israeli friends. Hebrew is the only language spoken in their home. Of their three children, only their oldest daughter, who turned 20 in 1988, is minimally competent in Russian. Dora explained her position earlier in this paper.

[42] See Gitelman, op. cit. in note 19 above, p. 266.

[43] Ibid., p. 241. Gitelman explains: 'Either they had accepted Soviet type practice or they were simply so eager to "become Israelis" that they were attracted to the idea of an ethnically undifferentiated society'.

[44] 29% of the respondents chose a recently-arrived former Prisoner of Zion as their preferred leader (Natan Sharansky — 18%, Joseph Begun — 8%, Ida Nudel — 2%, Vladimir Slepak — 1%), while 8% selected men from the *aliyah* of the 1970s (Joseph Mendelevitch — 4%, Alexander Voronel — 3%, Efraim Gur — 3%), and 10% named others. Almost half the respondents selected 'No one' as their choice — 28% because 'it is impossible to find one person who can represent such a varied group', and 21% because 'it is not necessary because we are all Jews in Israel'.

[45] Natan Sharansky, 'The Great Exodus', *The New York Times Magazine*, 2 February 1992, pp. 22–48 ff.

[46] These jokes were popular in the 1970s as Israelis reinforced their perception that Soviet *olim* wanted to embrace capitalism overnight.

[47] S. N. Eisenstadt, *The Absorption of Immigrants*, London, 1954.

[48] Harvey Goldberg, 'The Changing Meaning of Ethnic Affiliation', *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 44, 1987, p. 45, p. 50; and Dominguez, op. cit. in note 35 above, pp. 99–107.

[49] See Avram Shama and Mark Iris, *Immigration without Integration: Third World Jews in Israel*, Cambridge, MA, 1977, pp. 144–55. See also Erik Cohen, 'The Black Panthers and Israeli Society', first published in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 14, no. 1, June 1972, and reprinted in Ernest Krausz, ed., *Studies of Israeli Society Volume 1, Migration, Ethnicity and Community*, New Brunswick, NJ, 1980, pp. 147–63.

JEWISH MESSIANISM LUBAVITCH-STYLE: AN INTERIM REPORT

William Shaffir

OUR knowledge of Messianic movements is largely based on historical accounts — with few notable exceptions such as the studies by Festinger *et al.*[1] and by John Lofland[2] of contemporary religious cults.[3]

In 1993, there is the opportunity to conduct a sociological study of a Jewish Messianic movement in the making. The movement is that of the Lubavitch hassidim; the adherents are ultra-Orthodox Jews who maintain that their aged leader, their Rebbe, is the Messiah. The Lubavitch hassidim are the members of the most powerful religious movement in contemporary Orthodox Judaism and they have profound reverence for their charismatic leader, Menachem Mendel Schneerson; he celebrated his 91st birthday on 2 April 1993 (in the Jewish year 5753). The headquarters of the movement are in Crown Heights, in the Brooklyn district of New York, but the Lubavitch missionaries have gone to most of the towns and hamlets in the world where Jews are known to live in order to exhort them to be devout and observant believers. In North America, the Lubavitch run special vans known as 'mitzvah tanks' and 'mitzvah mobiles', from which they distribute their literature as well as sacred artefacts such as phylacteries and mezuzzot.

The Ḥabad hassidic movement was founded in the eighteenth century in the Russian town of Lubavitch by Schneur Zalman of Lyady. Its central doctrine is that man must gain mastery by means of intelligence or wisdom, understanding, and knowledge (Hebrew: *ḥokhmah*, *binah*, and *da'at*).[4] Ḥabad moved to Poland during the First World War and it was in Warsaw in 1928 that the sixth charismatic leader arranged the marriage of one of his daughters to Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the great-great-great-grandson of the third Lubavitch Rebbe, after whom he was named. At the outbreak of the Second World War, the then Rebbe moved his headquarters from Warsaw to Brooklyn and entrusted to his son-in-law the educational

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and social services departments of the movement. The younger man held a degree from the Sorbonne in Paris and after the death of his father-in-law, a few years later, he was chosen as the seventh Rebbe. His Israeli followers use the acronym Ḥabad, while in North America the term Lubavitch or Lubavitcher is more popular.

In the early 1980s, the Lubavitch began a 'We Want Moshiach Campaign' to popularize their belief that the arrival of the Jewish Messiah was imminent. The campaign increased in momentum over the years and there are now large billboards on expressways and freeways with a message heralding the Messiah. An advertisement, which includes the dot-to-dot concept where the word 'Moshiach' (Yiddish for Messiah or for the Hebrew Mashiyah) is almost completed, appeared in scores of Jewish newspapers, under the heading 'Draw Your Own Conclusion'. The advertisement stated:[5]

> These are amazing times. The Iron Curtain tumbled . . . Iraq is humbled . . . The people of Israel emerge whole from under a rainstorm of murderous missiles . . . An entire beleaguered population is airlifted to safety overnight . . . A tidal wave of Russian Jews reaches Israel . . . Nations around the world turn to democracy . . . Plus countless other amazing developments that are taking place in front of our eyes. Any one of these phenomena by itself is enough to boggle the mind. Connect them all together, and a pattern emerges that cannot be ignored . . . The Lubavitcher rebbe . . . emphasizes that these remarkable events are merely a prelude to the final Redemption . . . The Era of Moshiach is upon us. Learn about it. Be a part of it. All you have to do is open your eyes. Inevitably, you'll draw your own conclusion.

A Lubavitcher representative in Israel commented in this context: 'It is like the game kids play when you connect the dots and gradually the whole picture is revealed. Events examined individually don't look like much, but when you connect the dots, you see the meaning'.

Much like their counterparts in North America, Ḥabad in Israel have inserted advertisements in newspapers, mounted posters and signs on buildings, and have rented billboard space informing the public that the Messianic era has arrived. Many believers have also attached fluorescent signs to the tops of their vehicles, heralding the Messianic era. *The New York Times* printed a Lubavitch full-page advertisement in June 1991 which announced: 'The Time for Your Redemption Has Arrived' and the movement's speakers have been going across North America to deliver that message. The faithful believers in the imminence of the Messiah's advent know his name: it is their leader, the seventh Rebbe of Lubavitch. His predecessor was his father-in-law. But he has no children and no appointed successor so that the likelihood that he is the long-awaited Messiah is increased as a result.

It is not an official tenet of the Lubavitch that Schneerson is the Messiah, but many of his adherents assert confidently that he is, and

some of them are beseeching him to 'reveal' himself. The Rebbe has never openly encouraged that Messianic fervour, but he has done little to condemn it recently and that has angered his critics. Allan Nadler has commented that this is 'the first mass Messianic movement within Judaism since the seventeenth century'[6] and noted that the Lubavitch have used slogans similar to Madison Avenue publicity drives with their exhortations in posters, bumper stickers, and newspaper advertisements such as: 'Moshiach — Be a Part of It'. Nadler asserts: 'Schneerson's acute messianic expectations dominate every facet of his theology. . . . And the most urgent messianic expectation with which he has inflamed his followers has led many Lubavitchers to suspect that Schneerson is himself the Savior-King of the Jews'.[7] Indeed, an article published in the June 1993 issue of the Lubavitch women's newsletter, which is printed entirely in English, claimed that the Rebbe no longer gives instructions that his followers must not affirm that their leader is the Messiah. On the contrary, when public statements are made by hassidim that the Rebbe is the Messiah, 'the Rebbe responds with consent and blessing'.[8]

The data for the present paper have been gathered from a number of sources. By the end of June 1993, I had completed about two dozen interviews, all in English, with Lubavitcher hassidim, including officials of the movement at various levels of the organizational hierarchy; I have collected literature about Moshiach and the Moshiach campaign published by the Lubavitcher, including video and audio cassette tapes; and although most of the interviews were carried out in Toronto, Canada, I also spent a brief but intense period at Lubavitch headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway, in the Brooklyn district of Crown Heights, observing proceedings and chatting informally with those I encountered there.

Profound Belief in the Coming of the Messiah

The belief in the coming of the Messiah is a fundamental element of the Jewish faith. The Lubavitcher claim that their present Rebbe has been responsible for inspiring his disciples to attain the conviction that only if Jews believed with absolute certainty that the Messiah would come as Redeemer, would such an event occur. The Rebbe himself is quoted as saying: 'Indeed, our Sages teach us that one of the first questions a soul will be asked in its judgement for the afterlife is, "Did you anticipate the Redemption?"'[9] At the time of the approaching Jewish New Year in 1991, the Rebbe stated: 'When the divine service of the Jewish people over the centuries is considered as a whole, everything that is necessary to bring about the Redemption has been accomplished. There is no valid explanation for the continuation of the exile'.[10] That was the most explicit and public assertion of a belief

which had been gaining ground among the Lubavitch adherents for a number of years. Indeed, the Lubavitch advertisement which appeared in *The New York Times* of 19 June 1991 declared that recent events — including the mass emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and the defeat of Iraq in the Gulf War — were harbingers of redemption. Jews were advised to 'wait for Moshiach actively' since it was hoped that such faith would hasten his arrival. Two months later, on 22 August 1991, *The New York Times* again printed a Lubavitch advertisement (which had appeared in a large number of Jewish newspapers, as stated at the beginning of the present paper) entitled 'Draw Your Own Conclusions' and announcing 'The Era of Moshiach is upon us'.

However, no Jewish Messiah has arrived since these declarations and announcements were publicly made and published — to the embarrassment and exasperation of some Lubavitch followers and especially of critics of the movement. The most serious condemnations have come from those who had expected that the Rebbe would denounce these claims about his own Messianic Coming and publicly rebuke the zealous adherents who appear to be unshakably convinced that their Rebbe is indeed the much-awaited Jewish Messiah who will redeem the world, and that he will be recognized as such in the immediate future. Nadler explains that these devout followers continue to make such claims because the Rebbe's promotion 'is their promotion, too, as they become possessed of the certainty that they are themselves the central agents in the realization of the Jews' most cherished dream'.[11] But it must be pointed out that the Rebbe does seem to have given some justification for the belief at least that the advent of a Jewish Messiah would occur in the very near future. At a *farbrengen* (public gathering) on 3 June 1989, the Rebbe is recorded as noting that the Hebrew letters which give the numerical equivalent of the coming Jewish year 5750 constitute an acronym for the Hebrew words 'This will be a year of miracles'.[12] And in fact, within a very short time indeed, there was the collapse of the Soviet empire and the prospect of world peace seemed attainable without further immense efforts. The Rebbe is also said to have stressed in public addresses that the awesome collapse of the Soviet system was a sign that the Redemption was nigh.

Moreover, before the next Jewish New Year, at a public gathering on 12 May 1990, the Rebbe again read into the Hebrew letters for the numerical equivalent of the coming Jewish year 5751 the statement by God that the coming year would be a year when the Almighty would show wonders to his people. The Rebbe predicted with confidence that the miracles which would occur in the coming Jewish year would be even more extraordinary than those which had occurred in the present Jewish year — and his followers saw confirmation of their Rebbe's prediction in the events of the Gulf War in 1991.

In his analysis of collective behaviour, Blumer emphasizes the role of the dramatic event as a turning point,[13] while Spector and Kitsuse discuss the 'claims-making activities' of a collectivity.[14] The turning point must be seen by the participants as something qualitatively different from what has occurred up to that point. The Rebbe's address on 11 April 1991 marked such a dramatic event. After the evening service, the Rebbe began to deliver what first seemed to be a usual *sichah* (discourse); but shortly after the discourse ended, the Rebbe addressed his audience directly in the most unusual fashion, saying:[15]

> What more can I do to motivate the entire Jewish people to . . . actually bring about the coming of Mashiach? . . . All that I can possibly do is to give the matter over to you. Now, do everything you can to bring Mashiach here and now, immediately . . . I have done whatever I can; from now on, you must do whatever you can . . .

The Lubavitcher hassidim were apparently stunned when they heard their Rebbe's injunction but they soon mobilized and started a veritable avalanche of teachings and directives about Messianic redemption. They published what the Rebbe had said in his talks and sermons about the Messiah, they organized classes to study the Rebbe's pronouncements and advice, and they translated his words into several languages and distributed these sayings throughout the world. Moreover, the Rebbe now spoke not only about yearning for the coming of the Messiah but about the Saviour's imminent arrival. He proclaimed: 'Moshiach's coming is no longer a dream of a distant future, but an imminent reality which will very shortly become fully manifest'.[16]

Dissension within the Ranks

Not all the followers became convinced that their Rebbe did indeed mean to reveal himself to be the Jewish Messiah. Those who doubted that the Rebbe was in fact the long-awaited Messiah, and that he was preparing his disciples for the momentous revelation, argued that although the Rebbe did possess Messianic characteristics, he had yet to prove that he was the Jewish Messiah. The difficulty was that since March 1992, when he had suffered a stroke, he was partially paralysed and unable to speak; and it was possible that several of his disciples had mistakenly interpreted his desire to be recognized as the Messiah. Some of them were even accused of exploiting the Rebbe's incapacity.

In the April 1993 issue of *Moment*, Yosef Abramowitz commented:[17]

> The mainstream messianists tend to be older and remember the previous Rebbe. Most were born into Lubavitch families, believe that the Rebbe is the best candidate for moshiach in this generation and say that the way to bring him is through greater Torah study and *mitzvot* . . .

> The radicals tend to be younger, Israel-based and *baalei teshuvah* (formerly not religious). They believe that the Rebbe is the moshiach and the way to bring him is to crown him and force the hand of God. They see the Rebbe more in their mind's eye than in person. They are the ones who have sponsored full-page ads in American Jewish newspapers and street signs in Israel, 'Welcome King Moshiach' with the Rebbe's picture.

The situation reached boiling point on 31 January 1993, the forty-third anniversary of the Rebbe's assumption of the Lubavitch leadership, when some of the followers expected him to be annointed as the Messiah. *The New York Times* of 29 January 1993 commented in an article:[18]

> A showdown between the two factions is expected Sunday, when one faction says Rabbi Schneerson . . . will appear on the balcony of the main Lubavitch synagogue at 770 Eastern Parkway. The faction that supports proclaiming him the Messiah plans a 'coronation' ceremony, televised on the worldwide Lubavitch satellite hook-up. However, leaders of the other faction say the event is 'nonsense', that there is no certainty that the Rebbe will appear and that the televisions facilities will not be made available.

That article also quoted one of the Lubavitch representatives as saying that the claim by the most outspoken proponent of the Rebbe that the Lubavitch revered leader was indeed the undoubted Messiah was 'dishonest, dangerous, confusing, sacrilegious' and was 'a horrible exploitation of a tragic situation'. However, on that momentous day of 31 January 1993, the Rebbe did appear on the balcony — but he was not consecrated as the undoubted Jewish Messiah. The person who had been pinpointed by the media as the master of ceremonies who would orchestrate the Rebbe's coronation as the Messiah, instead marked the beginning of the evening's festivities in a world-wide broadcast, stating:

> This is not a gathering for a coronation . . . This is a gathering for all of us to announce our outright declaration to Almighty God, and to Almighty God Himself, that He, Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, and His infinite mercy, should give us the directives to take us all out of this Exile . . . And to bring the Redemption for all of humankind.

Some of the Lubavitcher whom I interviewed in the spring of 1993 said that the master of ceremonies had been obliged to yield to pressure and to cancel all plans for a coronation, and further to make the categorical announcement at the beginning of the festivities that there would be no coronation. One of them told me:

> Have there been individuals that maybe wanted to make a coronation? Maybe. Did the Rebbe sanction . . . a coronation: I would say absolutely not. Personally I don't think there's any source to make a coronation of that kind. . . . My feeling is that everything has to have a source. And I don't know a source that we have to have a coronation and, therefore, I'm

opposing it unless the Rebbe would have okayed it and that would be my source. . . .

The group of Lubavitcher who condemn the identification of their Rebbe as the actual Messiah-in-waiting, recommend the following strategy:

> One of the aims of the campaign was to bring people an awareness about Moshiach: a) people should start to think that there's a real thing called Moshiach, b) that Moshiach's coming is real, and c) that it's imminent. . . . Is the Rebbe encouraging we should go into the streets and say he's Moshiach? No, the Rebbe has never encouraged this. [Why?] Because this is not necessarily today's task. The task is to tell the world that Moshiach is coming, not necessarily to say who is Moshiach.

The 28 May 1993 issue of *Canadian Jewish News* reported an item from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency stating:[19]

> As the Lubavitcher rebbe withdrew from public view last week during a setback in his recovery from a major stroke, a power struggle was taking place among his most trusted lieutenants.
>
> Several of his closest aides, all of whom have worked for their beloved leader for decades, were fighting over control of the most important jewels in the Lubavitch crown of organizations.

There was a vigorous denial of any dissension within the Lubavitch movement in a four-page leaflet, written in English; it was neither dated nor signed but is said to have been widely circulated in Lubavitch circles.[20]

One Lubavitcher whom I interviewed in English, and who has written and spoken extensively on the topic of Moshiach, commented:

> Name one person who has become convinced. . . . And even if someone has become convinced, what now? So now he believes the Rebbe is Moshiach. What have you gained? . . . The slogan of the Rebbe in three words is 'Hama'aseh hu ha'ikar', action is the main thing. If it does not lead to action, . . . positive results, positive effects, forget it. . . . And if you can't show me, it's a waste of time. You're going counter to everything the Rebbe stands for, everything hasidus stands for, everything Yiddishkayt stands for.

It is recounted that the present Rebbe's predecessor had issued in 1941 a call for his followers immediately to repent their sins and to seek immediate Redemption. Afterwards he asked his son-in-law (who later succeeded to the position of Lubavitch Rebbe, on the death of his wife's father) what the reaction had been to his injunction. The younger man tried to avoid answering that the reaction had in fact been to brand the Lubavitch leader as a false prophet and to condemn him violently. When the older man insisted on an answer to his query, he was told that people were saying that he wished to be recognized as the Jewish Messiah. That did not seem to anger the 1941 leader, because he simply commented, 'Nu, nu, but at least they're talking about Mashiach'.[21]

More than half a century later, in April 1993, the Jewish weekly *Forward* printed a reporter's comment about a small hassidic group who have 'the grandiose idea that their leader is God's appointed redeemer'.[22] The Lubavitch movement is largely dependent upon the generosity of secular Jews for the funds necessary for its outreach programmes and it is claimed that this campaign to have the Rebbe recognized as the Messiah is causing these secular Jews to refrain from making contributions.[23] Perhaps that is one of the reasons why the believers in the Rebbe as Messiah-in-waiting are now muting that campaign perspective and are instead stressing only that belief in the coming of a Jewish Messiah is a cornerstone of Judaism.

The Focus of the Controversy

When the Rebbe is wheeled on to the balcony built for him after his stroke so that he can have a vantage point for viewing his followers in the synagogue, he is greeted in a frenzy of adoration with the chant of the Hebrew words, 'Long live our master, our teacher and our Rebbe, the King Messiah, forever and ever'. The mainstream section of the Rebbe's interpreters assert that some years ago, well before he had been deprived of his power of speech, he had expressed disapproval of this form of chanted greeting because he believed that such Messianism would distance Jews from Judaism and especially from the Lubavitch movement. A Lubavitcher said to me:

> Three months before the stroke at a farbrengen somebody started singing the song. . . . And the Rebbe sat there quietly and people took that as an acknowledgement. But right after the song finished, the Rebbe quietly said, 'Actually I should have gotten up when you started singing this and walked out of here, but I figured this would lead to confrontation. . . . So I want to make it known that my sitting here quietly is not any shape or form of acceptance. . . . Some take it as acknowledgement. I personally do not. What would happen if they would sing another lively song?' . . . At another farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke out: 'Those people who point a finger at who is Moshiach really don't realize how many people they alienated from hasidus, from Yiddishkayt'. The controversy now is what is the Rebbe's nodding, to what extent it implies an acknowledgement or does not. Personally I believe it is not. Given the song itself, it can be interpreted in many different ways. It can be interpreted as related specifically to the Rebbe as many of those who sing it have in mind, if not all of them. But the Rebbe can also take it 'Yechi adoneinu' whoever 'melech Hamoshiach' is, as a kind of prayerful song. So if you want, you can play games. I'm not convinced personally that this is any acknowledgement in any way, shape, or form.

Those who take the opposite view argue that although it is true that some years ago the Rebbe was opposed to the chanted greeting,

nowadays he approves of it. They claim that all can see that the Rebbe gives a clear sign of approval when the chant of 'King Moshiach' is voiced when he appears, since he seems to conduct the rhythm with the motions of his head and of his one hand — the other is paralysed. Rabbi Avtzon is reported as stating in April 1993 that although two or three years earlier the Rebbe requested that his followers do not chant the words, 'now he has accepted the role of Moshiach. I am convinced of that 100 per cent'.[24] In the course of an interview with a Lubavitcher in February 1993, I was told:

> I don't believe the Rebbe would come out twice a day to an occasion that he didn't want to be part of. In other words, if God forbid, the Rebbe wouldn't be in control of himself, that would be one thing. We know from situations that the secretaries wanted the Rebbe not to come out because the Rebbe was in pain . . . And the Rebbe specifically told them when he wants to come out and when he doesn't want to come out. He's the one who calls the shots and not they. . . . And the Rebbe is in full control when to close the curtain. So I don't believe that the Rebbe would have continued to continuously come out for four months in a row, twice a day, and make with the hand and head [when the song was sung]. . . . If the Rebbe wanted to stop the campaign, in one movement with the head it would have been stopped for good that the Rebbe is Mashiach.

The Newsletter of Ḥabad women, published in June 1993, supported this position by stating:[25]

> In the past during the Rebbe's 'Farbrengens' — official public addresses, when the assembled would sing a song with words referring to the Rebbe as the Moshiach, the Rebbe, who personally conducts and dictates the proceedings, although never refuting their contentions, nonetheless strongly admonished this conduct, explaining then that it was counterproductive.
>
> Even then, when individuals or groups of their own accord, and not during a 'Farbrengen', addressed the Rebbe as Moshiach, the Rebbe's response was positive. . . .
>
> For the past seven months the Rebbe has been appearing publicly, and almost twice daily; in the presence of the Rebbe, the assembled thousands sing and, on occasion, proclaim in unison: 'Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu Verabeinu Melech HaMoshiach Le'olam Voed' — 'Live May our Master, Guide and Teacher King Moshiach forever and ever'. The wording of this proclamation, 'Live . . . Forever', originates from the TaNaCH [*Tanach* is the usual Hebrew collective term for the Old Testament] where the Jewish people accepted the sovereignty of a king upon themselves.
>
> The Rebbe encourages this song/proclamation, often vigorously so, with head, hand and body motions.
>
> On several occasions, during the singing of this song, the Rebbe was asked if he desired that a different song be sung. On each occasion, the Rebbe rejected the suggestion.

In the spring and summer of 1993, immediately the curtain was opened in the Lubavitch headquarters at '770', the greeting was

chanted as the Rebbe was wheeled on to the balcony. Moreover, a daily recorded telephone message in English describes the proceedings. For instance, on 5 July 1993 it stated:

> Monday the Rebbe's *mincha* [afternoon prayer] was about 2:15 and *ma'ariv* [evening prayer] was about 9:40. After *mincha* the Rebbe was on the porch about three minutes and after *ma'ariv* about two minutes. Yechi hamelech hamoshiach was sung. The Rebbe participated by moving his lips, nodding his head, and drumming his fingers. . . .

Problems of Interpretation

On 2 March 1992, it was initially reported that the Lubavitch Rebbe had suffered a mild stroke, but his speech and movement have been impaired and recuperation has been considerably slower than predicted. Moreover, three months later, in June 1992, he underwent gall bladder surgery. His followers claim that they remember exactly where they were when they heard about his stroke. The revered leader cannot stand up unaided, cannot move the right side of his body, and cannot speak. He communicates by shaking his head to signify 'yes' and 'no' and by waving his left hand. His followers are continually praying that he might soon recover, but they have to face the fact that their prayers may not be answered and that the Rebbe's frail body might instead suffer further deterioration. An added serious problem is that he is childless and that the subject of his successor is never raised in Lubavitch circles. Nadler has pointed out: 'Once you say that someone is the Messiah, how do you talk about a successor? I mean, this is a tough act to follow'.[26] And Heilman has stated in *The New York Times* article of 29 January 1993: 'What we have now is this odd phenomenon of a Rebbe who is alive and dead at the same time. He is with his followers but he is no longer verbal. Everything he does is subject to interpretation. It all depends on who is doing the interpreting'.[27]

When the Rebbe was able to speak and move freely, before his stroke, he delivered frequent discourses and attended special gatherings when he clarified, stressed, or condemned various theories or comments about Jewish religion or about Lubavitcher tenets. He also justified his standpoints by citing halakhic or hassidic authorities and that in turn enabled his followers to defend the Lubavitch stand about Messianic hopes to non-followers. Before his stroke, the Rebbe had an impressive presence and his followers looked up at him in awe as he walked majestically from his quarters to his reserved place in the synagogue. He addressed the congregation with passion. When I began carrying out research into hassidic movements, in the early 1970s, I asked a Lubavitcher in Canada why he had gone to New York for a *farbrengen* when he might have listened to the Rebbe's discourse via a telephone link in the local Lubavitcher yeshiva in Montreal. He replied:

> If you have a choice between eating bread and water, or eating herring and fish, which would you chose? When you're there [in the presence of the Rebbe], you see the Rebbe and you can actually feel what he's saying. You can see how holy the man is. In the yeshiva you can listen, but it's not the same thing as seeing.

But nowadays, the Rebbe's appearances are brief: they last minutes rather than hours and he cannot speak. One of his followers said to me:

> The spokesman for Lubavitch has always been the Rebbe, Rabbi Schneerson, and you have secretaries who give over the message of Rabbi Schneerson. It would be similar to the president of the United States. You have the White House Chief of Staff and the Secretary of State who in this case is Christopher. He doesn't make policy, he only says what the president wants. Since the Rebbe is not speaking you now have a division in understanding the main purpose of the Mashiach campaign.

In this context, it is important to note that several years ago, the Rebbe ceased granting private audiences (*yecheedus*) to his followers and the authority of his four male secretaries was increased. Their power lay in their ability to control the information brought to the Rebbe's attention; the Rebbe then replied orally and in some cases he put into writing his responses to the followers' queries for guidance — and that was communicated to the followers by the secretaries. But since his stroke, the secretaries now not only decide which matters must be communicated to the Rebbe, by reading to him the queries and other relevant matters, but they also interpret what his responses are. Before his stroke, the Rebbe read all his correspondence, but his illness has greatly impaired his reading ability and he must now rely on his secretaries. One Lubavitcher told me in February 1993:

> I submitted a question to the Rebbe which was divided into four parts. . . . The secretary promised to present my question to the Rebbe when he thought it was appropriate. A while went by and I asked, 'So when will it be the right time?' The secretary called last night and gave me the Rebbe's answers. To the first part, the Rebbe nodded 'yes', to the second 'no' and to the third 'yes'. But the secretary combined parts three and four whereas I formulated the question to distinguish between them. The secretary didn't feel that this was the time to present the distinction to the Rebbe. This [the reformulation] also made it easier for the secretary.

The secretaries are aware that there is some discontent about their alleged abilities of correctly interpreting the Rebbe's decisions and wishes, and they strive to reassure the followers that they do indeed take great care to ascertain his intentions and to carry out his instructions.

Conclusion

At the time of writing, in July 1993, the Lubavitcher had not yet announced a definitive date for the Messiah's arrival. Though the

Rebbe's secretaries apparently believe that he is the Messiah, they are not necessarily of one mind regarding the focus and intensity of the Moshiach campaign. The Lubavitcher are aware that an individual, or a group of followers, lack the authority to announce a date for the Messiah's arrival, and that the actual designation of the Messiah can be proclaimed by God alone. At the moment, the person to whom such a proclamation may be revealed is speechless. However, citing the teachings of Maimonides, the Lubavitcher continually downplay the idea that the Messiah's arrival will coincide immediately with cataclysmic events but contend, instead, that it will proceed along a number of predefined stages.[28]

Critics of recent developments in the Lubavitch movement are both outraged and worried. Rabbi Schach, one of Israel's leading ultra-Orthodox rabbis, has publicly called Schneerson 'insane', an 'infidel', and 'a false Messiah'. He has even accused the Rebbe's followers of eating non-kasher foods, as reported in *Time* magazine in March 1992.[29] Those who disapprove of the present trend in the movement fear that the messianic campaign will provoke a schism in Judaism and may also lead to doubts about the Jewish faith — thus driving the believers away from the fold. However, the Lubavitcher have 30,000 followers in Brooklyn and a further 100,000[30] throughout the world and an efficient organizational network which could offer necessary support to counteract the fierce criticisms levelled at them. It has been noted that if a believer 'is a member of a group of convinced persons who can support one another, we would expect the belief to be maintained and the believers to attempt to proselyte or to persuade nonmembers that the belief is correct'.[31]

However, the Lubavitcher are becoming aware that while Jews are familiar with the concept of a redeeming Messiah, they are not usually willing to entertain the practical consequences of imminent Redemption and are extremely uneasy about accepting that the Lubavitch Rebbe *is* the Messiah. One person I interviewed, who is not a hassid, commented: 'You know, I can understand the concept of moshiach, but when you begin to pin it down to a person, to me, it's very much like Christianity and that's why I can't relate to it'. There is also the concern about the reluctance of Conservative and Reform Jews to support a missionizing-Moshiach movement. Lawrence Shiffman, who is professor of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University, is reported to have commented:[32]

> What you risk in your messianic pretensions is not your own Jewish observance, but the continued role of Chabad-Lubavitch as a major catalyst of Jewish observance in the wider Jewish community. If you turn yourself from an outreach movement into a false messiah movement, many of those who have gained so much spiritually and religiously from your work will find themselves unwilling to follow you further. . . .

I went to Israel in June 1993 and stopped by the Ḥabad booth at Ben-Gurion airport. I noticed the publications on display and was surprised that there were none about Moshiach. I asked the two Lubavitcher who were enjoining passersby to fulfil the commandment of laying on *tefillin* (phylacteries): 'How is it that there are no Moshiach stickers here?' They seemed somewhat surprised at my question, then one of them said, 'We ran out of stickers'. That might have been the case, but it is also likely that there was at the time a calculated strategy not to focus attention in Israel on the Lubavitch claim that their Rebbe was the Moshiach. Indeed, I could no longer see anywhere billboards associating the Rebbe with Moshiach — which, a year earlier, had appeared as advertisements along major expressways.

The *Toronto Star* of 10 March 1992 stated in an article on the movement: 'Among the Lubavitchers in Brooklyn, the anticipation is so high that many have taken to wearing phone beepers with a special number that will let them know the moment the Messiah arrives', while in Montreal there was a large billboard along one of the city's major expressways which proclaimed in French, 'Welcome to the Moshiach'.

The situation provides students of religious movements with a unique opportunity of carrying out research into a contemporary dynamic Messianic cult among some devout Jews who are firmly convinced that their leader is without doubt the long-awaited Messiah and Redemptor.

Acknowledgement

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NOTES

[1] See Leon Festinger, Henry W. Riecken, and Stanley Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails*, New York, 1956.

[2] See John Lofland, *Doomsday Cult*, New York, 1977.

[3] The most famous Messianic movement in Judaism was that of Sabbatai Zvi in the seventeenth century. See, for example, Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah, 1626–1676*, Princeton, N.J., 1973, and H. Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. 5, Philadelphia, 1895.

[4] See *The World of Lubavitch*, vol. 12, no. 6, December 1991, p. 6.

[5] Ḥabad is an acronym for *ḥokhmah*, *binah*, and *da'at*.

[6] See Allan Nadler, 'Last Exit to Brooklyn: The Lubavitchers of Crown Heights and their Powerful, Preposterous Messianism', *The New Republic*, May 1992, p. 28.

[7] Ibid., p. 28.

[8] See *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, vol. 21, no. 5, June 1993, pp. 9–12.

[9] See *Sound the Great Shofar: Essays on the Imminence of the Redemption*, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1992, p. 7. The Rebbe's discourses are delivered in Yiddish and are

immediately translated and edited into various languages by designated officials of the movement. The English translations of the Rebbe's statements which appear in this paper are taken from the above-mentioned book, which was prepared for publication by Rabbi Yonah Avtzon, Director of Sichos in English.

[10] Ibid., p. 11.

[11] Allan Nadler, op. cit. in Note 6 above, p. 28.

[12] *Sound the Great Shofar*, op. cit. in Note 9 above, p. 3.

[13] See Herbert Blumer, 'Social Unrest and Collective Behavior', in Norman K. Denzin, ed., *Studies in Symbolic Interaction: An Annual Compilation of Research*, Greenwich, Ct., 1978. pp. 1–54. The 'turning point' concept is addressed by Anselm Strauss in *Mirrors and Masks: The Search for Identity*, San Francisco, 1969, pp. 93–100.

[14] See Malcolm Spector and John I. Kitsuse, *Constructing Social Problems*, Menlo Park, Ca., 1977, pp. 78–82.

[15] See *Sound the Great Shofar*, op. cit. in Note 9 above, p. 7.

[16] Ibid., p. 10.

[17] Yosef Abramowitz, 'What Happens if the Rebbe Dies?' *Moment*, April 1993, p. 72.

[18] *The New York Times*, 29 January 1993, p. A14.

[19] *Canadian Jewish News*, 28 May 1993, p. 7.

[20] The four-page leaflet is entitled: 'The Rebbe as Mashiach'.

[21] See *Sound the Great Shofar*, op. cit. in Note 9 above, p. 20.

[22] *Forward*, 2 April 1993, p. 1.

[23] Ibid.

[24] *The New York Times*, op. cit. in Note 18 above, p. A14.

[25] *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, op. cit. in Note 8 above, p. 10.

[26] *The New York Times*, op. cit. in Note 18 above.

[27] Ibid.

[28] See Jacob Immanuel Schochet, *Moshiach: The Principle of Mashiach and the Messianic Era in Jewish Law and Tradition*, New York, 1992.

[29] *Time*, 16 March 1992, p. 26.

[30] These figures are approximations which are generally cited in popular magazines and newspapers. My view is that they are exaggeratedly high.

[31] See Leon Festinger *et al.*, op. cit. in Note 1 above, p. 4.

[32] Lawrence Shiffman, *Long Island Jewish World*, 29 January 1993 as cited in *Moment*, op. cit. in Note 17 above, p. 33.

AMERICAN JEWRY

Geoffrey Alderman

(Review Article)

DAVID M. GORDIS and YOAV BEN-HORIN, eds., *Jewish Identity in America*, xv + 296 pp., Wilstein Institute, Los Angeles, 1991, n.p.

DAVID M. GORDIS, ed., *Crime, Punishment and Deterrence: An American-Jewish Exploration*, xi + 104 pp., Wilstein Institute, Los Angeles, 1991, $14.95.

SUSANNE KLINGENSTEIN, *Jews in the American Academy 1900–1940: The Dynamics of Intellectual Assimilation*, xxii + 248 pp., Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1991. $38.50 or £22.00.

JACOB RADER MARCUS, ed., *This I Believe: Documents of American Jewish Life*, xxi + 277 pp., Jason Aronson, Northvale, New Jersey, 1990, $25.00.

MYRNA SILVERMAN, *Strategies for Social Mobility: Family, Kinship and Ethnicity within Jewish Families in Pittsburgh*, xiv + 217 pp., AMS Press, New York, 1989, $49.50.

GERALD SORIN, *The Nurturing Neighborhood: The Brownsville Boys Club and Jewish Community in Urban America, 1940–1990*, xiv + 255 pp., New York University Press, New York and London, 1990, $44.00.

IT is a safe bet that more research has been done on the history, sociology, and social anthropology of the Jewries of the United States than on any other Jewish community of the Diaspora. Yet its essence remains an enigma. Consider the findings of a 1988 survey published in the *Los Angeles Times*, which suggested that a quarter of American Jews (the random sample was a national one) did not think of themselves as Jews, though they confessed to having been born Jewish; another quarter did indeed regard themselves as Jews, but had no institutional affiliation. Consider, too, the results of innumerable surveys showing a rate of out-marriage amongst American Jewish youngsters of between 40 and 50 per cent in the 1980s. On the face of it, statistics such as these would suggest a series of communities in a state of terminal decline, battered by forces of assimilation operating in what is arguably the world's most secular society and culture.

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But such a conclusion would be dangerously partial, and downright inaccurate. Largely through the work of the Conservative and Reform movements in America, the phenomenon of out-marriage has been transformed from a powerful solvent into a rather messy glue; of course, the Orthodox groups do not see it that way, but it is true none the less. In his contribution to *Jewish Identity in America*, Professor Bruce Phillips (of Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles) makes the point that in the major sociological investigations of American Jewry, data on intermarriage have come from households answering 'yes' to the screening question 'Is there anyone Jewish living in this household?' Is this not evidence that at least some sort of positive Jewish identity was being displayed?

We might also note that support for Israel — that is, for the Jewish nation-state — remains very high amongst American Jews, that the major American-Jewish institutions dedicated to fighting *domestic* anti-Jewish prejudice continue to attract multi-million-dollar budgets, and that the proliferation of community-sponsored Jewish studies programmes on American campuses has now reached embarrassing proportions: there are more Chairs than suitable candidates to fill them and, as Professor Coöperman of Maryland observes in the same volume, there is at least one Jewish Studies instructor in every university in the country. The phenomenon of a resurgent, even triumphalist American-Jewish orthodoxy, doing its own lobbying on Capitol Hill, does not please the non-orthodox, any more than the grip of the non-orthodox on the major institutions of American-Jewish life pleases those of the orthodox persuasion. But can all this really amount to evidence of communal decline?

At first glance, the books which are the subject of this review might appear ill-suited to providing a coherent set of answers to the American-Jewish enigma. But, admittedly in very different ways, they each offer penetrating insights into this problem. Let us, therefore, begin at the beginning, with the judicious selection of documents made by the father of American-Jewish history, Professor Jacob Marcus of Cincinnati. Here I must make a personal confession. In 1988 I had the honour of being elected to a Fellowship at American Jewish Archives, which Jacob Marcus founded in the city which has now honoured him by giving his name to a square (how many British historians, while still living, have had a square, street, or even cul-de-sac named after them?). Of Jacob Marcus it can be truly said that he invented the study of the history of Jews in the USA, and situated it at the same time at the highest scholastic levels. The collection of documents which he now presents is not a documentary history of American Jewry, but rather a set of testimonies to the ideological, ethical and spiritual values, and the hopes and fears which Jews brought with them from the Old World to the New, which they committed to writing (often in the form of 'ethical

wills') and which they therefore thought worthy of transmission to future generations.

In the context of the search for the essence of the American-Jewish identity, two significant themes emerge from Professor Marcus's selection. The first is the conviction, widespread among Jews of very varying degrees of religious commitment, that in coming to the USA they had taken upon themselves a duty to maintain and teach others, non-Jews, a system of ethics which they regarded as perfect. The second is that, however far removed many American Jews may have been from an institutional (let alone religious) affiliation, they regarded themselves as American Jews, and not simply as Americans. Over the four centuries and more of the Jewish presence in the USA, it is clear that Jews migrated there to remember and preserve their Jewish origins, not to forget and discard them.

This theme is explored from two very different perspectives in the short book of essays, *Crime, Punishment and Deterrence*, edited by David M. Gordis, and the major monograph by Susanne Klingenstein, *Jews in the American Academy. Crime, Punishment and Deterrence* reproduces nine papers originally presented at a conference organized by the Wilstein Institute (of which more in due course). As the editor makes clear, the volume does not attempt to present a 'Jewish view' of crime and punishment in the USA, though there are forceful statements of the Talmudic views of capital punishment (by Rabbi Elie Spitz) and of self-defence (by Professor George Fletcher of Columbia University). Rather, the aim is to address these issues by reference to Jewish tradition and experience. In this slim volume, Jewish academics, religious leaders, lawyers, and law-enforcement officers offer their views to American society at large; they do so as American Jews, a fact which, today, enhances rather than detracts from the seriousness with which these views are received by the non-Jewish majority in the USA.

It was not always thus. When, in 1936, the writer Lionel Mordecai Trilling became the first Jew to hold a Chair of English and American Literature at Columbia University, his success was hailed as a triumph not merely of merit over prejudice but of a particular view of the legitimacy — and value — of the American-Jewish contribution to American academic life. Susanne Klingenstein's powerful monograph traces the process by which Jews, living and even born in the USA, came to be accepted as authentic guardians and reliable transmitters of American cultural values.

To understand the significance of that victory, we need to remember that the Ivy League campuses had appropriated to themselves the role of guardian of Anglo-Saxon culture; they had certainly been entrusted with the education of the nation's academic, professional, and political elite. Was it right — was it safe — to entrust these tasks to professing Jews? In 1911, in a celebrated incident at Columbia, in the heart of New

York, Joel Spingarn was dismissed from a post he had held for six years as Professor of Comparative Literature; the circumstances of his dismissal were complex, but it is clear that the accusation that he harboured and transmitted 'alien-minded' theories loomed very large. It took another quarter-century for these fears to be dispelled; meanwhile, quotas were openly and unashamedly operated against Jewish students wishing to enter the Ivy League Universities. Dr Klingenstein tells this story partly through narrative and partly through thematic analysis; the non-American reader, unfamiliar with the background, will probably find this not an easy book to read. None the less, it repays careful study, and its uses of sources as well as the sheer, incisive scholarship are impressive.

In *The Nurturing Neighborhood* Professor Gerald Sorin, Director of Jewish Studies at the State University of New York, New Paltz, tackles what might at first glance seem a rather unpromising subject: the official history of a club established in 1940 by largely second-generation Jewish teenage boys in the Brownsville district of east Brooklyn. Today Brownsville, north-east of the ultra-orthodox districts of Flatbush and Boro Park, and south of the ultra-affluent enclave at Kew Garden Hills, is a stark, largely black-inhabited ghetto. In 1940, almost 80 per cent of Brownsville's population was Jewish; Brownsville was then more Jewish, indeed, than Manhattan's Lower East Side. The establishment of the Brownsville Boys Club (BBC) was a classic example of the Jewish ethic of self-help — a declaration, so to speak, that the social and economic situation in which Jewish teenagers found themselves was not going to be accepted as inevitable, less still as unalterable. In 1955 the Club was transferred to the jurisdiction of New York City in a cynical move which formed part of the wider political ambitions of a local Jewish businessman who then had his sights on the mayoralty of the city. By then, the flight of Jewish families out of the district was in full swing.

As a study of the interaction between religion, class, and community I found Professor Sorin's book compelling reading. His use of oral testimony is impressive, but so too is his ability to weave into the story the wider themes of urban decay, inadequate social-service provision, and juvenile delinquency and crime that formed the contextual backcloth of the experience of Jewish New Yorkers in the 1930s and 1940s. Very few of the youngsters who founded the club were observant orthodox Jews, but all brought to the task which they had set themselves a dogma of social action firmly rooted in the Talmud — even if some of them did not recognize it as such. Professor Sorin asks why, at that time, 'non-Jewish white ethnic neighborhoods, relatively similar to Brownsville, do not appear to have produced institutions like the BBC. Nor did Black Brownsville in the 1960s and 1970s'. He finds the answer in what he argues was a redefinition, by Jewish immigrants to

the USA, of 'the ethnic and religious dimensions of Jewish culture . . . reformulated ethical injunctions, remodelled self-help institutions and a progressive politics — in short, an *American* Jewish identity'.

As part of the wider debate about the survival and social impact of ethnic identity in America, *The Nurturing Neighborhood* will act as a powerful reinforcement of the views of scholars such as Deborah Dash Moore, whose study, *At Home in America: Second Generation Jews in New York* (Columbia University Press, 1981) has now become a classic and in my view unchallengeable statement of the strength with which ethnic identity transmits itself from one generation to another in the American context. What we see in the United States is the adaptation of Jewish identity, an accommodation which has been at work regardless of particular forms of purely religious behaviour.

In *Strategies for Social Mobility*, Dr Myrna Silverman of Pittsburgh reproduces the findings of her doctoral dissertation, essentially an anthropological study of a small group of Jewish families in that city. Closely-knit family networks acted as support groups in the first phases of immigrant-Jewish settlement in Pittsburgh in the early 1900s. Later, these networks regrouped as part of the process of upward mobility; but they were not abandoned. The author concludes: 'To help one's kin, as to help anyone, was considered a *mitzvah* . . . It had been an integral part of the Jewish status system in the shtetls in East Europe and continued to be so in the United States'. By the third generation, the family network has become less important. Few extended families live in the same household; family businesses are less common; family sanctions against the infringement of religious precepts are much less severe. None the less, Dr Silverman finds that the middle-aged, affluent grandchildren 'have not lost their ethnic identity nor the closeness of their family. In addition, they have become more religious over the past few years and religion has more meaning for their lives than it did for their parents'.

Thus we return to the enigma of Jewish identity in the USA, the riddle of its survival and continued strength in spite of the very considerable counter-pressures. In June 1989 the Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy Studies, based at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles, hosted a conference on 'Jewish Identity in America'. In the book of the same title, David Gordis and Yoav Ben-Horin present us with the edited conference proceedings — 29 papers by rabbis, academics, attorneys, and social workers. The result is a fascinating potpourri, valuable in itself but amounting also to an agenda for future research which the Wilstein Institute is well placed to foster and promote. There is material here which will be of interest to almost every student of Jewish studies, whether based in Israel, the USA, or any other Diaspora community.

Two of the contributions struck a particular chord with me. In a wide-ranging and provocative examination of the state of Jewish

studies in American universities, Professor Cooperman offers some profound insights into the nature of the tensions which exist (not only in the USA, I might add) between the values of university teachers of Jewish studies and those of their rabbinic and communal colleagues. 'For the scholar, the past must be treated as critically as the present' — an attitude which lay and religious leaders alike often wrongly interpret as not far removed from communal treason. In fact, the academic study of Jewish history provides the only credible context within which policies for the present can be formulated. There could be no better illustration of this than the paper by Professor Jonathan Sarna, who holds the Chair of American Jewish History at Brandeis; he demonstrates that the history of American Jewry is littered with prophecies of doom, of total assimilation (as one Jewish student put it in 1872) 'within fifty years'. Sarna comments, 'So far, thank God, all of these predictions have proven wrong . . . contemporary prophets, much like the biblical Jonah, are often fated to spend their lives as "self-negating prophets." Their widely publicized prophecies, instead of being fulfilled, usually result in the kinds of changes needed to "avert the evil decrees"'.

I have no doubt of the truth of this statement. A crisis is also an opportunity, and provided the opportunity is recognized for what it is, and addressed creatively, predictions of the imminent disintegration of American Jewry will, I think, turn out to have been as ill-founded in the late twentieth century as they were in the mid-nineteenth.

A NOTE ON PRESENT-DAY SEPHARDI AND ORIENTAL JEWRY

Michael M. Laskier

SEVERAL conferences and meetings were organized to mark the five-hundredth anniversary of the expulsion of Jews from Spain and Portugal in 1492 and prominent scholars delivered papers on a wide variety of disciplines ranging from folklore and literature to history and linguistics. Major conferences were held in Binghamton, New York; in Los Angeles; in Tel-Aviv University; and in Istanbul. There has also been renewed interest in the continued survival of Jewish communities in Muslim countries and in India and in the contribution of international Jewish organizations — especially the American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU) — for their welfare and for the education of their children.

Morocco

The Jews of Morocco live mainly in the cities of Casablanca, Fez, Marrakesh, and Meknes. In 1988 they had numbered 9,000 but by 1990 there were about 7,000, as a result of continuing emigration.[1] The majority of those who left went to Canada and the United States and to European countries, while a few households made *aliyah* and settled in Israel. In 1991, there were some 1,400 pupils in AIU schools (known in Morocco as the Ittihad-Maroc network), in the ORT vocational establishments, and in the American-sponsored religious schools of Osar ha-Torah and Lubavitch. More than two-thirds of these students were enrolled at AIU schools: 1,019.[2]

The AJDC has been active in Morocco since the 1940s, and in partnership with the Casablanca community it has given assistance to large numbers of Moroccan Jews. The Oeuvre des Secours aux Enfants has been providing health services to needy Jews. With the reduction in numbers of the community, several schools have amalgamated without sacrificing educational standards.[3]

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Tunisia

The overthrow of President Habib Bourguiba in 1987 and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism have adversely affected the Jews of Tunisia. The younger age-groups went mainly to France, while the elderly have remained in their native land. There were about 2,000 Jews in the country in 1988 and three years later, in 1991, 1,874 remained;[4] it must be borne in mind that one must expect a high death rate when the bulk of the population is aged. The Jews live mainly in Tunis, in Zarzis, and in the island of Jerba; and most of them needed assistance from the AJDC, which is also committed to ensuring that the community's children, however few, have full access to Jewish education. The AJDC has supplied 70 per cent of the cost of the Lubavitch school in Tunis (the only Jewish school in that city nowadays); it had 85 pupils in 1991, ranging in age from three to 16. The AJDC also supports two schools in Jerba (with a total enrolment of 205) and a Talmud Torah class in Zarzis.[5]

Algeria

The large majority of Algerian Jews, a total of 140,000, emigrated during the decolonization phase of the early 1960s. In 1992, there were only about 150, most of them elderly and dependent on the AJDC cash allotments to supplement their meagre retirement income.[6]

Egypt

Egyptian Jewry was by far the most Westernized of all the Diaspora communities in Middle Eastern and North African countries, with a population — according to the French edition of the Egyptian census — of 65,639 in 1947; but Egyptian Jewish community sources estimated in 1950 that the actual total was 75,000–80,000, concentrated in Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said, Suez, and Tantah. By 1970, only a few hundred remained in Cairo and Alexandria; the majority have gone to Israel, Europe, and North and Latin America. In 1991, only 265 Jews were left in these two cities. It was in 1982 that the Egyptian authorities first allowed the AJDC to carry out openly relief work in the country; in previous years, it had given assistance through the International Committee of the Red Cross. The AJDC now cares especially for the aged and needy, and has allocated funds for medical care, including hospitalization; in partnership with the Jewish communal organizations still existing in Egypt, it helps to maintain Jewish homes for the aged.[7]

It is becoming increasingly difficult for the remaining Jews of Egypt to observe their traditional religious practices; they have to rely on the AJDC to provide cantors for High Holy Days, for Passover supplies,

and for kasher foods; they are grateful that their co-religionists have enabled them to continue to be proud of their religion and cultural heritage.[8]

Syria

There were about 4,000 Jews in Syria in 1991, concentrated in three cities: Damascus (3,500), Aleppo (400), and Kamishli (100). They engaged in a variety of trades and occupations, and included craftsmen and peddlers. Seventeen synagogues still functioned in Damascus and there were also several in Aleppo. The AIU school in Damascus (known as Ittihad al-Ahliya) had 130 Jewish pupils;[9] the number of Muslims frequenting the school has not been cited in recent AIU statistics.

Until April 1992, the Jews of Syria were reported to feel insecure, with the Syrian secret police (*Muhabarat*) continually patrolling Jewish districts, while their mail was intercepted and examined and their telephone conversations were monitored. Moreover, Jews had to obtain permission from the authorities if they wanted to buy or sell immovable property.[10] If they wished to leave the country legally, they could do so only if they made a substantial monetary deposit and also left in Syria close relatives as a guarantee that they would eventually return to the country.[11]

On 27 April 1992, a sudden lifting of travel restrictions occurred and by October 1992, more than 2,600 Syrian Jews emigrated — mostly to the United States, Canada, and Latin America — while the remaining Jews (about 1,450) have been allowed since to leave only in very small numbers if they could prove that they wished to be reunited with their families overseas. Thomas L. Friedman of *The New York Times* has stated that the decision to allow Syrian Jews to leave was a consequence of the peace talks which started in Madrid in October 1991 between the Israelis and their Arab neighbours as well as Palestinian representatives. On the eve of the fifth round of talks about to take place in Washington in the spring of 1992, the Foreign Minister of Syria told the United States embassy in Damascus that the travel restrictions would be lifted and that Syrian Jews would be allowed to sell their properties; the only remaining theoretical restriction was that they would not be allowed to go from Syria to Israel. However, once Syrian Jews had left for any other country, they were then free to go wherever they wished and wherever they would be welcome.[12]

Syria lost its most powerful patron in international affairs when the Soviet Union collapsed and the United States became the only dominant military world power. If concessions were made to the country's Jews, Syria could hope for better relations with the United States. It was also believed that Yitzhak Shamir, then Prime Minister of Israel,

was determined not to surrender the West Bank or the Gaza Strip but on the other hand would not strongly oppose some compromise about the Golan Heights.

Yemen

According to American and Israeli sources, between 1,000 and 2,000 Jews lived in Yemen in 1992, mainly in districts of Sana (the capital city), the outer suburbs, and the surrounding rural countryside; in Raydah (60 kilometres from Sana); Sa'ada (75 kilometres from Sana); and Lahij (near Aden). They are probably the most isolated of all Diaspora communities and they are also the most traditional, still adhering closely to many usages and observances recorded in old rabbinic texts. They are proud of their heritage and of their unbroken link with the past. In recent years there has been much concern among Jews in other lands as well as in Israel about the plight of Yemeni co-religionists — especially after May 1990, when North and South Yemen were reunified, resulting in a combined population of 14 million Muslims (the most densely-populated area in the Arabian peninsula).[13]

The large majority of Yemen's Jews were transported to Israel in 1949–50 in 'Operation Magic Carpet', but only very limited numbers were able to leave the country later. They are reported to be closely watched by the authorities and foreign Jewish tourists must obtain special travel documents if they wish to go to some rural areas where Jews live. It is also said that if anyone has a prolonged conversation with Jewish residents, plain-clothed detectives intervene. Recently, however, Yemen has been allowing its Jews to leave for Israel: the newly-unified country desperately needs Western economic aid and it is said that the authorities have decided not to alienate American and European Jewish communities who have campaigned publicly for Yemeni Jewish rights. The recent exodus of Yemen's Jews began in 1992, with the governments in both Jerusalem and Sana maintaining secrecy about the whole operation; about 300 were received in absorption centres in Rehovot and Ashkelon. That became known in Israel in July 1993 when two ultra-Orthodox parties, the Sephardi SHAS and the Ashkenazi Degel ha-Torah, quarrelled openly about the right to educate the new immigrants,[14] and it was then feared that the Yemeni *aliyah* might be brought to a stop by the public disclosure that Yemen had allowed its Jewish citizens to leave the country.

India

The Jewish Journal of Sociology published an article by Margaret Abraham in its June 1991 issue (volume 33, no. 1) on emigration factors

among the Jews of India. The author noted that apart from the small number of Jews from Western countries living in India, there have been three settled communities: the Cochin Jews, the Bene Israel, and the Baghdadi Jews. Joan G. Roland published a book in 1989 (*Jews in British India*, quoted in the *JJS* article), in which she stated that 'at their maximum strength in 1951, the Bene Israel numbered about 20,000, the Baghdadis about 5,000, and the Cochin Jews about 2,500'. A report on the Jews of India, based on a fact-finding mission at the end of 1991, estimated that there were about 6,000 Jews in India at that time: 3,000 in Bombay, 2,000 in neighbouring Tana, and a further 1,000 in various areas — including New Delhi, Calcutta, and Ahmedabad. The report stated that apart from several dozen rich families, most of the Jews in the country live in reduced circumstances and that most of the synagogues in Bombay and elsewhere are dilapidated and neglected. There is barely a *minyan* during weekday prayers, but on the Sabbath and during High Holy Days, the synagogues are said to be filled to capacity.[15]

The Sephardic Educational Center runs a summer camp for 120 young Jews, men and women, in Bombay while the ORT vocational school has about 400 students, the majority of whom are Jews. The AJDC has been providing relief for Jews in India for more than three decades and in 1991 it gave assistance to about 200 elderly needy Jews.[16]

The principal communal bodies are the National Council of Indian Jewry; the Board of Trustees of Properties owned by Iraqi Jews; the Association of Synagogues; the Vocational ORT Society; and the Board of Jewish Education and Culture. Until the end of 1991, there was no umbrella organization for all these various associations. Diplomatic relations were established between India and Israel in the spring of 1992 and it is hoped that this development will result in giving the old-established Jewish communities of India a greater sense of pride in their religious heritage.

The Sephardic Educational Center

The Center was established in 1979 and its aim is to preserve Sephardi tradition and culture. Its principal officers are of both Sephardi and Ashkenazi origins. The executive headquarters of the Center are in Los Angeles while its Educational Center is in Jerusalem; there are 17 branches in various countries conducting educational and cultural endeavours; the most active are in New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Washington DC, Montreal, Toronto, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Bombay, and Istanbul. Most of these have been established since 1988. The Center had several thousand members in 1993, mostly young men and women in the age group 18–36; membership dues amounted to between $50 and $100, depending on the level of income.

A bibliography of recent books on Sephardi and Oriental Jews in many languages is available on request from the Executive Office of the Center, at 6505 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 403, Los Angeles, Ca., 90048, USA.

NOTES

[1] *The AJDC 1991 Annual Report*, New York 1992, p. 43.

[2] Ibid., p. 43–44.

[3] *The Alliance Review*, vol. xxxiv, no. 55, 1992–93, p. 21, published by the American Friends of the Alliance Israélite Universelle.

[4] *The AJDC 1991 Annual Report*, New York, 1991, pp. 43–44.

[5] Ibid., p. 44.

[6] *The AJDC 1990 Annual Report*, New York, 1991, pp. 40, 42–43; *The AJDC 1991 Annual Report*, New York, 1992, pp. 43–46.

[7] *The AJDC 1990 Annual Report*, New York, 1991, pp. 42–43; *The AJDC 1991 Annual Report*, New York, 1992, pp. 43–46.

[8] *The AJDC 1990 Annual Report*, New York, 1991, pp. 42–43.

[9] *The Alliance Review*, vol. 34, no. 55, 1992–93, p. 21; see also: *Council for the Rescue of Syrian Jewry (CRSJ): Fact Sheet* (April 1991); and *International Perspective: Syria, Syrian Jews and the Peace Process*, a report prepared by Dr George Gruen and published by the American Jewish Committee in New York City, pp. 2–13.

[10] Confidential information.

[11] Confidential information.

[12] *The New York Times*, 28 April 1992.

[13] *Yemeni Jewry: General Facts and Information: 1992*, published by the World Union of Jewish Students (WUJS), Jerusalem.

[14] See reports in the Israeli press of the first and second weeks of July 1993 (*Yediot ahronot*, *Ma'ariv*, and *Ha-aretz*).

[15] Report on the Jewish communities of India based on a fact-finding mission of 25 December 1991–2 January 1992. Confidential.

[16] *The AJDC 1991 Annual Report*, New York, 1992, pp. 48–49.

BOOK REVIEWS

GEOFFREY ALDERMAN, *Modern British Jewry*, ix + 397 pp., Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992, £40.00.

Geoffrey Alderman is a controversialist. He is more than that, of course: he is an academic who occupies a chair of Politics and Contemporary History and is a prolific writer on those subjects; in the last decade he has paid particular attention to Anglo-Jewish history. He is active within British Jewry. Religiously orthodox, a member of the Federation of Synagogues, he is its historian. But above all he does not hesitate to say what he thinks, as readers of this *Journal* will know. It is no surprise to be told that he has 'deliberately set out to tell the story warts and all' (p. viii). There is no harm in that, except that he often prefers talking about the warts rather than about the less ugly parts of the body.

The 'story' he refers to is the history of the Jews of Britain since the middle of the nineteenth century and apart from new research of his own and by his research assistant, he has been able to draw on a great deal of work done by a number of people in the last two decades or so. The tone of much of that material chimes with his approach. The book, he tells us, is his contribution to the conscious reaction to 'the public-relations history that British Jewry has been accustomed to read hitherto' (p. vii).

It differs from another recent (1990) book covering the same period — the late V. D. Lipman's *A History of the Jews in Britain since 1858* — in being fuller and by going into much greater detail about the last fifty years, which were merely sketched briefly by Lipman. Thus Alderman's work is the first full-scale book on the modern history of British Jewry aiming to cover various aspects — social, economic, political, and religious (i.e. synagogal) — all getting a share. As such, it may well come to be regarded as a standard work; for that reason it merits detailed scrutiny. Alderman is especially interested in the history and politics of organizations and institutions, both religious and secular. There is much on political and personal manoeuvres.

Each of the seven chapters is long and there are no section headings to break up the text. Most of the time this does not matter since he is a skilful writer and the book is generally readable; but towards the end he tends to veer from topic to topic. Moreover, he tackles his subject academically and at first in a quite unbiased way. For example, he goes beyond the Halakhic definition of a Jew and includes 'as Jewish any person who considered or considers him or herself to be such, or who

was or is so regarded by his or her contemporaries' (p. 1). Reform and Liberal Judaism are described and analysed dispassionately. He places the origin of the Federation of Synagogues in its historical context. Although he does not say so directly, he clearly objects to those Jews who have sought some divine purpose in the Holocaust or who regard it as a punishment for deviations from orthodoxy (p. 301). He normally gives references for everything he says.

The book is divisible into two unequal parts and these laudatory comments apply to the first five of the seven chapters, about two-thirds of the volume. Inevitably, however, errors appear in a work of such wide scope. Here are three examples from those early chapters. He refers more than once to a 'Sunday Work of Jews Act of 1871'; there was no such Act. He means 34 Vict. c. 19 which had the very long title 'An Act for exempting persons professing the Jewish religion from penalties in respect of young persons and females professing the said religion working on Sundays'. He includes the Jewish Working Men's Club among the institutions set up as agencies of social control of the Eastern European immigrants (p. 141); my published history of the Club (reviewed in this *Journal's* December 1981 issue, vol. 23, no. 2) makes it clear that its clientele consisted of the older-established, anglicized Jewish workers and that it was shunned by the Poles and Russians. A somewhat allusive statement on page 131 implies that the Jews in the late nineteenth century were responsible for the subdivision of tailoring work — an old and discredited view. On the contrary, the origins of subdivision in that industry are to be found in the early nineteenth century and it was by no means a Jewish speciality.

However, such errors do not detract, it seems to me, from the worth of the first five chapters. The final two chapters, on the other hand, exhibit a different tone. Chapter 6 covers the period from the Passfield White Paper on Palestine (1930) to about 1950, with the last chapter bringing the story more or less up-to-date. In them he makes bizarre generalizations supported by highly selective evidence. Take this statement that within British Jewry 'a feeling of antipathy towards the aspirations of Black communities ... is undoubtedly widespread' (p. 349). This appears to be based solely on the results of the 1978 by-election in Ilford North, the details of which he published in an earlier work (*The Jewish Community in British Politics*, 1983, pp. 147–49). The Conservatives won back the seat from Labour; a major issue in the campaign was the Conservative demand for stricter control of immigration (that is, of Blacks and Asians). An opinion poll found that half of all the voters in the constituency who switched from Labour to Conservative did so because of that issue. The swing to the Conservatives was 6.9 per cent, while among a sample of 143 Jewish voters the swing was 11.2 per cent. Ergo Jews were keener on immigration control and are very antipathetic towards Black people. At best this is very

indirect evidence, and there are questions about such statistical matters as margins of error, let alone about reasons for voting behaviour. I should add here that he gives various figures which need to be treated with caution. Having said that in the mid-1930s the Communist Party in the East End had 'a mass Jewish following' (p. 316), he provides what must be assumed to be the supporting evidence, of purported Jewish membership and of voting for the Party (p. 317). He calls such figures estimates and refers us also to his earlier *Jewish Community* (p. 118) for the calculations. They prove to be no more than guesses.

There are other examples of limited and one-sided evidence. He has a long section on the reception of refugees from Nazism. It is mainly about 'the antipathy displayed [by British Jews] towards Jewish refugees who managed to gain sanctuary in Britain' (pp. 295 ff.) As a corrective to a myth (not referenced) that their treatment 'was neither uniformly uncritical nor uniformly benevolent', he gives many instances of 'the common atmosphere of distrust and ill will that greeted Jewish refugees'. In a full statement of the episode it is right to give the negative side; but that is all he gives. Thus of the arrivals on the Children's Transports (after *Kristallnacht*) he complains that not all were taken into Jewish homes but concentrates on those who were not (no numbers are given).

At the time, because I was learning German at school, I was asked to speak to a young boy taken in by nearby Jewish shopkeepers in Leytonstone where my family lived. The owners were not known as active members of the community; indeed, I was surprised to see a Christmas tree in the corner of the room, the first time I had seen one in a Jewish house. My family similarly gave hospitality to a young adult, Max; by chance I still have a letter from him sent to us after he had moved on. Actions of this kind are not mentioned here. The evidence to the contrary which he provides is either a contemporary general complaint or, when the case is specific, a single example. There are two of the latter on one page (p. 300). His opinion that some refugee children were denied the chance to get a university education, because of the unwillingness of 'British Jewry' to provide the funds, is footnoted solely by reference to the experience of one person, John Grenville. The point is somewhat blunted by the fact that he was subsequently appointed to a chair of History at the University of Birmingham. He also tells us that British Jews could treat German and Austrian refugees, who had 'a vocation for the pulpit', with great prejudice; but the sole evidence which he gives is a letter in the *Jewish Chronicle* complaining about the appointment of one such as a Minister of a London synagogue. This was the German-born Immanuel Jakobovits. Since he later became Chief Rabbi and a Life Peer, it obviously did him no harm either.

It is certainly true that here and there, within those final two chapters, one does discern a liberal, academic voice. Thus his

description (p. 376) of Rabbi Ehrentreu refusing to meet the Pope in 1982 not through any objection to the Pontiff but because 'he would have been part of a delegation that included a Reform Jew' is set down plain, but Alderman's own view is undoubted. He notes approvingly (p. 367) the large numbers of Jews pursuing advanced Jewish studies and this provides him with a link to look back to developments in Jewish (school) education in Britain during and since the Second World War. Characteristically, that section consists largely of arguments and disagreements. What the children studied is not mentioned.

Geoffrey Alderman has provided in this book much that is useful and relevant for a study of Anglo-Jewry during the last 150 years. What a great pity that the latter part of the volume should be less praiseworthy.

HAROLD POLLINS

BENJAMIN BEIT-HALLAHMI, *Despair and Deliverance: Private Salvation in Contemporary Israel* (SUNY Series in Israeli Studies), vii + 221 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1992, $17.95 (paperback).

Amongst those who died in the FBI assault on the headquarters of the Davidian Branch sect in Waco, Texas in April 1993 was a young Israeli boy. This dramatically highlights the relevance of the research assembled by Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi in his account of the 'epidemiology of happiness' amongst native-born Israelis since 1973. To material available from sources such as the Centre for Documentation of Israeli Society at the Hebrew University, Beit Hallahmi has added information gleaned from his own extensive fieldwork in attending cult activities and interviewing individuals who have found personal 'salvation' in them. He describes, not without sympathy, the 'miracle of transformation' experienced by so many who have broken with an empty, 'meaningless' past and experienced a 'new birth' by attaching themselves to a cult community; they find not only the supportive group which values them as individuals, but a framework of meaning which makes sense of their lives and reconciles them to the apparent harshness of an indifferent and uncontrollable environment.

Beit-Hallahmi accepts Glock and Stark's definition of cults, in contrast with sects, as 'religious movements which draw their inspiration from other than the primary religion of the culture' (p. 12). This certainly fits ISKCON, as Beit-Hallahmi calls what is generally known as the Hare Krishna movement, and also the Emin Society Israel, a branch of an occult group which was started by a London truck driver in the 1970s. The Society, based in the Upper Galilee village of Maale Tzvia, had at the time of writing several hundred members. Beit-Hallahmi characterized 283 of these by occupation, educational attainment (60 have University degrees), sex, and ethnic origin (Ashkenazi/

Sephardi). The 'members are by no means the downtrodden or visibly desperate. Many are young, handsome, neatly dressed, many of them officers in the Israeli armed forces'. Yet a paranoid tendency is discernible in the belief in 'electrical barnacles' which attach themselves to the 'impure' (p. 31). Many sociologists have studied back-to-the-fold movements, not least the *baal teshuva* trend manifest throughout the Jewish world. Beit-Hallahmi's chapter on this is perceptive. Focusing on the Israeli scene, he relates the return to Judaism to the failure of secular Zionist ideology; if this is correct, it would distinguish the movement in Israel from its counterpart in the Diaspora.

In his chapter headed 'The Triumph of the Occult', the author points out that whereas in 1970 few references to the occult were to be found in the Israeli media, the scene changed completely after 1973. By the late 1970s the media were rampant with horoscopes, advice columns and discussions; and Ilan Pecker, a lawyer and an Orthodox Jew, was launched on his career as an astrological cultural hero. Beit-Hallahmi's gloomy conclusion is that the issue which the 1973 Yom Kippur war imprinted on people's minds, leading them to seek salvation in these non-establishment ways, was similar to that facing apartheid in South Africa: 'the survival of a whole state and a whole culture in a future filled with growing threats and difficulties' (p. 187). 'Like Cargo Cults in Melanesia, the new salvation movements in Israel are a rebellion against the ... irrationality and inhumanity of an oppressive social system' (p. 186). These are certainly aggravating factors, but Beit-Hallahmi not only shows his political bias but perhaps places too much stress on the differences between Israeli cultism and that elsewhere in the 'Western' world. Surely a major factor in all Western cultism is the failure of the established religions to create welcoming societies with credible systems of meaning. This is compounded in the case of Israel by the failure of the Orthodox to free themselves from, and to condemn, astrology and other superstitions — I have often heard even Maimonides censured for his rejection of astrology. This well-researched book should stimulate deep thought about the failure of contemporary society to absorb some of the most valuable lessons of the Enlightenment.

NORMAN SOLOMON

URSULA R. Q. HENRIQUES, ed., *The Jews of South Wales. Historical Studies*, xi + 238 pp., University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1993, £25.00.

I have two immediate memories of three years I spent in Swansea in the early 1950s. In the centre of the city, amidst the bomb sites, was a garage, its ownership proclaimed as 'Goldberg & Jones', a sign of ethnic integration, perhaps. A colleague, from the coal-mining town of

New Tredegar, told me that one of its inhabitants was known as 'Maurice the Jew', a life-time miner. No doubt he was among the thousands of people drawn into South Wales, from other parts of Britain and abroad, in the generation or two before 1914 when the area boomed. Coal-mines, steel works, and tinplate works opened everywhere. Coincidentally, it was the period of mass Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe and an economic interpretation of emigration would posit a major flow into South Wales. But comparatively few in fact went there, resulting in a peak Jewish population of perhaps 5,000–6,000 in 1914.

This book tells something of their story in eight chapters on disparate subjects (four of them previously published or based on articles which have appeared before) as well as an Introduction and an Epilogue by the editor. The chapters cover either longish periods — for instance, the editor's republished 'The Jewish Community of Cardiff, 1813–1914' — or more specific case-studies, such as her 'Lyons versus Thomas: the Jewess Abduction Case, 1867–8', which reappears with some changes. Anthony Glaser's 'The Tredegar Riots of August 1911' is the sixth such study on that topic since the early 1970s but is justified by the use of new material with a different interpretation. The availability of primary material is one reason for two chapters covering a short period of Swansea's history. The editor writes on 'The Conduct of a Synagogue: Swansea Hebrew Congregation, 1895–1914', including the establishment by new immigrants of their own more orthodox Beth Hamedrash, a not uncommon story at that period. Leonard Mars, in a version of a published paper, describes an even shorter period: 'The Ministry of Reverend Simon Fyne in Swansea, 1899–1906'. It illustrates the activities of a minister, born in Russia, who served both the new immigrants and the established Jews and, unusually in those years, was a committed Zionist.

There are three further chapters. The editor reprints her article on 'The Jews and crime in South Wales before the First World War'. It is a valiant effort since she had to use general sources, such as printed calendars of court cases, picking out possible 'Jewish' names. In Wales, Old Testament names are common so that we get such ambiguously-named criminals as Kate Isaac, Moses Lewis, and William David Israel. Moreover, some Jews had English or Welsh names: a president of the Swansea congregation was called Owens. Whatever the true figures, the amount of Jewish crime was small, both absolutely and proportionately. (The Irish, another immigrant group, were much more likely to appear in court.)

One chapter deals with a special feature of Jewish settlement in South Wales. Before the influx of Eastern European Jews there were three main Jewish communities, at Swansea and Cardiff on the coast, and inland at the iron and steel town of Merthyr Tydfil. The

newcomers went to those towns as well but also settled in numerous other places. Chapter 2, 'The Valleys Communities' by Anthony Glaser and Professor Henriques, deals with this part of the story. The map on page 46 clearly shows the distribution of the main centres, in two lines; from east to west, along the coast at Newport, Cardiff, and Swansea, and at the heads of the valleys at Brynmawr, Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, Merthyr Tydfil, and Aberdare. Between them and the coast was the Pontypridd congregation, an older settlement with a synagogue dating from 1867. Three smaller places also had synagogues, Llanelli and Aberavon on the coast and Ystalyfera at the head of the Swansea valley (the last is not shown on the map as having a synagogue although mentioned as such on p. 55). The map shows very many other places marked as 'Small business' which presumably indicates the presence of at least one Jewish shop, probably with resident family.

Whether transients, on their way to the New World, or settlers, few worked in the main industries. Most were shopkeepers with a marked concentration on pawnbroking, at least up to the First World War. But there were others and it is a pity that we are given only glimpses of other occupations and statuses, of employees and of the poor. Details are given from the Jewish marriage registers for Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff but they are sketchy. Jews had a wider range of occupations in the 1920s and 1930s; a few examples of skilled jobs are given but only a tantalizing general statement (for Merthyr) that from 1938 'there is evidence of women being employed outside the home' (p. 54). A more systematic use could have been made of the three marriage registers, the third being for Tredegar. Similarly, more could have been made of the MS Population Census Enumerators' Lists.

It will be evident that the book is mostly about the period before 1914, but one chapter deals specifically with later years. Anthony Glaser writes on 'Jewish Refugees and Jewish Refugee Industries', the establishment under government auspices of industrial concerns at the Treforest Trading Estate by refugees from Nazism. The author's father was one such industrialist and his experiences provide a useful if brief case study. In April 1939, 49 of the 78 companies on the Estate were Jewish-owned. They manufactured a wide range of products, including zip fasteners, strings for musical instruments, medical drugs, and unbreakable pencils; nevertheless, overall, 40 per cent were in traditional 'Jewish' industries — clothing, textiles, footwear, and furniture. Other enterprises were established later and survived despite difficulties during the war, including the internment of some of the owners. It is essentially an essay in economic history and one wonders if the industrialists had any connection with local Jewish communities.

This is not a comprehensive, chronological history of the Jews of South Wales but it is a useful addition to the growing number of local studies of Anglo-Jewish history. It could have been improved by a

clearer chronological outline of events, otherwise scattered in various chapters, such as known dates of establishment of the various communities and such information about them as their Jewish populations at various dates, estimated or guessed as they have to be. The quality of production is good, but there are several misprints and typographical errors.

HAROLD POLLINS

PAULA E. HYMAN, *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace: Acculturation and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century*, viii + 214 pp., Yale University Press, New Haven, 1991, $34.00 or £19.95.

Alsatian Jews, as the author points out in this valuable study, 'were the first large traditional community to experience the benefits and the challenges of emancipation' (p. 5). Scattered in small village communities, few of which numbered more than two hundred souls, Alsatian Jewry before the emancipation consisted mainly of pedlars, old-clothes-merchants, and dealers in cattle and horses. They spoke their own Judeo-Alsatian dialect of Yiddish, were deeply God-fearing, and had much more in common with the traditionalist rural communities of the German lands than with the Jews of the rest of France. They were a world apart from the etiolated Judaism of the wealthy Sephardim of Bordeaux.

In spite of the book's main title, Hyman does not deal, except in passing, with the politics of formal emancipation in 1791. Rather, she examines its long-term consequences and the slow process by which it took real effect in the economic, social, and cultural integration of Alsatian Jewry in the French nation. She analyses the stages by which the community was gradually transformed and modernized, very much against the will of many of its constituents, into the 'regenerated' mould favoured by enlightened officials and Jewish notables of the mid-nineteenth century.

As a result of what was evidently indefatigable labour in the archives and painstaking dissection of her materials, Hyman succeeds in explaining the dynamic of post-emancipation social change and the many obstacles which hindered the 'regeneration' of these little communities. Using official census data, reports of prefects, and other such sources, she provides a thorough and convincing picture of the occupational distribution, regional and external migration patterns, educational formation, and social mobility of Alsatian Jews. Her statistical analysis of the Jewish family is particularly illuminating, showing how very late marriage (the average age of brides in the 1860s was 28), and moderately-sized families (an average of 2.9 children per family in 1846), low rates of illegitimacy, and next to no out-marriage remained constants for at least three generations after emancipation.

What is missing, however, is a certain human dimension. In her conclusion (p. 157), she writes: 'Recovering the multiplicity of voices within different Jewish communities saves dissent from the historical obliteration that triumphant opponents often impose on it'. Unfortunately, her dry narrative does not altogether achieve this objective. With one exception, the people who are the subject of her book do not come alive. In this respect there is much to be learned, in terms of human insight, from Richard Cobb's brief but vivid *esquisse* on the 'bande juive', a gang of Jewish cattle rustlers and horse thieves in the 1790s (in his *Paris and its Provinces 1792–1802*, London, 1975). Cobb's imaginative essay also brings out successfully the crucial element — mentioned, but not fully explored in the book under review— of the special role of Jews in frontier zones. The question of the national identification of Alsatian Jews is presented here in rather too uniform a manner, reflecting perhaps the apologetic insistence of the majority of Alsatian Jews, and of most literature on the subject, on their loyalty to France. But a significant minority remained German in cultural orientation (again, here, further linguistic research would have been helpful) and after 1870 were content to become German citizens. It is true that many left Alsace after 1870 in order to remain French; but there were also others after 1918 who moved east, rather than west, in order to remain German.

This book raises some questions in the mind of the reader without adequately addressing them: for example, given the powerful role of the state so much stressed by Hyman, it might be useful to know whether the five regimes which ruled France between 1800 and 1870 pursued identical policies towards the Jews. The author provides some materials towards an answer but no sustained analysis of the issue. She alludes to the persistent survival of the Judeo-Alsatian dialect and the efforts made by educational reformers to stamp it out, but we are left at the end of the book unclear as to how widespread its usage was at the close of the period. It would also be helpful to know more about the relationship of this dialect to other western forms of Yiddish, to know to what extent it developed as a written or published language, and how far it assimilated French vocabulary. Given the author's emphasis on the survival at least until the 1840s of what she terms the 'cultural ancien régime', it is surprising that she did not develop this line of enquiry.

The one figure who emerges as a living personality in Hyman's book is Rabbi Salomon Klein of Colmar, a staunch defender of orthodoxy who bravely defied governmental efforts to 'regenerate' the community by watering down what were regarded as the more obnoxious aspects of its orthodox practice. Hyman quotes (p. 149) an exasperated Minister of Cults who accused Klein of 'inflaming the religious zeal of his flock' — evidently an offence in the eyes, be it noted, of a minister not of the

Jacobin republic but of the Second Empire. Hyman's keen-eyed exposure of the imperial government's rigging of consistorial elections and the collusion of Jewish notables is admirably done. She argues at the end (p. 157) that the 'role of the state throughout Europe in the adaptation of Jews to the conditions of modernity deserves more attention' — an unexceptionable although perhaps unexciting conclusion.

BERNARD WASSERSTEIN

AHARON KELLERMAN, *Society and Settlement: Jewish Land of Israel in the Twentieth Century* (SUNY series in Israeli Studies), xv + 321 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1993, $59.50 (paperback, $19.95).

It would be difficult to think of a more exciting theme connected with Israel than the one chosen by Professor Kellerman. How indeed did what is now the State of Israel come to be settled with Jews over a period of more than a century since the first *aliyah* and what pressures — historical, religious, ideological, economic, and strategic — dictated both the changing direction of settlement and its different character in successive decades, both before and after independence? How far was the Zionist movement consistent and united in its perception of the goals to be attained? How far has Israel developed along the lines envisaged by the earlier Zionist leaders and the early settlers themselves? What has happened to the kibbutz and the associated ideals of egality and austerity as Israel becomes increasingly and now overwhelmingly urbanized and as the attractions of Western consumer culture increasingly dominate the growing middle class? The book was completed more than two years ago, when the outlook was different, but how do these past experiences affect the two pieces of unfinished business — the absorption of Jews from the former Soviet Union and relations with Palestinians and with the wider Arab world beyond? On the latter point, the author might have done better to deal with the population as a whole, Arabs as well as Jews, and the patterns of settlement rather than approaching that problem obliquely and mainly in respect of the occupied territories for, as he admits, it was an illusion of some early Zionists that Palestine was a 'land without people'.

One main criticism of Professor Kellerman's book does not, however, concern his self-imposed and in some respects understandable self-limitation; it is that he has made this volume so difficult for the would-be reader, so rebarbative is its composition, style, and language, so disfigured by unnecessary graphs and tables, and so uncompromising in its 'social science' type of source-references that only someone determined to get to grips with the subject and aware of what the author has to offer is likely ever to proceed to reach the end of the book.

It could almost be said (to adapt a well-used cliché) that we have a deplorable volume from which an excellent book is trying to escape.

One has the feeling that the author was not only keen to explore a most interesting and important topic but also at the same time to justify the scientific aspect of human geography — his own discipline. For that reason, he uses concepts such as 'core', 'periphery', and even the ever-ambiguous 'frontier', which so far from illuminating his argument actually confuses it. When he forgets all about the necessity of displaying his 'scientific' credentials, he offers real illumination on some of the most challenging aspects of Israeli experience. Much is to be gathered, for instance, from his discussion about the settlements in the Galilee and in the Negev and about the failure of most of the 'development towns' to sustain an independent industrial role against the pull of Tel Aviv which, he argues, has now the role of a 'world city'. Indeed, his analysis of the differences between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv — the capital and religious centre against the main exponent of secular commercialism and 'social Zionism' — is both profound and illuminating. So too are his explanations for the failure of Haifa to become as important as those two cities, as seemed inevitable in the Mandate period and as might happen if 'peace' were to break out.

It is impressive that in writing about a country as deeply divided as Israel — Jew and Arab, orthodox and secular, right and left — Professor Kellerman betrays no distinct personal preferences but can represent with full understanding each differing point of view. Some may grudge the effort required to read this book; but the effort is worth while.

MAX BELOFF

RICHARD MENDELSOHN, *Sammy Marks 'The Uncrowned King of the Transvaal'*, xvi + 304 pp., David Philip and Ohio University Press, in association with Jewish Publications–South Africa, Cape Town and Athens, Ohio, 1991, 45 rands (hardback, 75 rands).

Sammy Marks was born in 1844 in a small town in Lithuania and in 1861 came to England, where he had a kinsman in Sheffield who helped him to become a pedlar. He then became the protégé of a prominent Jewish businessman in the town, who advised him to go to South Africa to seek his fortune and not only paid his fare but also gave him a large case of knives to use as capital.

Marks came to Cape Town in 1868 and again worked as a pedlar, hawking the knives, and made a good profit; he reinvested the sum in other goods and sold them in the suburbs of Cape Town. A distant cousin from Lithuania joined him and the two of them prospered sufficiently to open a shop eventually in the area of the Kimberley mine. They were paid for their goods largely in diamonds and acquired a

reputation for fair dealing. They prospered and Marks later moved to the Transvaal where he established that republic's first liquor distillery. He was not always successful in his business ventures but he was able to benefit from the 'Kaffir boom' of the mid-1890s. By then he was thoroughly at home in the corridors of Boer power and President Kruger in particular displayed a trust in Marks which he had not accorded to other Randlords, who had blotted their copy-book in the infamous Jameson Raid aimed at overthrowing the Transvaal Republic. Mendelsohn notes that Marks 'was the classic outsider, the Russian Jewish immigrant, who was unswayed by either the call of the blood of British imperialism after the Raid or its opposite, Boer republicanism' (p. 100); and 'he had a roll specially inserted in a large music box so that it could play the anthems of the South African Republic and of the Orange Free State as well as God Save the Queen' (p. 102).

Mark's neutrality and his negotiating skills were particularly evident towards the closing stages of the Boer War, when he took an active part in the peace talks, and his contacts with major role players on the South African political scene continued into the reconstruction period. He entertained prominent dignitaries regularly at 'Zwartkoppies', his magnificent home outside Pretoria, which resembled an English country estate. He had great respect for English Victorian values and traditions, but at no time did he deny his roots or his religious heritage. Indeed, his commitment to Judaism and to Jewish precepts was shown in the substantial support he gave to local Jews; he was orthodox in sentiment if not in practice and therefore differed notably from most Jewish magnates in the Transvaal who preferred to distance themselves from their Jewish origins. His pride in his Judaism blended comfortably with his high esteem for the British Empire and its aims. He sent his eldest son to be a pupil at Harrow, in England, and arranged for him to have Hebrew lessons. In a letter to the boy in 1898 he said:

> You may also meet Jewish boys who are ashamed to call themselves Jews. You must never be ashamed of your religion; you have no reason to be. You will find Jews amongst the greatest men in every profession and every calling in life of which we have every reason to be proud. . . . England is a free country and everybody has the right to worship God in his own way . . .

In 1910, Sammy Marks was appointed to the Senate, the upper chamber of the newly-formed Union of South Africa, but parliamentary life did not appeal to him; he much preferred the cut and thrust of trade and industry. All his skills were crowned with the establishment — against all odds — of the Union Steel Corporation in 1911, which laid the foundations for the iron and steel industry in South Africa. He died in 1920 and was buried according to his wishes in the Jewish cemetery in Pretoria. Jan Smuts, the Prime Minister who was an old friend, attended the funeral, as did representatives of the Senate and of

the many organizations with which Marks had been connected. The press 'reported that the funeral procession was a lengthy one and that all along the route businesses were closed as a mark of respect to the deceased' — although in a codicil to his will he had stated: 'I . . . desire that the funeral shall be as simple as possible without wreaths or flowers, as I wish to be buried as I have lived without ostentation or parade', and he was indeed placed in a plain deal coffin and had an unadorned gravestone (p. 249).

Richard Mendelsohn has written a volume of great scholarship and has demonstrated incisive analysis; and the many photographs help to illustrate the life and times of Sammy Marks. For those interested in South Africa's economic and political history, he provides a blow-by-blow account of the business and diplomatic activities in which Marks was engaged. For the modern Jewish historian, his study is a fascinating account of the transformation of a Jewish immigrant pedlar into a magnate and a man of considerable political influence, who never forgot his roots or his religious affiliation.

MILTON SHAIN

YOCHANAN PERES and EPHRAIM YUCHTMAN-YAAR, *Trends in Israeli Democracy. The Public's View*, a policy study of the Israel Democracy Institute, with a Foreword by Arye Carmon, x + 57 pp., Lynne Rienner Publishers, 3 Henrietta Street, London, WC2, 1992, £7.95 (paperback).

Israel's continued claims for, and receipt of, Western support are based in part upon the perfectly correct proposition that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. Yet the country has been in the unique position of suffering the continued hostility of its neighbours, at times amounting to outright war; and it has had a continuous need to absorb new immigrants, most of whom came from countries where democratic doctrines are neither espoused nor put into effect. Since 1967, the position has been further complicated by the fact that in the occupied territories Israel is in a quasi-colonial position, holding political sway over a population without direct access to the shaping of policy.

How has the Jewish majority in Israel proper, as distinct from its political and intellectual elites, accepted the implications of the commitment to democracy embodied in the country's own declaration of independence? Such was the question posed by two sociologists from Tel Aviv University who carried out three carefully-designed public opinion surveys between January 1987 and February 1991 and then compared the results with the responses to somewhat similar questions in the 'Eurobarometer' surveys conducted in the countries of the European Community. The results, while in most cases not unexpected, are nevertheless revealing even though they now have to be set in

the context of the 1992 election, which came too late for the authors to take into account.

On the general commitment to democratic values, Israel is not substantially different from the countries of Western Europe; nor is it surprising to find that when one comes to attitudes — that is to say, the price one is prepared to pay when these values are challenged, as in the reaction to the Intifada (the Palestinian uprising) — then the more educated element in the Jewish population (which has economic, religious, and ethnic aspects to its composition) is keener to hang on to its principles than is the case with the rest of the country's Jewish citizens. Since attitudes towards the Arab population in Israel proper is at the core of the specific issues which Israel faces and would face, even if there were a total or partial withdrawal from the territories, it is a pity that the authors did not include a question about the expenditure of public funds upon the Arab community: one form of discrimination can be financial. Or does the exclusion of Arabs from military service mean that their claims upon public services can be justifiably reduced?

Of particular interest is the finding about the different levels at which national institutions are rated. While it is common for integrative institutions — the courts, the army, and the police — to be valued most highly, it is revealing that between 1987 and 1991 there was a fall in the public's confidence in its political leadership, the political parties, the Knesset, and the media. A further survey, after the Gulf War and the accompanying descent of Saddam's missiles on Tel Aviv and Haifa, shows that there was then an increase in the domestic consensus, more acceptance of the country's political leadership, and an actual rise in the sentiments of tolerance towards Israeli Arabs. The policy of 'restraint' imposed by the Allies, and notably by the United States, seems in domestic terms to have paid off. Even those most sceptical about the value of opinion surveys will find this short publication a good augury for the new Israel Democracy Institute.

MAX BELOFF

MOSHE Z. SOKOL, ed., *Rabbinic Authority and Personal Autonomy* (the Orthodox Forum Series), xiv + 250 pp., Jason Aronson, Northvale, N.J., 1992, n.p.

The two main questions to which this symposium addresses itself are: 1) whether the Halakhah, in the sense of rabbinic decision (*pesak*), is all-embracing — leaving no room for the individual to determine his own patterns of life; and 2) whether a contemporary rabbi is obliged to follow precedent in his decisions — or be creative and innovative? The first question is discussed at length only by Moshe Sokol in the essay entitled: 'Personal Autonomy and Religious Authority'; he notes that even the most dedicated follower of the Halakhah has numerous

opportunities to make his own choices: in his family life, his business, and his general relations with others, where there are situations which are not governed by the Halakhah. It is simply a mistake to imagine that the Halakhah has something to say about every one of life's events. Undoubtedly, for example, the Codes have much to say about parental responsibility and about how children are to go about obeying the fifth commandment (to honour their parents), but how parents and children apply the rules and principles in particular situations must be left to their own judgement. As Solomon Schechter once said when considering the whole question of personal loyalty to the tradition (a saying, incidentally, germane to the theme of this book): 'You cannot get your father to write your love letters for you'. The illustration is not Sokol's but this is what he appears to be saying and the conclusion is so obvious that it was hardly necessary for him to use the sledge-hammer of his massive erudition to crack this nut, though his philosophical analysis is valuable on other counts.

The other essays in the volume agonize in one way or another over the dilemma of modern Orthodox rabbis who seek to follow the Halakhic processes typical of the rabbis of the old school while accepting, unlike the latter, many of the values of Western thought and culture. Lawrence Kaplan's essay — '*Daas Torah*: A Modern Conception of Rabbinic Authority' — has no difficulty in exposing the flaws in the notion, very prevalent among the ultra-Orthodox today, that the *Gedolim* (the 'great ones', chiefly the unelected members of the Council of Sages of the Agudat Israel) have a kind of built-in guarantee that their opinions on political matters are infallible as (in the Ashkenazi pronunciation) the *Daas Torah*, the view of the Torah, to reject which is to reject the very word of God. Kaplan rightly calls this a 'modern' view since it only emerged, under the influence of Hassidic veneration of the Tsaddik, in the early twentieth century and is unknown in the traditional sources, where the decisions of the great rabbis were considered to be binding only in legal matters and, even in that area, it was not the charisma of the rabbi that determined his *pesak*. The Halakhist was always obliged to convince his peers by the cogency of his reasoning, as the other essays in the volume show. The *reductio ad absurdum* of this view is provided when a number of *Gedolim* offer contradictory opinions of what is claimed to be the only true voice of the Torah.

The basic idea behind all the contributions in the volume is spelled out in the essay by Chaim I. Waxman. It is only the application of the Halakhah which changes under changing conditions: the Halakhah is never actually determined or even influenced by environmental or sociological factors. 'In other words, the *halakhah* as originally conceived applies in one way under conditions X and in another way under conditions Y. They [Maimonides and the Hafetz Hayyim, referred to earlier in this essay as acknowledging the principle of change] would

have insisted, however, that every *pesak* derives from the traditional *objective* process of Halakhic decision-making' (italics in text).

This takes us to the heart of the matter. Throughout the book there is a failure to distinguish between the Halakhic process itself, which does operate objectively, as does every legal system, and the Halakhists engaged in the process. In such matters as the dietary laws, no doubt, the determination of whether a substance is kasher or not depends on an objective study of the sources. But in matters of social concern it is hard not to believe that the Halakhists were asking, consciously or unconsciously, not only what the law is but what it must be — granted the particular circumstances in which they found themselves — and they then employ the legal machinery so that it leads to the desired conclusion. On the objective view, the rulings of Maimonides regarding women (for instance, that a woman cannot be appointed to any position of importance in the community) differ from the more favourable Halakhic attitudes towards women on the part of the medieval French and German Halakhists, on purely objective grounds. The two sets of Halakhists simply understood the Talmudic sources differently and the debate is one based on pure reasoning and the use of analogy. But, in that case, why is it that Maimonides always arrives consistently with a set of rulings not so favourable to women while the French and German Halakhists arrive consistently at a set of more favourable rulings, if not that Maimonides was influenced by his Islamic background and the others by their Christian background? What is new and, one would have thought, has to be taken into consideration by Halakhic decision-makers today, is the historical study of the Halakhah. The objectivists seem to deny that the Halakhah has had a history: for them it is all a matter of simple transmission of a series of different rules to be used mechanically for different situations. Those influenced by the penetrating researches of the historians of the Halakhah — I. H. Weiss, Saul Lieberman, Chaim Tchernowitz, Louis Ginzberg, Louis Finkelstein and other distinguished scholars — have come to appreciate that what Kaplan says about the *development* of the notion of *Daas Torah* is true of the *development* of the Halakhic process as a whole. By acknowledging that the Halakhah has developed through historical as well as Halakhic processes, that there is in the Halakhic process a subjective as well as an objective element, the modern Orthodox rabbis could have found a way out of their dilemma. As it is, by postulating that nothing changes and at the same time claiming their right to personal autonomy, they are trying to have their cake and eat it.

LOUIS JACOBS

CHRONICLE

The Central Bureau of Statistics of Israel announced last September that at the end of the Jewish year 5753, the population of Israel numbered 5,280,000 — an increase of 124,000 or 2.4 per cent over the previous year. Jews accounted for 81.5 per cent of the total; Muslims for 14.1 per cent; Christians: 2.7 per cent; and Druze: 1.7 per cent. The Jewish population grew by 92,000, partly by natural increase and partly by immigration; there were 76,000 new immigrants, most of them from the former Soviet Union.

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The President of Belarus (formerly Belorussia) and government officials attended last October the public commemorations marking the 50th anniversary of the liquidation of the Minsk ghetto in October 1943. There was an academic conference on genocide and monuments to Jewish victims were unveiled. Nowadays, Belarus has a Jewish population officially estimated at 121,000 but local Jewish leaders are reported to believe that the more accurate figure is likely to be about 250,000.

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The Queen of Denmark attended last October a service to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the clandestine seaborne evacuation in October 1943 of the majority of the country's Jewish population to Sweden, which was a neutral country during the Second World War. The Danish press and television had several features to mark the commemoration. An exhibition documenting the rescue was mounted in a museum and was scheduled to be shown later in other countries, including Israel, Germany, and North America.

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The Minister of State of Monaco attended a ceremony to mark the 50th anniversary of the deportation of Jews from the Principality in 1943. A plaque was unveiled in memory of the 87 Monaco Jews who were sent to concentration camps.

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The Spring 1993 issue of *Tel Aviv University News* states that a non-Jewish art collector in Turkey, Nuri Arlasez, told the historian Professor Bernard Lewis in 1981 'that the old Jewish cemeteries in Istanbul were being built on or paved over under the crush of migration to the city.... A visit to the Jewish cemetery in Kuzguncuk ... convinced Lewis of the importance of the matter, and over the next six years he tried to organize the salvage of these testimonies to the local past'.

Finally, in 1987, a team from Tel Aviv University 'surveyed Turkey's surviving Jewish cemeteries, as well as other vestiges of Jewish settlement during the Ottoman period, such as archives, libraries, buildings, and religious art. The most arduous task was photographing and classifying the tens of thousands of Jewish tombstones. Thus far, about one-third of the raw data on the stones has been computerized. Categories in the database include the stone type and size; name of the deceased; cause of death; sex, age and profession of the deceased; and the language of the inscription'.

There has been outstanding help from the Turkish authorities. 'When the project is completed, scholars will gain a broader picture of the social and cultural history of Turkish Jewry in the Ottoman period, and will be able to apply this computerized research tool to any other major survey of physical artefacts. In addition, any Jew of Turkish descent will be able to trace his family tree and even see a picture of the graves of his forefathers.'

The project is to be expanded 'to include all the countries of the Ottoman Empire. Under survey currently are Jewish cemeteries of Bulgaria, and it is hoped that Greece and Albania will be documented next'.

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The Fall 1993 issue of *Tel Aviv University News* states that the University's Centre for Russian and East European Studies played a significant role in the decision of the Russian government to declassify documents relating to Palestine, Zionism, and Israel. 'A bilateral agreement on joint publication of the documents was signed in Moscow last March by officials of the Israeli and Russian foreign ministries.' The documents 'had never been seen by Western scholars or government officials. They cover the period between 1941 and 1967, and deal with discussions in the Soviet government on the future of Palestine, the decision to recognize Israel, Soviet involvement in arms deals between Czechoslovakia and Israel before the War of Independence, Soviet relations with Arab states, and other questions of vital historic interest.' Israeli documents of the same period are also covered in the agreement and will give Russian researchers access to important material which had previously not been available to them.

An international conference on 'Jews and Jewish Life in Russia and the Soviet Union' was held last April in Moscow, with joint Israeli, American, and Russian academic sponsorship. 'It was the first international academic symposium of this type to be held in Russia.'

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The Summer 1993 Report of the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization (ICUTJC) states that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) made its first grants to the International Center in 1992: '$20,000 toward the translation and adaptation into French of BINAH volumes 1 and 2, and the sum of $10,000 toward computerization of the World Register of institutions of higher learning offering courses in Jewish Civilization Studies. UNESCO has also financed the translation of Confucius's work into Hebrew, and of the Encyclopaedia Judaica into Chinese'.

The same ICUTJC Report gives details of the areas of specialization of the members of the Japan Association for Jewish Studies. According to the Israeli Embassy in Tokyo, these scholars number 65 and the Report lists some of their names and the universities to which they are attached. There is a wide range of interest: Hebrew language; Yiddish language; Jewish history and thought; antisemitism in Europe; antisemitism in Japan; Biblical studies and archeology; Jewish literature; and Jewish music.

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La Rassegna Mensile di Israel is a publication of the Jewish community of Italy. Its August 1992 issue, received in London in July 1993, consists mainly of articles about the 1492 Expulsion of the Jews from Spain and their settlement in Italy — in Rome, Padua, Ferrara, and Livorno — and in the Ottoman Empire. There is also a contribution about Portuguese Jews in Amsterdam in the seventeenth century.

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The Institute of Jewish Affairs (79 Wimpole Street, London W1M 7DD, England) has published *Antisemitism World Report 1993*, which covers the year 1992. The Report gives data on countries of Western, Central, and Eastern Europe; on the Middle East and North Africa; on South Africa and Zimbabwe; on Asia (Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Singapore); on Australia and New Zealand; on Canada and the United States; and on Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay). The Preface to the Report points out that the 'absence of an entry on a country does not imply that antisemitism does not exist in that country'.

The Report is written in a concise and clear style and is a valuable source of information for both scholars and lay readers interested in current manifestations of antisemitism throughout the world. It gives details of each country's total population and of the estimated size of its Jewish community; lists the parties, organizations, and movements associated with antisemitic platforms; cites manifestations of antisemitism which occurred in 1992, including desecrations of Jewish cemeteries and attacks on synagogues; lists antisemitic and anti-Zionist publications; notes anti-racist legislation; and documents the denial of the Holocaust. There is also information gathered from opinion polls which included questions about attitudes to Jews. The Introduction to the Report states: 'The current size of Jewish communities appears to bear no relation to the degree of antisemitism in a country. In Poland, where levels of antisemitic sentiment are high, the organized Jewish community numbers less than 10,000. Yet an opinion poll found that 10 per cent of Poles thought the Jews numbered between 4 and just over 7 million, and 25 per cent put their numbers between 750,000 and 3.5 million....'. Apparently, the phenomenon of antisemitism without Jews 'can also be found in Romania, Slovakia, many Arab countries and Japan' (p. xix).

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The American Jewish Committee commissioned a comprehensive Gallup poll about attitudes to Jews in the United Kingdom; the results were

announced last October. There were 959 respondents who were interviewed in a hundred areas of the country in September 1993. The survey revealed that Jews were the least disliked ethnic minority in the United Kingdom. Only eight per cent of those interviewed said that they thought that Jews had 'too much influence' — in contrast to similar surveys in the United States, where 22 per cent expressed such a belief, and in Austria, where the proportion was 28 per cent. In Britain, 12 per cent said that they would prefer not to have a Jewish neighbour; these respondents tended to be older persons, poor, and less well educated. Those most unwanted as neighbours were Gypsies (65 per cent disapproved of them); Arabs were next: 31 per cent did not wish to live near them; and Pakistanis were held to be almost equally unwelcome: 30 per cent said that they did not wish to have them as neighbours.

Only eight per cent of respondents stated that Jews did not have an agreeable behaviour while 57 per cent said that Gypsies behaved in a manner which aroused hostility.

More sympathy was expressed for Israel than for Arab states; but on the other hand, when Palestinians and Israel were compared, the Palestinians were viewed more favourably.

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The Spring 1993 issue of *NewsBoard*, a publication of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, states that the bulk of the Board's Archives, 'containing valuable historic records of the activities in which the Board was engaged for the latter part of the 19th century, and for most of this century, have now been transferred to the Greater London Record Office, which is part of the Corporation of London. The Board's records are generally recognized by history departments at universities both here and abroad as providing invaluable data on matters relating to the Jewish community in the UK and abroad.'

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The Community Research Unit of the Board of Deputies of British Jews has compiled vital statistics for British Jews for 1992. It has reported that the number of marriages in synagogues has continued to decrease: there were 1,031 in 1992; 1,082 in 1991; and 1,098 in 1990. But the proportion of strictly Orthodox and Sephardi religious weddings increased in 1992, accounting for just over a fifth of the total: 20.7 per cent; in 1991 the percentage for these two groups was 14.1. Marriages in Sephardi synagogues have shown fluctuations in recent years: 48 in 1990; 26 in 1991; and 47 in 1992. There were 166 strictly Orthodox marriages in 1992, an increase of 40 over the 1991 total of 126 — which, in turn, was higher than the 1990 number: 103.

There was a decline in the number of marriages in United, Federation, and Masorti synagogues: 602 in 1992 compared to 679 in 1991; and the same was true in the case of Progressive synagogues: 251 wedings in 1991 but 216 in 1992.

There were 4,219 burials and cremations under Jewish auspices in 1992; in 1991, there had been 4,431; and in 1990, 4,615.

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The July 1993 issue of *Ends and Odds*, a publication of the Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish/Christian Relations of Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, includes a report by Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon on three major international conferences which were held in 1993.

The first was a meeting of the IJCIC (International Jewish Committee on Inter-religious Consultations) and the Orthodox Churches; it was held near Athens in March. There was 'broad participation, including Jewish and/or Orthodox Christian representatives from Russia, Rumania, Georgia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Serbia, Israel, the Armenian and Coptic Chruches, as well as from Greece itself and from North America'. There was also a strongly supportive message from the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople.

In April, there was a Conference on Education in Christian-Jewish Relations in Central Europe; it was held in the Evangelical Retreat Centre in Mauloff, Germany, under the auspices of the International Council of Christians and Jews. The aim 'was to find ways of presenting Jewish religion, culture , and history in the new education structures now being developed in Central Europe. The point was made that strategies developed to combat antisemitism applied also to other forms of xenophobia'.

In the first week of May, there was a Colloquium on the Spiritual Significance of Jerusalem for Jews, Christians, and Muslims; it was held in Glion-sur-Montreux in Switzerland and was convened jointly by the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and the Vatican. There were many disagreements and heated debates, but in the end a joint statement was issued, starting with the words: 'We come together in dialogue, as Jews, Christians, and Muslims, as men and women of faith committed to our respective traditions'. This was followed by the first paragraph stating: 'We agree that religion should foster rather than hamper efforts to achieve peace. ... We affirm the holiness of the city of Jerusalem for all three faiths and recognize the rights of all to worship in their own ways. We affirm that the claims we make in the names of our traditions must not be mutually exclusive.'

*

President Mitterand of France issued in 1993 a decree that, annually on 16 July, there will be a day of national remembrance of Vichy's crimes against Jews. On 16 July 1942, 13,000 Jews — including children, women, and elderly people — were rounded up in a Paris stadium on the orders of the Vichy police; they were deported to concentration camps, where most of them perished. Until now, French leaders since General de Gaulle had claimed that the Vichy regime was illegal and not representative of the 'true France', which was leading the fight against the German occupying power from London and directing the French Resistance.

President Mitterand did not attend the first official ceremony on 16 July 1993, which was held at the site of the Paris stadium where the Jews had been rounded up in 1942. But Prime Minister Edouard Balladur was present and was reported to have said that the victims had been 'hurled down into horror and death with the atrocious complicity of the regime instituted under the Occupation'. He added: 'The memory of the events which took place during the war must inspire our vision of the world today. It is our duty to transmit this memory to the next generation.'

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Books listed here may be reviewed later)

Frank, Daniel H, ed., *A People Apart: Chosenness and Ritual in Jewish Philosophical Thought* (SUNY Series in Jewish Philosophy), vi + 270 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1993, $16.95.

Green, J., *A Social History of the Jewish East End of London 1914–1939. A Study of Life, Labour and Liturgy*, xv + 522 pp., The Edwin Mellen Press, Lampeter, Wales, 1993, £49.95.

Hasson, Shlomo, *Urban Social Movements in Jerusalem: The Protest of the Second Generation* (SUNY Series in Israeli Studies), ix + 198 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1993, $14.95.

Katz, Fred E., *Ordinary People and Extraordinary Evil. A Report on the Beguilings of Evil*, xii + 154 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., $39.50 (paperback, $12.95).

Leeder, Elaine, *The Gentle General: Rose Pesotta, Anarchist and Labor Organizer*, xviii + 212 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1993, $16.95.

Levine, Robert M., *Tropical Diaspora: The Jewish Experience in Cuba*, xviii + 398 pp., University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 1993, n.p.

Markowitz, Fran, *A Community in Spite of Itself: Soviet Jewish Emigrés in New York*, xvii + 317 pp., Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington and London, 1993, $49.00 (paperback, $19.95).

Miles, Robert, *Racism after 'race relations'*, ix + 243 pp., Routledge, London, 1993, £12.99 (hardback, £37.50).

Rockaway, Robert A., *BUT —— He Was Good to His Mother: The Lives and Crimes of Jewish Gangsters*, viii + 264 pp., Gefen Publishing House, POB6056, Jerusalem, 1993, $24.95.

Rose, Gillian, *Judaism and Modernity. Philosophical Essays*, xii + 297 pp., Blackwell, Oxford, 1993, £14.99 (hardback, £45.00).

Sklare, Marshall, *Observing America's Jews*, edited and with a Foreword by Jonathan D. Sarna and an Afterword by Charles S. Liebman, xv + 304 pp., published for Brandeis University Press by University Press of New England, Hanover, NH, 1993, $39.95.

Taylor, Simon *A Land of Dreams. A study of Jewish and Caribbean migrant communities in England*, xiii + 217 pp., Routledge, London, 1993, £40.00.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ALDERMAN, Geoffrey; D.Phil. Professor of Politics and Contemporary History at Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, University of London. Chief publications: *British Elections*, 1978; *The Jewish Community in British Politics*, 1983; *Pressure Groups and Government in Great Britain*, 1984; *The Federation of Synagogues*, 1987; and *London Jewry and London Politics*, 1989.

LASKIER, Michael M.; Ph.D. Executive Director of The Sephardic Educational Center and Visiting Professor of History and Islamic Culture at the University of Judaism, in Los Angeles. Chief publications: *The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Jewish Communities of Morocco: 1862–1962*, 1983; *North African Jewry in the Shadow of Vichy France and the Swastika*, 1992; *The Jews of Egypt, 1920–1970*, 1992; and *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, forthcoming in 1994.

MARKOWITZ, Fran; Ph.D. Lecturer of Anthropology in the Department of Behavioral Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Has published several articles on various aspects of the post-migration experiences of Russian-Jewish immigrants in the United States and in Israel and is the author of *A Community in Spite of Itself: Sovet Jewish Émigrés in New York*, 1993.

SHAFFIR, William; Ph.D. Professor of Sociology, McMaster University. Chief publications: *Life in a Religious Community: The Lubavitcher Chassidim in Montreal*, 1974; co-editor, *Fieldwork Experience: Qualitative Approaches to Social Research*, 1980; co-editor, *The Canadian Jewish Mosaic*, 1981; 'Ritual Evaluation of Competence: The Hidden Curriculum of Professionalization in an Innovative Medical School Program' in *Work and Occupations*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1982; and several articles on Hassidic communities.

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