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MELBOURNE JEWRY: A DIASPORA COMMUNITY WITH A VIGOROUS JEWISH IDENTITY

W. D. Rubinstein

THERE has been mounting concern about the survival of Jewish identity in the Diaspora, especially in countries with a great degree of religious tolerance and a decline in religiosity of the wider society, so that intermarriage is also increasingly tolerated. Furthermore, fertility rates have decreased below replacement levels, and secularisation or indifference to religious values have had a marked effect — apart from conversion to other religions or cults. On the other hand, a few positive trends have been identified: among some sections of the younger generation in the Diaspora, there has been a greater interest in Jewish history and identity and blatant antisemitism and discrimination have greatly diminished, while ultra-Orthodox Jewish groups have high birth rates and negligible intermarriage.[1]

Until the mid-1980s, some sociologists — notably Calvin Golscheider and Steven M. Cohen — were markedly optimistic about the long-term effects of intermarriage on American Jewry: they argued that the result was frequently demographic gain, when the Gentile spouse converted to Judaism and the children of the union were brought up as members of the Jewish faith. However, by the early 1990s, reports of recent surveys have shown rising rates of intermarriage and of assimilation to the Gentile life-style of Diaspora countries and they have alarmed even the most sanguine Jewish demographers.[2] The 1990 National Jewish Population Survey in the United States reported that 590,000 individuals who were born or raised as Jews now either adhered to another religion or had no religion.[3] Moreover, more than half of those who had married in 1985–1990 had taken a non-Jewish spouse.[4]

In Canada, where Census reports give data on religion and ethnic affiliation, it is clear that Jewish intermarriage rates have risen sharply — from only five per cent in 1951 to 22 per cent in 1984.[5] There are no

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comparable data on the intermarriage rates of Anglo-Jewry, but statistics presented by the Community Research Unit of the Board of Deputies of British Jews have shown that there is some cause for concern: male synagogue membership declined from 88,438 in 1970 to 79,388 in 1990, a decrease of more than ten per cent;[6] there has been an excess of deaths over births for at least three decades (deaths rose from an annual average of 817 in 1965–69 to 1,519 in 1990);[7] and the number of synagogue marriages has shown a sharp decrease from an annual average of 1,742 in 1971–75 to 1,098 in 1990, 1,082 in 1991, and 1,031 in 1992.[8] The number of Jews in the United Kingdom was for several years after the end of the Second World War estimated to be 450,000 in scholarly publications; but by the mid-1980s the revised total was only 330,000. Many have asserted that the decline is largely the result of a very high intermarriage rate, but such statements must be cautiously considered to be only informed guesses.[9] It is likely that studies of other Jewish groups in Western democracies would reveal in most cases significant increases in intermarriage rates, especially in the younger age cohorts, as well as fertility rates below replacement levels. The ultra-Orthodox segments are too small for their high fertility, coupled with a negligible rate of intermarriage, to have a marked countervailing effect.

The aim of the present paper is to report on a Diaspora community which exhibits an obvious Jewish dynamism and pride in Jewish identity: the Jews of Melbourne in Australia who number about 50,000 and who constitute the country's largest Jewish group. The Jews of Sydney rank second, with about 35,000, followed by about 6,000 in Perth (in Western Australia), and by smaller communities in other cities. The Federal Census of 1991 recorded 75,000 Jews in the country, but it is important to note that Australians may lawfully abstain from answering the question about religious affiliation.[10] Demographers have estimated the actual number of Jews to be nearer 100,000.

In 1966–67, the Melbourne Jewish community sponsored a survey of the city's Jewry, it was directed by Professor Ronald Taft and was based on a random sample of 640 households drawn from the Welfare Society's communal register. That register is constantly updated; while some 'fringe' or 'marginal' Jews, always difficult to identify, may have been missed, it is clear that the communal list is as comprehensive as possible. The communal register records the names of all recent Russian Jewish immigrants who were sponsored by the Welfare Society and the names of all who have ever belonged to any Jewish organization in Victoria as well as those known to have been through the initiation rite of the *bar mitzvah* or *bat mitzvah*.

Intermarriage

A survey carried out in 1991 (along the same lines as that of 1966–67 and with the same sponsors) was based on a random sample of 640 Jewish

households in Melbourne drawn from the communal register of 47,000 names.[11] Perhaps its most striking single statistic to emerge is that 91.5 per cent of respondents had Jewish spouses. This survey shows that respondents who have taken a non-Jewish spouse tend to be younger, less observant or non-religious, and with a higher standard of formal education than respondents who married a Jewish person. However, it is worth noting that the intermarriage rate in the age-group 30–39 years was 11.4 while for the older cohort (40–49 years) it was 14.4, and for the 50–59 age group 13.1. It is mainly in the two oldest cohorts that the rate of intermarriage is strikingly low: 3.5 for those aged 60–69 years and 1.9 for those aged 70 years and over.[12]

Other findings were that intermarriage was very heavily correlated with divorce and subsequent remarriage: about a third of those who had entered into more than one marriage had non-Jewish spouses in 1991, while 5.7 per cent of those married only once (the great majority of respondents) had taken a Gentile spouse. The highest intermarriage rate is found among the 41 respondents who came to Australia in 1986–1991, mainly Russian Jews: 19.5 per cent; that is more than twice the intermarriage rate of the Australian-born: 8.2 per cent. Moreover, while the strictly Orthodox reported, without exception, having Jewish spouses, the Progressive group (Reform and Liberal) had a modest rate (8.1 per cent) and the respondents stating that they were not observant ('not religious') had a rate of only 14.4 per cent.

When we come to the questions concerning education at a Jewish day school, it may surprise sociologists to note that the rates of intermarriage do not reveal a strong correlation with education at a non-Jewish day school: those who had gone to such a school had a rate of 7.2 per cent while for those who had gone to a non-Jewish day school, the rate was only 9.1 per cent. But that may be so only because most of those who had not attended a Jewish day school were members of an older age-group, a large proportion of them being refugees or Holocaust survivors. Moreover, it is likely that the general atmosphere of Melbourne Judaism, which strongly disapproves of marriage with a non-Jewish spouse, leads the community members to marry within the faith. My own personal experience is that intermarriage in Melbourne (where I lived for 16 years) is far less socially acceptable than is the case in the Jewish communities of some other English-speaking countries.[13] In virtually every case of a Melbourne resident who held a position of Jewish leadership and who had a Gentile-born spouse, the latter had converted and the children of the union were brought up as Jews. This is in sharp contrast to the United States, where there are some Jewish leaders with a Gentile spouse who did not convert to Judaism and about whom there has not been any strongly-voiced condemnation in American Jewry. I am acquainted with about 200 Melbourne Jews, but I know of only four cases of marriage with a non-Jewish spouse, where the latter did not convert and whose

children were not brought up as Jews. In the United States and in Canada, a Jewish resident with the same range of Jewish acquaintances (about 200) can usually cite quite easily dozens of such cases, especially in the younger age groups.

Fertility Rates

The female respondents (299 women aged 18 years and over) who answered the question about the number of children they had given birth to, included those who were single, married, divorced, or widowed. For any population to maintain its numbers, the mean number of children of women of reproductive years must be at least 2.1, since there is no certainty that *all* those children will themselves have children in turn. In nearly all Western nations, fertility rates nowadays are below the minimum level for replacement, while the Jewish fertility rate in these countries is generally even lower. The comprehensive 1990 survey of American Jewry — commissioned by the Graduate School of the City University of New York — found that Jewish women aged 45–49 had averaged only 1.9 children, about 10 per cent lower than the minimum needed for replacement.[14] That rate was considerably lower than that shown by a similar survey carried out in 1970–71: 2.4 children for those in that age-group and very much lower than the average for all American white women aged 45–49 in 1988.[15] The 1990 survey showed that Jewish women aged 30–39 had an average of 1.3 children while those aged 40–49 had an average of 1.75 children.[16]

The 1991 Melbourne survey revealed that women in the age group 40–49 years had an average of 2.5 children each, well above replacement level.[17] That rate is strikingly similar to that of Jewish women of European-American origin living in Israel in 1989–90: 2.45 children.[18] The Melbourne respondents in the cohort 30–39 years had a mean number of 2.2 children, just above replacement level, and it is not improbable that when their reproductive years end, they will have had more children — so that the average number could match the rate for those aged 40–49 years. The Melbourne respondents were asked to define themselves as strictly Orthodox (they numbered 19); traditional religious (103 women); Liberal/Reform (47), or 'not religious' (126). The strictly Orthodox, as expected, had the highest rate: 3.5 children on average while the 'not religious' had the lowest average: 1.6 children; but surprisingly, the rate for the traditionally religious (2.1 children) was very close to that of the Liberal/Reform group (2.0 children).

Education

Australia, like South Africa, has an extensive network of full-time Jewish day schools. The first of these, Mount Scopus College in Melbourne, was

founded in 1949; it is a modern Orthodox (but not strictly Orthodox) co-educational school with a Zionist orientation and the pupils may start at the age of five years and continue until they are eighteen. But since that school's location is in a remote suburb, other day schools were established later and there are now nine full-time Jewish day schools in the city, representing the various strands of Judaism, with four Strictly Orthodox schools, establishments for the children of Liberal or Reform Jews, and a school founded by secular Zionists. In 1993, the total enrolment in these nine schools was 5,836 full-time pupils.[19] Mount Scopus College, with about 2,300 students, is said to be the largest Jewish day school in the Diaspora. Other Australian cities also have Jewish day schools, six of these establishments in Sydney, and another three in Adelaide, Brisbane, and Perth. The total number of pupils in all Jewish day schools in Australia was 9,706 in 1993.[20]

The comparison with British Jewry is instructive: in 1990–91 the total number of children receiving a full-time education at any Jewish day school was only 12,785, although the Anglo-Jewish population is more than three times the size of Australian Jewry.[21] It should also be noted that Australian Jewish day schools charge fees which are similar to those in other Australian private schools, up to 9,000 Australian dollars for pupils in the twelfth grade.[22] Admittedly, some scholarships are readily available, while many parents make great efforts to ensure that their children are enrolled in a Jewish day school, in spite of the heavy financial burden, especially during the current recession. This is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that Australia has a free, secular state school network, apart from the well-developed range of private schools founded for Protestant and Catholic pupils. Some of these Christian religious schools — such as Melbourne Church of England Grammar School, Geelong Grammar School, and Scotch College — are prestigious institutions favoured by the upper economic strata and are largely modelled on England's famous public schools, such as Eton and Harrow.[23] Before the establishment of Jewish day schools, middle-class Jews tended to enrol their children in these Christian private schools, where there was little or no antisemitism.[24]

The data obtained from the 1991 Melbourne survey show that the large majority of the 331 school-age children of respondents were enrolled in Jewish day schools.[25] Only 8.8 per cent of Jewish children of school-age had never attended a Jewish day school, while — not surprisingly — the children of strictly Orthodox respondents had the highest rate of education in Jewish day schools. It is also remarkable that parents who described themselves as 'Jewish but not religious' stated that their children had been enrolled for some years in Jewish day schools: 44.2 had been totally educated in such schools; 39.3 per cent of the children had gone to a Jewish day school for some period of their education; and only 16.3 per cent of pupils with parents who were not

religious had never attended a Jewish day school. Well over half of the total number of 331 children (61.9 per cent) had been educated only at Jewish day schools while parents who had been pupils at a Jewish day school showed the greatest proportion of those with children who had received their total education in a Jewish day school: 81.6 per cent of the total number of such parents (125). Of those who had not themselves attended a Jewish day school (206 respondents), half of them (50 per cent exactly) had sent their children to a Jewish day school for their whole period of education.

Religious Observance

Respondents were asked to state their 'present feelings about the Jewish religion'; 43.1 per cent described themselves as 'Jewish but not religious'; 33.1 per cent as 'traditional religious'; 14.8 per cent were Liberal or Reform Jews; 6.3 per cent were 'strictly Orthodox'; under one per cent (0.8) stated that they were 'opposed to religion'; and the remaining 1.9 per cent gave various other self-descriptions which did not fall under any of the above categories of Jewish religiosity.[26] The respondents who stated that they were 'Jewish but not religious', and who were the most numerous single group, were then asked: 'How often do you attend any type of synagogue, or organized Jewish religious service?'. Only six replied 'Once or twice a year'. The majority of those who were 'Jewish but not religious' attended synagogue at least a few times a year (22 per cent said more frequently than a few times a year).[27] Since only a very small percentage of those who described themselves as 'Jewish but not religious' never went to synagogue, it seems that the respondents in that category (43.1 per cent of the total) believed that the term 'religious implied a high degree of observance of Jewish rituals and practices and perhaps strict adherence to the Jewish dietary laws and to Sabbath observance, as well as to the rule of family purity.[28]

It is clear from other answers that the majority of Melbourne Jews do in fact observe Jewish traditions: more than two-thirds of the respondents (71.4 per cent) said that they marked the Sabbath with some kind of special observance such as lighting candles: only 28.6 per cent replied that they considered the Sabbath as 'no different from any other day'.[29] Attendance at a Passover *seder* seems to be an almost universal practice: only five per cent stated that they never sat at a *seder* table.[30] On the other hand, all Melbourne Jews do not appear to regard fasting on Yom Kippur to be a most sacred obligation: only 52.5 per cent said that they fasted every year on the Day of Atonement, while 29.3 per cent replied that they 'never' observed that fast.[31] As for the dietary laws, only 6.5 per cent said they they ate 'only food that is certified kosher'.[32] Finally, three quarters of the respondents (74 per cent) said that they had placed a *mezzuzah* on their front door.[33]

We cannot easily compare the data obtained in the Melbourne survey concerning religious observance with the results of similar research carried out in other Diaspora communities, since the questionnaires and the interpretation of the replies vary appreciably. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that a survey carried out in the mid-1980s in eight American cities shows the Melbourne respondents to be much more observant about lighting Sabbath candles (63 per cent do so, in contrast to about 30 per cent of those in the American survey);[34] but 16 per cent of the Americans adhered to the dietary laws compared with 18 per cent in the Melbourne survey.[35] In England, there was a recent survey of a sample of 816 London members of the United Synagogue[36] and the findings of that survey clearly are not strictly comparable with the Melbourne study, since the latter encompassed respondents who might well not have been members of any synagogue. The United Synagogue members who replied to the questionnaire were categorized as either 'traditional' in their religious practice (67 per cent of the total) or as 'weak observers' (the remaining 23 per cent); but even those described as traditional did not all claim to attend synagogue regularly on Yom Kippur or on the Sabbath: 53 per cent said they went to synagogue 'only on Yom Kippur (or a few occasions)'; 20 per cent said that they attended the Sabbath morning service at the synagogue on most Saturdays.[37] Three-quarters (75 per cent) of the traditional group had a *mezzuzah* on all doors and an even greater proportion of them (83 per cent) lit candles every Friday evening; on the other hand, fewer than half of those labelled as weak in their religious observance in that London survey had a *mezzuzah* on all doors (47 per cent) or lit candles every Friday evening (42 per cent).[38]

Zionism and Support for Israel

The Jews of Melbourne exhibit a most pronounced Zionist fervour and support for the State of Israel. The respondents in the 1991 survey were asked: 'When international events put Israel in danger, which one of the following best describes how you feel'? and four possible answers were listed. Only a tiny proportion (2.2 per cent) replied: 'The same as if any other country was in danger'; 12 per cent said 'More concern than if it was another country'; 28 per cent replied, 'As if the danger is to myself'; and more than half (57.8 per cent) said that they felt 'special alarm because it is Israel'.[39] That pattern of response was evident in all age groups.[40] It may surprise those not familiar with manifestations of Australian Zionism to learn that nearly three-quarters of the respondents (73 per cent) had visited Israel, bearing in mind the distance between the two countries and the fact that there is no direct air link between Melbourne and the Jewish State. It was not only the older Melbourne Jews, who can be assumed to have more disposable capital than the younger age groups, who went in great numbers to visit Israel: an almost

exact proportion (72.5 per cent) of those in the age cohort 18–39 years had visited Israel.[41] However, that commitment to Israel did not imply that the respondents would be happy to make *aliyah*. In reply to the question, 'Would you like to live in Israel?', 46.2 per cent gave a 'definite yes' while 7.4 per cent gave a 'qualified yes'; the others said either 'no', or 'don't know', or they did not answer the question.[42]

Discussion

Various factors may be said to account for the vigorous Judaism and Zionism of Melbourne Jewry. There were Jews in Australia since the first European settlement in 1788 and some Jews came to Melbourne shortly after its foundation in 1835; those who settled in Australia were mainly English-speaking migrants from Britain and they encountered little antisemitism. Indeed, several of them rose to the highest positions in the country: General Sir John Monash (1865–1931) was Australia's Commander-in-Chief in the First World War while Sir Isaac Isaacs (1855–1948) was the first native-born Governor-General of Australia. However, that older generation did not establish institutions for communal survival (such as a Jewish day school system) and appeared to be in danger of heavily assimilating to the wider society.[43] But when Hitler achieved power, some 10,000 Jews came from Germany and Central Europe to seek refuge in Australia from 1933 to 1940, and they were followed after the Second World War by some 35,000–40,000 survivors or displaced persons, chiefly from Poland and Eastern Europe.[44] Then in the 1970s and 1980s, a steady stream of Jews from various other countries — chiefly from Britain, South Africa, Israel, and Soviet Russia — came to settle in Melbourne. As a result, the majority of Melbourne Jews are now foreign-born, with the Russians constituting about ten per cent of the community. According to the 1986 Census of Australia, 54.2 per cent of those Jews who replied to the optional religious question were born overseas; the self-declared total in that census was 69,088 Jews.[45]

Nearly ten per cent (9.6 per cent) of the foreign-born Jews came from Poland and a substantial proportion of them chose to settle in Melbourne, where they could join a Yiddish-speaking group who lived in Carlton, a district north of central Melbourne.[46] There are still nowadays several thousand Jews in the city whose mother tongue is Yiddish, there is a weekly Yiddish newspaper, there are radio broadcasts in Yiddish for several hours a week, and there is a Yiddish school. It is generally agreed that it is these migrants who are mainly responsible for the strong Zionist orientation of Melbourne Jewry and for promoting the network of institutions such as the Jewish day schools.[47] The great migrations of Jews fleeing Tsarist oppression ended in their settlements in the Americas, in Britain, and in several other countries, while Melbourne has now many of those who survived the Holocaust and their offspring. In the 1991

survey, 109 out of 640 respondents stated that they had lived under Nazi rule and 42 had been in a concentration camp.[48] Holocaust commemorations have large numbers of participants and it is not surprising that the survivors should strive to transmit Jewish traditions and values to their children. Some observers have commented that one can find in Melbourne a sort of pre-war Polish *shtetl* which has somehow been uprooted in time and place and deposited in the Antipodes.

On the other hand, the majority of Melbourne's Jews are not Holocaust survivors or the latter's close kindred. Even those Poles who came to Melbourne after the Second World War were not all devoutly observant Jews: many of them were adherents of the Social Democratic Bund (which is still influential in the city) and have a non-Zionist, secularist, politically progressive ideology. As for the German and Central European Jews who came to the town in the 1930s, they were frequently non-Orthodox and indeed formed the backbone of Progressive Judaism.[49] Perhaps a more important factor than the influence of the waves of migrants asserting their Judaism is the traditionalism of the community: more than 80 per cent of the respondents belong to an Orthodox synagogue.[50] This is a striking contrast to the situation in the United States, where only one-fifth of synagogue members are affiliated to an Orthodox synagogue; but it is not very different from Anglo-Jewry in this respect; in Britain in 1990, nearly 65 per cent (64.9) of male synagogue members belonged to a mainstream Orthodox synagogue (United Synagogue or Federation of Synagogues).[51] But Australia has no Chief Rabbi and although there is an Association of Orthodox Rabbis, each Orthodox synagogue is independent.

The fact that the large majority of the 1991 respondents belong to an Orthodox synagogue must be correlated with their low rate of intermarriage: 3.5 per cent;[52] and they usually send their children to Jewish day schools.[53] Indeed, even Liberal Jews and non-religious Jews in the city do not have very high rates of intermarriage and they often pay fees for their children to go to a Jewish day school. Thus, there is not in Melbourne a striking contrast between the traditionally observant Jews and the Liberal and secular groups while that contrast is very evident in the United States and in other Diaspora communities. Moreover, there does not appear to be in Melbourne a clear tendency for the younger age-group to drift away from Orthodoxy to the less strict requirements of Reform or Liberal Judaism.[54] The 1991 survey asked respondents to state whether they were 'more religious or less religious today than a few years ago'; the majority of both the Orthodox and the Progressive Jews stated that they were 'about the same or more religious today than a few years ago' and only about 13 per cent in the two groups said that they were less religious than in the past.[55]

Perhaps the most important factor in the vigorous Judaism of Melbourne Jewry is the large proportion of children who are enrolled in

full-time Jewish day schools. Of course, the strictly Orthodox are unanimous in agreeing that Jewish children 'should receive a Jewish day-school education' while not all those who are 'traditional religious' or 'Jewish but not religious' are of that opinion[56] and 29 per cent of Liberal and Reform respondents stated that they did 'not at all' think that Jewish children should receive a Jewish day school education.[57] However, there appears to be an increasing tendency for parents who had not themselves attended a Jewish day school to decide to give their children a Jewish education, even full-time.[58] Progressive Jews have their own school, King David School, which has attracted very favourable notice and which had in 1993 about 500 pupils.

Another totally different factor to be considered is the political affiliation of Melbourne Jews. Australia has two main political party groups: a right-of-centre coalition of the Liberal and National parties and the left-of-centre Australian Labor Party (ALP).[59] Surveys of political opinion carried out in 1991 have claimed that the Coalition was ahead of the ALP in popularity ratings.[60] Both political parties are friendly to Jewish interests, but the ALP has been critical of Israel's West Bank policies and it includes a minority of left-wing members who are active supporters of Palestinian Arabs. The ALP government passed a War Crimes Act to enable the prosecution of Nazi war criminals allegedly living in the country since the Second World War; but so far all attempted prosecutions under the new Act have been unsuccessful. Both major parties supported the 1991 Gulf War.

The Melbourne survey revealed that nearly 60 per cent (59.3) of the respondents were most likely to vote for the Coalition and only 22.2 per cent for the ALP.[61] Melbourne Jews now appear to be more conservative than the general Australian electorate — a startling reversal since the later 1950s, when Medding found that Melbourne Jews had a definite preference for the ALP. The present political conservatism of Melbourne Jewry is consistent with the findings of recent surveys in other countries, showing a correlation between Jewish religious Orthodoxy and right-wing preferences in the United States and in Israel.[62] However, the majority of all American Jews are believed to continue showing preference for the left-wing Democratic party, in spite of their high socio-economic status. Melbourne Jews, on the other hand, have not produced a significant left-wing activist group or a left-wing intellectual movement.[63] During the Second World War, the Melbourne community did strongly support the formation of a Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Antisemitism, which was openly left-wing; but in 1952 the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies expelled that Council for its alleged Communist activities, especially for its failure to condemn the Slansky trial in Czechoslovakia.[64] Since then, the leaders of Melbourne Jewry have adopted a conservative stance politically and they have markedly remained aloof from any 'universalistic' commitment or non-Jewish

progressive causes such as Aboriginal rights; their chief concerns have been almost entirely focused on Jewish causes and on support for Israel.[65] But in 1993, a left-wing group, the Jewish Democratic Society, was affiliated to the successor of the Board of Deputies — the Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV). It is outspoken on such matters as Aboriginal rights and for the first time in more than 40 years there is now an explicitly left-liberal Jewish group officially affiliated to the community's representative body.[66]

Melbourne Jews also tend to be conservative in their life-style. There is no organised Jewish feminist movement and there is no publicly-known Jewish homosexual group, although the latter issues have been much discussed in the *Australian Jewish News*. The large majority of single young men and women are concerned about finding a congenial spouse and establishing their own households. Local Jewish artistic and cultural associations do not exhibit an adversarial or openly rebellious stance, as is often the case in other Diaspora countries, and therefore pose no challenge to the mainstream of Melbourne Jewry. There is, moreover, only a handful of local left-wing Jewish intellectuals; most of them tend to be neo-conservatives or moderate social democrats.[67]

When we consider the position of Jewish women in Melbourne to see whether their higher rate of fertility follows the pattern common in many countries of such a higher rate being correlated with a low level of education and a markedly subordinate status in employment prospects, we have to accept that Melbourne Jewish women appear to be a notable exception to that usual pattern. Their standard of formal education is almost indistinguishable from that of their male contemporaries and their attainments are notably higher than those of the general population.[68] In the 1991 survey, 63.7 per cent of all female respondents and 67.3 per cent of the males had continued their education beyond high school[69] and 42 per cent of the women had obtained a bachelor's degree or a postgraduate qualification, compared with 49.4 per cent of the men.[70] The educational attainments of the younger age cohorts were, as one would expect, much higher than those of the respondents aged 60 and over. Among all age-groups, however, Jewish women showed levels of educational attainment higher than those of the general population.[71]

Most Melbourne Jewish women are in gainful occupations, but a higher proportion of them than is the case with Jewish men are in part-time employment. In the 1991 survey, about three-quarters of all female respondents aged under sixty were either in paid occupations or were seeking employment.[72] A third of Jewish males (33.3 per cent) and 18.3 per cent of females were earning a living in the professions, while 17.9 per cent of men and 10.1 of women held administrative or managerial positions. Only 13 per cent of all male respondents and 9.4 per cent of women were in blue-collar or 'working class' trades.[73] Clearly, then, the Jewish women of Melbourne have an educational and

employment profile which is not inferior to the profiles of women in other Western Diaspora communities, in spite of showing higher fertility rates.

On the other hand, there are few Jewish women in Melbourne who are acknowledged as respected leaders of the community, apart from the cases of those who preside in such exclusively female groups as the National Council of Jewish Women or WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organisation). There is no organized Jewish feminist society in the city; unlike the case in the United States, Australia's best-known feminists have seldom been Jewish. In the federal parliament or the state parliaments of the country, it is extremely rare to find a woman who freely admits that she is Jewish.

An important factor making for cohesion of the Jewish population of Melbourne is its concentration in one residential area of the city — the section which has been the centre of Jewish life for several decades, encompassing Caulfied, East St Kilda and Elsternwick, about six miles south of the city's central business district.[74] This is largely an upper middle-class area of detached houses and well-appointed blocks of apartments;[75] Caulfield is a very visible Jewish neighbourhood, with kasher butchers and delicatessens. Recent Russian Jewish immigrants have largely settled in or near East St. Kilda. Melbourne, like other Australian cities, is fortunate in not being blighted by decaying, crime-ridden inner-city ghettoes, from which earlier Jewish immigrants have fled, leaving behind elderly and impoverished Jews; there is no equivalent of American urban 'white flight' to remote suburbs. There is also no equivalent to the trends in the United States since the 1950s of dispersal from such major cities as New York to the West Coast or (in the case of the elderly) to Florida. The two centres of Australian Jewry have been, and seem likely to remain in the foreseeable future, Melbourne and Sydney. But it must be noted here that several thousand elderly Jews who had retired from active gainful occupations have moved to the Gold Coast, a resort area near Brisbane.

Another factor of some importance in the context of general residential stability is that Jewish students who register in colleges of further education or in universities usually attend such an institution in their home city and usually continue to live at home. Australia has only one private university, while all the others (numbering about 30) are sponsored by the federal government of the country. There are no Australian equivalents of the hundreds of liberal arts colleges in the United States, and virtually no equivalent of dormitory or fraternity living so commonly found on American campuses. Australian campuses tend to be almost deserted after dark, except for foreign and out-of state students. Consequently, student friendships and associational networks tend to have been formed in high school, reinforcing the major role played by attendance at a Jewish day school and influencing the choice of a marriage partner, while the Australian Union of Jewish Students is

very well organized and arranges a wide variety of social events and pro-Israel activities.[76]

Jewish communal organizations in Melbourne are under the umbrella of the recognized representative body, the Jewish Community Council of Victoria, which consists of about 150 delegates from affiliated associations; there are no individual members.[77] But the strictly Orthodox synagogues have remained apart from the JCCV. The Council has limited means, employs only a handful of full-time staff, and has no professional infra-structure; its role is largely limited to making statements to the press and to the state government on Jewish matters and to provide advice to its affiliated members. On the other hand, independent Jewish associations are active and remarkably efficient. There is no community-wide appeal structure for all such associations; whenever one of them wishes to launch an appeal, it is allocated one or two weeks to do so, with an exclusive right to raise funds by a combination of publicity in the weekly *Australian Jewish News*, as well as telephone and direct mail appeals, functions, etc. At other times, associations can raise funds by approaching only their own members. These Jewish organizations tend to be independent fiefdoms, often well-endowed by a core group of supporters: this is the case of the Zionist Federation of Australia (reflecting the community's commitment to Israel); the Jewish Welfare Society, the Montefiore Home for the Aged; the schools; and the synagogues.

Since the established umbrella organization, the JCCV, has little power and very limited funds, projects of community-wide interest are seldom attempted or undertaken.[78] The 1991 Jewish Community Survey took several years to organize and benefited from a substantial grant awarded by the government's Department of Ethnic Affairs; one of the reasons for this successful venture was the fact that the major co-ordinating body, the Jewish Welfare Society, is widely regarded as non-partisan. The autonomy of the individual Jewish bodies has allowed pluralism without a great deal of friction, since the JCCV does not attempt to put its stamp on the direction of Melbourne Jewry and therefore does not give rise to vociferous deviant groups.

Although there is general support for welfare associations and for the Jewish day schools and general disapproval of intermarriage and of assimilation, as well as very strong support for Israel (especially when that country's policies are condemned by the mainstream media) and although there is general distrust of eccentric or 'progressive' groups, the *Australian Jewish News* does regularly publish articles criticizing some of the leaders of Melbourne Jewry as well as articles discussing 'deviant' behaviour. That newspaper, however, has always staunchly supported the community's conservatism, and especially the Jewish day schools.[79]

The attitudes of the government of Australia and of the general public have been generally favourable to the maintenance of the Jewish population. Since the 1960s, all Australian governments have pursued a

policy of multiculturalism, which recognizes the legitimacy of foreign languages and cultures and the transmission of their values to the younger generation. Australian Jewry has been consistently regarded as a minority community and, for instance, is allocated about eight hours of broadcasting time a week on two government-funded 'ethnic' radio stations. However, it is worth noting that studies of other ethnic groups in other countries have shown that some ethnic groups which benefit from similar recognition and support nevertheless have assimilated to the maintstream society and intermarried within a short period of time — unlike Melbourne Jewry.[80]

Both the federal and the state governments provide substantial financial support for Jewish day schools and for communal welfare service organizations such as the Jewish Welfare Society. In the case of these day schools, however, the costs of providing that education are so high that, as noted above, parents have to pay very high fees; the institutions are also supported by voluntary private donations. It is relevant to note in this context that another English-speaking country, Canada, which also has a policy of multiculturalism and gives considerable government aid to ethnic groups, is apparently witnessing rates of assimilation of these groups which are far higher than is the case for Melbourne Jewry.

A brief comparison with the situation in Sydney in New South Wales shows that, on the available evidence, that city's Jews have higher rates of intermarriage. In 1981, 12.9 per cent of Jewish women and 16.8 per cent of Jewish men in New South Wales had non-Jewish spouses — while the respective percentages in Victoria were 7.2 and 8.7.[81] But even these higher rates for New South Wales are considerably lower than those estimated for some other English-speaking countries, such as the United States, Canada, and Britain. Moreover, attendance at Jewish day schools in Sydney has been increasing in recent years: from 922 pupils in 1977 to 2,430 in 1986, 3,041 in 1988 and to 3,181 in 1993.[82] Sydney in this respect is therefore apparently following Melbourne rather than showing increasing signs of assimilation.[83]

Conclusion

Some may ask whether other Jewish communities in the Diaspora, which are reputedly in danger of almost total assimilation, could benefit from a study of the factors which appear to be conducive to a strong Jewish identity and to a secure position as a minority group in a tolerant wider society. Admittedly, the case of Melbourne is in many respects not easily comparable with the situation of Jewish communities in other parts of the Diaspora; but perhaps the most important single factor which contributes to the vigour of Melbourne's Judaism is the provision of Jewish day schools with a high standard of education and the willingness of Jewish

parents to make sacrifices to pay the school fees necessary to ensure the continued success of that system of education.

NOTES

[1] For a good discussion of the issues, see Sergio Della Pergola and U. O. Schmelz, 'Demographic Transformations of American Jewry: Marriage and Mixed Marriages in the 1980s'; Calvin Goldscheider, 'American Jewish Marriages: Erosion or Transformation?' and Della Pergola and Schmelz, 'American Jewish Marriages: Transformation and Erosion — A Rejoinder to Calvin Goldscheider,' in Peter Y. Medding, ed., *Israel, State and Society 1948–1988* (Studies in Contemporary Jewry — An Annual, vol. v, Oxford, 1989).

[2] See, for instance, Daniel J. Elazar, 'American Jewry in the 1990s: Part Two — The 1990 Demographic Study: Some Good News, Much Bad News', *Jerusalem Letter* (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs), 15 January 1991; 'America's Vanishing Jews', *The Jerusalem Report*, 5 November 1992.

[3] Elazar, ibid., p. 2.

[4] Sidney Goldstein, 'Profile of American Jewry: Insights From the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey', in David Singer, ed., *American Jewish Year Book 1992* (New York, 1992), p. 126.

[5] Robert J. Brym, 'The Rise and Decline of Canadian Jewry? A Socio-Demographic Profile', in Robert J. Brym, William Shaffir, and Morton Weidenfeld, eds., *The Jews in Canada* (Toronto, 1993), Table 8, p. 30. In 1984, 26 per cent of Canadian Jewish men and 22 per cent of women had non-Jewish spouses: ibid.

[6] Marlena Schmool and Frances Cohen, *British Synagogue Membership in 1990* (Community Research Unit, Board of Deputies of British Jews, London, 1991, p. 22. There was, however, a very slight rise of 489 between 1983 and 1990 (ibid.). I am most grateful to Mrs Schmool for this and other data on Britain.

[7] 'Report of Vital Statistics for 1992', Community Research Unit, Board of Deputies of British Jews, Table 5. Very precise statistics for these characteristics are available from comprehensive reporting of Jewish funerals and of *brit milah*, extrapolated for the male : female birth ratio. It should be noted that the excess of deaths over births declined to 1004 in 1991 (ibid.).

[8] Table 'Synagogue Marriages in Great Britain, Annual Averages 1971–1990, Annual Totals, 1986–1990', provided by the Board of Deputies, with handwritten additions for 1991 and 1992.

[9] Geoffrey Alderman, *Modern British Jewry* (Oxford, 1992), Table 7.1, p. 323. It would be more precise to ascribe this decline to the replacement of the very large families typical of pre-1914 Jewry with the much smaller families typical of the middle-class, 'acculturated' community which arose after 1918 than to other factors.

[10] Australian censuses, conducted every five years, ask an *optional* question about religious affiliation. About 25 per cent of the total population do not answer this question or give 'no religion' as their response.

[11] The comprehensive report on this survey is John Goldlust, *The Jews of Melbourne–A Community Profile: A Report of the Findings of the Jewish Community Survey, 1991* (Jewish Welfare Society, Melbourne, 1993) — henceforth,

Profile). Pages 1–15 of the *Profile* discuss the survey's methodology, which is very similar to that adopted elsewhere.

[12] Ibid., p. 93. Questions 48 and 54. The 'missing cases' constitute 7.4 per cent and, according to the report, the data combine two survey questions, one asked of respondents who have been married once and the other of those married more than once.

[13] I was born and educated in the United States and also lived for some years in London.

[14] Sidney Goldstein, op. cit. in Note 4 above, p. 122, and Table 18, p. 169.

[15] Ibid., p. 122.

[16] Ibid., Table 18, p. 109.

[17] It is not possible to provide data for five-year cohorts. Since some women in their forties may continue to bear children, this figure of 2.5 children per woman is an *understatement* of the likely final number.

[18] 'Population Trends and Policies in Israel', in Sergio Della Pergola and Leah Cohen, eds., *World Jewish Population: Trends and Policies* (Jewish Population Studies No. 23, Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Jerusalem, 1992), Table 1, p. 256.

[19] Figures supplied by the Australian Co-ordinating Committee of Jewish Day Schools.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Jewish Educational Development Trust [London], *Securing Our Future: An Inquiry into Jewish Education in the United Kingdom* (*c.* 1992), Table 2, p. 7.

[22] Or about U.S. $6,000.

[23] Among the alumni of Geelong Grammar School, for instance, are Prince Charles (who attended its 'Timbertop' branch for a few months) and Rupert Murdoch. The headmaster of Geelong Grammar School, John Lewis, was recently appointed headmaster of Eton.

[24] On the history and evolution of the Jewish day school system, see W. D. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History, Volume 2: 1945–Present* (Melbourne, 1991), pp. 211–54.

[25] *Profile*, op. cit. in Note 11 above, Tables V3 and V4, pp. 174–57.

[26] Ibid., Q. 63, p. 122.

[27] Ibid., Q. 66A, p. 126.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., Table R4, p. 126.

[30] Ibid., Q. 68, p. 130.

[31] Ibid., Q. 69, p. 130.

[32] Ibid., Q. 70, p. 130.

[33] Ibid., Q. 71, p. 130.

[34] Sylvia Black Fishman, *Learning About Learning: Insights on Contemporary Jewish Education From Jewish Population Studies: Research Report 2* (Cohen Centre for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass., December 1987) figure 2, p. 14. The cities are Baltimore; Metro Park, N.J.; Atlantic City; Rochester; Worcester, Mass; Kansas City; St. Louis; Washington, D.C.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Stanley Kalms, Chairman, *United Synagogue Review: A Time for Change* (London, n.d., *c.* 1992), Quantitative Research (Questionnaires), pp. 240–61.

[37] Ibid., p. 245.
[38] Ibid., p. 241.
[39] *Profile*, op. cit. in Note 11 above, Q. 84, p. 158.
[40] For instance, among those aged between 18 and 39, 2.4 per cent stated that they felt 'the same as if any other country was in danger', while among those aged 40–59, the result was 2.3 per cent; and for the oldest group, aged 60 and over, 2.0 per cent (ibid., Table U1, p. 60).
[41] Ibid., Table U2, p. 161.
[42] Ibid., Table U1, p. 160. Unfortunately, these responses are not disaggregated in any table.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Rubinstein, op. cit. in Note 24 above, p. 92.
[45] Ibid., pp. 67–69.
[46] Ibid., Table 2.2, p. 87.
[47] See, for instance, Peter Y. Medding, *From Assimilation to Group Survival* (Melbourne, 1968), and W. D. Rubinstein, 'The Revolution of 1942–44: The Transformation of the Australian Jewish Community' in *Journal of The Australian Jewish Historical Society*, vol. XI, Part 1, November 1990.
[48] *Profile*, op. cit. in Note 11 above, Q 110 A, p. 206.
[49] Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*, Oxford, 1988, pp. 342–43; Rubinstein, ibid., pp. 184–92. Among 90 Progressive Jews in Melbourne surveyed in 1967 by Medding, 31 per cent were born in Germany or Austria; among 312 Orthodox Jews, only 8 per cent were born in Germany or Austria: Peter Y. Medding, 'Orthodoxy, Liberalism and Secularism in Melbourne Jewry', in Medding, ed., *Jews in Australian Society*, Melbourne, 1973, p. 44. In the 1991 *Profile*, 67.5 per cent of the 27 respondents born in Germany or Austria belonged to a Liberal synagogue, a much higher percentage than any other national group: Table R6, p. 128.
[50] *Profile*, op. cit. in Note 11 above, Table Q 66B, p. 128. There are no Conservative synagogues in Australia; while some old-established Anglo-Orthodox synagogues are similar in ambience to American Conservative *shuls*, the Conservative movement as such has never taken root in Australia.
[51] Marlena Schmool and Frances Cohen, op. cit. in Note 6 above, Table 3.3, p. 23.
[52] *Profile*, op cit. in Note 11 above, Table N3, p. 94.
[53] Ibid., pp. 97 and 714. But — as noted above — Liberal/Reform respondents have an even lower rate of cases than Orthodox Jews where no child is educated at a Jewish day school.
[54] There has, however, been some intergenerational drift toward Reform/Liberalism. Asked to give the 'religiosity of the home' in which the respondent 'grew up', 12.4 per cent replied 'Strictly Orthodox', 41.5 per cent, 'Traditional Religious', 10.2 per cent, 'Liberal/Reform', and 30.2 per cent 'Jewish but not Religious'. The present self-descriptions are 'Strictly Orthodox' 6.3 per cent; 'Traditional Religious' 33.1 per cent, 'Liberal/Reform' 14.8 per cent; 'Jewish But Not Religious' 43.1 per cent (*Profile*, Table R3, p. 125). The highest percentages of 'Strictly Religious' were found among those of Polish and other Central European parentage, where this might well have meant something quite different from the case in Australia

generally. Current synagogue preference also indicates higher Orthodox affiliation at present.

[55] *Profile.*, Q. 64 and Table R2, p. 124.

[56] *Profile.*, Table VI, p. 169.

[57] Ibid.

[58] *Profile*, Table V3, p. 174.

[59] Although called the 'Liberal' party, this is actually a right-of-centre conservative party similar to the Republicans in the USA or the Tories in England. The National party is a rural-based party, often further to the right than the Liberals. The two parties invariably work together at the federal level and are known as the 'Coalition'.

[60] However, the Coalition most unexpectedly failed to win the March 1993 General Election, chiefly owing to its advocacy of a highly unpopular sales tax (Australia currently has no sales tax). In the end, the ALP won about 51.5 per cent and the Coalition 48.5 per cent of the two-party vote.

[61] *Profile*, Tables Q 77a and b, p. 153. Of the remainder, 3.7 per cent were most likely to vote for the Democrats (a third party), 3 per cent for other parties; 2.7 per cent informal (i.e. spoiled ballot); and 9.2 per cent 'Don't know/no response'.

[62] Rubinstein, op cit., p. 34, citing Medding, *From Asimilation to Group Survival, op. cit.*, p. 238.

[63] See, e.g. W.D. Rubinstein, *The Left, the Right, and the Jews* London, 1982, pp. 136–179.

[64] Rubinstein, *Jews in Australia*, op. cit. in Note 24 above, pp. 1–21.

[65] Ibid., pp. 401–410.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Rubinstein, op. cit., p. 116.

[68] *Profile*, Table W1, p. 178.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] In 1976 Jewish women in Victoria were seven times more likely than women in the general population to hold a degree higher than a B.A. (Rubinstein, op. cit. in Note 24 above, p. 116).

[72] Among 18–39 year old respondents, 57.1 per cent of men and 29.9 per cent of women were employed full-time in 1991; 17.8 per cent of men and 30.6 per cent of women were employed part-time. A further 13 per cent of men and 22.8 per cent of women aged 18–39 reported that they were 'not in the labour force'. *Profile*, Table X4, p. 193. Among respondents aged 40–59, 86.1 per cent of men but only 28.9 per cent of women were employed full-time; 3.7 per cent of men and 37.4 per cent of women were employed part-time; and 0.9 per cent of men and 24.3 per cent of women were 'not in the labour force' (ibid).

[73] *Profile.*, Table X6, p. 195. Most of the remainder (26.5 per cent of men and 21 per cent of women) were in clerical services and in sales.

[74] Before the 1950s, many Yiddish-speaking Jews lived in Carlton, a working-class district north of Melbourne city centre. That community moved *en bloc* to Caulfield/East St Kilda after about 1950, and little trace remains of it.

[75] 67.7 per cent of respondents lived in a detached house while only 14.1 per cent were in a flat (apartment): *Profile*, Table I.V., p. 198).

[76] A first-degree course in America lasts for three years (as it does in Britain), not four years; but there is an optional fourth year for the ablest students. There are no post-B.A. professional degrees in Australia: one is normally admitted, at the age of eighteen, to undertake a degree in law, medicine, or business studies, rather than proceeding to e.g. a 'law school' after a first degree.

[77] It was known as the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies until it changed its name in 1989. There is also a national Australian Jewish representative body, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ).

[78] The 1991 Jewish Community Survey, reported upon here, was an almost unique example of a project directly funded by 20 separate local organizations.

[79] It carries a 'Jewish singles' page in every issue, where unmarried Jews can learn of social events to find partners. The plight of Jewish singles is high on its agenda, the underlying message being that conventional Jewish marriage is the best and normal outcome.

[80] See, for instance, Michael Cigler, *The Czechs in Australia* (Melbourne, 1985), for an account of particularly rapid assimilation and loss of cultural identity by a central European group.

[81] Rubinstein, op. cit. in Note 24 above, p. 94, Table 2.3.

[82] Ibid., p. 238.

[83] The two cities are often said to be very different in atmosphere with Sydney more 'hedonistic' than Melbourne.

JEWS IN THE BRITISH ARMY IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Harold Pollins

HISTORIANS and sociologists are usually keen to find and analyse lists of people, especially when other data — occupations or family structure, for example — are also included. One such source for Anglo-Jewry is *British Jewry Book of Honour*, published in 1922 and edited by Michael Adler, who had been senior Jewish chaplain in the British army in the First World War. It was published as a record of the contribution of the Jews of Britain and of the Empire and Commonwealth during 1914–18.

The bulk of this large book does indeed consist of lists. It includes a Roll of Honour (RH), an alphabetical list of the dead, citing officers first, and giving regimental numbers (for other ranks), units, dates of death, and addresses. There is a section for those who gained honours and awards, in some cases with official descriptions of the actions which merited the award. Much of the book consists of Nominal Rolls (NR) of those who served in the various regiments and corps, with separate entries for the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force, and for units from various territories of the British Empire — Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa as well as the West Indies and India. Those who died are indicated by an asterisk. The last part of the book contains photographs of many of the dead and of the survivors, as well as of gravestones (often temporary wartime ones), and of post-war memorials in a number of institutions — such as synagogues, Jewish schools, and youth clubs.

Although *British Jewry Book of Honour* (*BJBH*) is a well-known document, as far as I know very little use has been made of it. While there is quite a literature on Anglo-Jewry in the war period, the main emphasis has been on the reluctance of Russian-born Jews to join the British forces who were fighting as allies of Tsarist Russia. On the other hand, it has often been noted that the proportion of Jews in Britain who served in the armed forces was higher than the percentage of troops in the country's general population. The section 'Jews at war 1914–18' in David Englander's collection of documents illustrating Anglo-Jewish history

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cites the *BJBH*.[1] Sharman Kadish's history of the Jewish Lads' & Girls' Brigade also refers to that publication, since it has been estimated that more than a quarter of all the Jewish war dead (on the usually-quoted figure of just under 2,000) had been in that organization.[2] *BJBH*'s statistics on the deceased former pupils of some Jewish schools are sometimes quoted, as in Gerry Black's study of West London.[3] These are only brief references and I have come across only two extensive uses of the *BJBH*. The first is by Paul Emden in his *The Jews of Britain: A Series of Biographies*, essentially a summary of some of the salient points;[4] the second is an analysis by Kosmin *et al.* of the statistics of the dead which the authors used to throw light on Anglo-Jewish social stratification and geographical distribution during the war.[5]

This latter article is a substantial and important piece. It shows that most of the commissioned officers came from the established, anglicized Anglo-Jewish families who mainly lived in more salubrious parts of towns and cities. Few of the children of the recent — mainly Eastern European — immigrants were commissioned. The authors calculate that there were 1,941 dead with addresses in the United Kingdom and give their geographical areas — towns or sometimes counties. Their aim was to use those statistics, involving a weighted formula — to allow for the higher proportion of deceased Jewish officers than of other ranks — in order to provide estimates of Jewish populations for towns and cities (in the case of London, for different parts of London) or for wider areas where Jewish populations were small, such as 'Western counties'. They compare these estimates with those published for Jewish communities in the *Jewish Year Book* of 1916 and draw attention to the fact that some of their estimates are remarkably close to those of the *Year Book* while others are vastly different. They also suggest reasons for the discrepancies.

Their exercise depends on the validity of the raw material. How accurate is *BJBH*? Its compilers thought that they had probably omitted a further ten per cent of Jewish war dead. Kenneth E. Collins has criticised the article by Kosmin *et al.*, arguing that their figure of 47 Glasgow deaths is much too low; he gives a list of 86 Jewish Glaswegians who died.[6] Another example is that whereas the article's authors state that the defunct community of Falmouth suffered three deaths, the 400-strong — largely British-born — community of Plymouth had none; but Bernard Susser gives the names of two Plymouth Jews who died.[7] Neither man figures in Adler's Roll of Honour. One reads in various sources of casualty numbers for particular places which do not agree with those in Kosmin *et al.*, although it may be that some of the men had been included (as members of congregations) while resident elsewhere. Thus the memorial tablet in an Edinburgh synagogue contained 21 names (Kosmin *et al.* give 18); there were nine names on the memorial in Nottingham's synagogue (Kosmin *et al.* give six), and a Leeds newspaper of September 1918 said that 'some 97 men and 1 officer' (who were

Jewish) had so far died during the war (Kosmin *et al.* give 90 plus 1 officer).[8]

Furthermore *BJBH* is not only incomplete but also inaccurate. In such a large compilation there are inevitably typographical mistakes — my father's name is wrongly spelled, for example, but there are more serious errors: one address is given as in Jesmond, Sunderland, when it should have been Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and another is said to be 'Redeath by Sea, England', but there is no such place. One deceased soldier (Rifleman Solomons of the 1st Bn, Rifle Brigade) is listed twice (as 5/8830 I. Solomons and 8830 J. Solomons [Knowles]), one with an address in the East End of London, another in the West End, but both with the same date of death. Some of the names on the photographs of memorials in the book's pages of illustrations are not found among the list of the dead.[9]

There are also numerous mistakes in the regimental Nominal Rolls. Most of the lists are not in alphabetical order and, possibly for that reason, quite a number of names are duplicated, even on the same page. On the other hand, one learns later that there were other men who had served in the war and survived — for example, in recent obituary notices in the *Jewish Chronicle* — but they are not in the Nominal Rolls.[10]

I

The object of this paper is primarily to attempt to discover whether in fact there has been an under-estimate of the number of British Jews who died while in the armed forces during the First World War. The main discussion concerns the sources available for this purpose and their reliability. Moreover, an examination of these sources could also throw light on other aspects of Anglo-Jewry in the early part of the twentieth century. The following are some of the possible sources:

1. *The Jewish press.* This is the most comprehensive source, but the data have to be used with care. The *Jewish Chronicle* appeared weekly along with its sister paper the *Jewish World.* The information in both was essentially the same but the latter contained more photographs. For the first year or so of the war, there were lists of all serving men. No doubt they were the source of the oft-quoted figure that before conscription was introduced in January 1916, a total of some 10,000 had volunteered to serve.[11] These lists are useful for confirming that a particular man was in the armed forces and also a Jew. But two points must be made. One early list evoked denials from two named officers: Lt Commander H.D. Warburg stated that he was not of Jewish descent while Lt F.L. Mond was a member of the Church of England. The *Jewish Chronicle* responded that the former's name had appeared for many years in the *Jewish Year Book* and defended the basic accuracy of the list, the names having come

from the Jewish chaplain or from the serving men themselves.[12] Later in the war, Jewish chaplains automatically received lists of men recorded as Jews who came into their jurisdiction.

The main data in the newspapers, apart from those lists, are as follows:

a. Virtually every week during the war, and for some time into 1919, they published the names of those who were killed, died of wounds, died on active service (for example, from sickness); those missing in action; and prisoners of war. Where necessary, corrections were published (previously missing now known to be killed, or died, or prisoner, or returned safely). In the first part of the war the information reaching the papers was somewhat chaotic, no doubt reflecting both the situation at the front and the absence of a Jewish chaplain in France. As a result, during those early months these papers often selected 'Jewish' names from the official casualty lists. These will be considered below.

b. There were news items of soldiers' funerals and lists of graves.

c. Some names were accompanied by potted biographies, or by formal tributes or reports of memorial services, describing the man's history and regretting lost potentialities. There were letters from army colleagues and occasionally copies of letters written by the deceased.

d. Families published notices of death and, on anniversaries, in memoriam notices. The latter continued to appear well after the end of the war.

A study of the newspapers thus produces a long list of men reported as dead; most of the names confirm those in the Roll of Honour although some others do not appear in it. But the newspaper material is a major first step in the attempt to find the Jewish war dead who were not listed in *BJBH*. It is odd, though, that the compilers of *BJBH* omitted so many names of the dead which appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* and were unequivocally valid entries — for example, references to graves, or tributes. One would have thought that the newspapers would have been the first source to be looked at.

2. Other names are provided by a variety of other sources. There are memorials in many synagogues and in some cemeteries. The prayer-room at Marlow Road cemetery (London Borough of Newham) contains plaques citing the names of members of the United Synagogue who had been in the armed forces and who had died during the war. Sometimes histories of Jewish communities list names, as do histories of institutions. Apart from the studies by Bernard Susser and Kenneth Collins, mentioned above, there is a 1981 publication by Lewis Olsover and a history of the Norwood Orphanage which appeared in 1995.[13]

Thus one can discover many names of deceased servicemen who are not cited in the Roll of Honour. They can be checked against other publications.

3. *The officially-published lists of the dead.* These are an obvious source.

a. They were first published in 1919 by the War Office as *Officers Died in The Great War* — reprinted with additions in 1988 (*ODGW*) — and as *Soldiers Died in The Great War* — first published in 1920–21 and reprinted in 1988.[14] The latter appeared in 80 separate parts, most of the individual parts listing the dead in a particular regiment or corps. Nothing comparable was published at the time for the Royal Air Force (or its predecessor, the Royal Flying Corps) or for the Royal Navy but there have been recent publications, such as H. J. Williamson on the RAF, which, although not under official sponsorship, can help to fill the gap.[15]

Soldiers Died in the Great War (*SDGW*) gives a great deal of information, but not all the entries contain the full complement of date of death, where died (Home, France & Flanders, Salonika, etc.) and cause of death. Many entries give place of birth as well as place of enlistment and of residence. Where appropriate, there are details of former units, including regimental numbers (useful for checking purposes).

A perusal of these two official publications confirms that most of the entries in the Roll of Honour in Adler's *British Jewry Book of Honour* are valid but there are three sets of differences:

1. The names of some Jewish dead are missing from them, even those referring to men whose grave or funeral, or some other solid evidence, is elsewhere recorded. Clearly *ODGW* and *SDGW* are incomplete and other sources (to be mentioned below) often provide the necessary confirmation.
2. On the other hand, these official publications cite many names, mentioned as dead in Jewish sources, but which do not appear in the Roll of Honour. They account for some of the dead missing from the RH.
3. Moreover, in going through *ODGW* and *SDGW* one comes across other, new 'Jewish' names — not found in RH or even in the other Jewish sources, such as newspapers. However, a large proportion of those names can be included in our search because they are printed in the Nominal Rolls in *BJBH*, and their inclusion there confirms that they were Jews. They are usually shown in NR as not deceased.[16]

It is worth emphasizing that the official lists are by no means complete or accurate; this is not surprising in view of the very large numbers involved. There are inaccuracies in the dates of death (not relevant for this present study but important if one was examining that aspect; also many dates in the entries in the Roll of Honour are wrong). For example: one of the first Jewish officers to be killed in action was Captain CDW Bamberger of the Royal Engineers who died before the end of 1914; there is a picture of his grave with the date in the illustrations section of *BJBH* and his death was recorded in the *Jewish Chronicle* in January 1915. *ODGW*, however, gives the date of death as December 1917.[17]

b. *The Office of Population Censuses and Surveys* preserves manuscript volumes of lists of deaths in the war: 'Index to War Deaths 1914–1921 (Army Other Ranks)', 'Index to War Deaths 1914–1921 (Army Officers)' (IWD), and 'Index to Marine Deaths 1912–1918'. These are normally in alphabetical order and thus useful where the only previous information is a name without any indication of arm of service. The entries in the volumes of the IWD give number, name, regiment, year of death and reference number of the death certificate. Once again one finds previously unknown 'Jewish' names, some of which are confirmed from their inclusion in the Nominal Rolls of *British Jewry Book of Honour.*

These lists are also known to be incomplete but they contain names which are not in the official lists — (as well as omitting names listed in *ODGW* and *SDGW*).

c. *Other Sources.* Individual regiments sometimes published lists of the dead, as did several towns. In some cases, a name cited there does not appear in such official publications as *Officers Died in the Great War, Soldiers Died in the Great War* or 'Index to War Deaths'. The Commonwealth Graves Commission is another source and the Public Record Office has much information.[18]

II

Discussion

Most of these names are anonymous, mere entries in lists, with no other accompanying data. Selecting the 'new' names on the basis of a 'Jewish' name, if they are not in the Nominal Roll, can be unreliable, since they may refer to non-Jewish Germans who had settled in Britain — some surnames end in -berger, and there are Mayers and Meyers. Biblical names are commonly those of members of Nonconformist sects. Judgements have to be made. One who was probably a Jew was 681563 Private Garshum Sckkool (*sic*) 22 (County of London) Bn (The Queen's) London Regt., date of death 2 September 1918. He is found in *Soldiers Died in the Great War*[19]; his name seems wrongly spelled yet his surname is spelled the same way in 'Index to War Deaths'. The forename (Gershon?) suggests that he was a Jew and his birthplace (Russia) and his residence (Commercial Road, Stepney, in the Jewish East End of London) almost certainly confirm it. But the case of 26830 A/RSM James Welton 4 Bn South Wales Borderers who died 15 February 1917 is more doubtful. *SDGW* gives him alternative names, following 'Welton, James' with 'alias Solomon Saul'. He was born in Bethnal Green (also in the East End of London), but was a resident of Plymouth.[20] This could mean that he was born a Jew and changed his name, a not uncommon occurrence; Adler's lists in *British Jewry Book of Honour* contain a number of such examples, as does the *Jewish Chronicle* — both the original and the later names being

given. However, it is safer to consider him as a 'doubtful' case of Jewish identity.

Place of residence can be an important indicator. As noted above, in the early years of the war the *Jewish Chronicle* printed not only the list of those known to be Jews, but also the names of dead soldiers purely on the basis of their names being 'Jewish'. Thus it listed men named Abrahams, Barnett, Hyams, Jacobs, Lyons, Moses, Phillips, Samuels, Simons, and Woolf. None of these is a uniquely Jewish name. The *Jewish Chronicle* lists also included an Emery, a Miles, and a Rintoul. Most were neither in Adler's Roll of Honour nor in the Nominal Rolls. Almost all lived in parts of the country which were often remote and rural and which had no Jewish communities. They include men born in Mortonhampstead, Devon; Cannington, Somerset; Coombe Basset, Wiltshire; Newport, Isle of Wight; Argyllshire; and Skirbeck, Lincolnshire.

Since there is no confirming evidence about their identity, it is safe to omit these from any search for the missing ten per cent even though a number of men who lived in such 'unusual' places are correctly included because of confirmating evidence. One came from Cinderford, Gloucestershire. Another was a Russian-born soldier who lived in the small village of Tideswell in Derbyshire. Two brothers were from Cromer, Norfolk, but it is known that their family were members of the Norwich Jewish Community.[21]

III

Findings

The initial purpose of the exercise was to try to discover the names of those omitted from the list of Jewish war dead in *British Jewry Book of Honour*. As a result of these various searches, I have found the following.

a. Unequivocal Additions. These amount to 40 officers and 172 other ranks. They are men whose names were in the Jewish newspapers or some other Jewish source, were not in the Roll of Honour but were often in the Nominal Rolls, and were cited in the official lists of war dead, in the 'Index to War Deaths', or in sources such as Williamson on the RAF or in regimental histories.

b. Possible Additions. Another 104 names (including those of two women) come from some Jewish source, such as memorials or Jewish newspapers, often with confirmation of their deaths; but they have not been located in the Nominal Rolls, or in the official publications about the officers and other ranks who died in the war (*ODGW* and *SDGW*) or in 'Index to War Deaths'. In most cases we only have a name, with no indication of service unit, and it is possible that some had changed their names and had already been included in one or other of the various lists.[22]

c. Probable Additions. There were 20 officers and 160 other ranks whose names were in *ODGW*, *SDGW*, and IWD but with no confirming evidence from a Jewish source. Their names and addresses suggest that they were probably Jews.

d. Doubtful Additions. There were 19 officers and 89 other ranks in *ODGW*, *SDGW*, or IWD whose names together with addresses might suggest that they were Jews. They were not found in any Jewish source and their names were not unequivocally Jewish. Some were biblical and others were central European and their owners perhaps were from non-Jewish families of foreign origin. I have also not included the men mentioned above who were listed in the *Jewish Chronicle* in the initial months of the war but who proved to live in parts of the country with no known Jewish community.

It will be evident that the allocation of names in groups (c) and (d) is somewhat arbitrary, a matter of judgement. However, there are 212 extra names of men who were undoubtedly Jewish, an addition of just over 10 per cent, while at most those in all four groups, 604, account for about another 30 per cent. The most likely increase is of the first two groups amounting to 316 (212 + 104), about 16 per cent more. Somewhat less likely is a total of the first three groups, 496, just below 25 per cent. It is also worth pointing out that this is not the end of the story, since new names are found from time to time.

IV

Conclusion

The data for many of the other ranks about place of birth and residence provide extra information but may also confuse the picture. It is clear, as Kosmin *et al.* recognised, that some of the addresses given in the Roll of Honour were probably temporary wartime ones. Thus *SDGW* gives Oxford as a residence instead of London for one man (thus raising that town's total by 50 per cent., from two to three Jewish war dead). *SDGW* also gives Leeds as the residence of five men, for whom the Roll of Honour gives other places of residence. Moreover, among the unequivocal additions to the Roll of Honour ten men are shown as living in Leeds. There are similar examples for other towns. These are minimal numbers, since very many entries in *SDGW* had no residence details and to them must be added those who cannot be found in *ODGW* or *SDGW*. Sometimes we only have a name which cannot be discovered in any lists consulted but there may be an address, as in a notice of death of a soldier inserted in a Jewish publication by his kin. One, for example, was married to the daughter of a well-known Jewish family of Plymouth;[23] he is one of the 104 'possible additions' noted above.

Particularly interesting is the information concerning birthplace about many of those listed in *SDGW*. Leeds again is a good example because it

had a large number of Russian-born Jews, who were at the centre of accusations about evasion of military service. *SDGW* gives Leeds as the birthplace of 20 men whose address in RH is elsewhere. Of the unequivocally additional names, a further 11 were born in Leeds. Quite clearly — provided the *SDGW* details are correct (and again these are minimal numbers) — there is much scope here for studies of Jewish migration within the United Kingdom.[24]

NOTES

[1] David Englander, *A Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain, 1840–1920*, Leicester, London, and New York, 1994, pp. 313–53.

[2] Sharman Kadish, *'A Good Jew and a Good Englishman': The Jewish Lads' & Girls' Brigade 1895–1995*, London, 1995, p. 55. The figures given here are 525 out of 1,949.

[3] Gerry Black, *Living Up West: Jewish Life in London's West End*, London, 1994, p. 238.

[4] Paul Emden, *Jews of Britain: A Series of Biographies*, London, 1944, pp. 445–57.

[5] Barry A. Kosmin, Stanley Waterman, and Nigel Grizzard, 'The Jewish Dead in the Great War as an Indicator for the Location, Size and Social Structure of Anglo-Jewry in 1914', *Immigrants and Minorities*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1986, pp. 181–92.

[6] Kenneth E. Collins, *Second City Jewry: the Jews of Glasgow in the Age of Expansion, 1790–1919*, Glasgow, 1990, p. 190. The list of names is on page 227. Kosmin *et al.* stated that 46 from Glasgow died, not 47.

[7] Bernard Susser, *The Jews of South-West England. The Rise and Decline of their Medieval and Modern Communities*, Exeter, 1993, p. 255.

[8] For Edinburgh, *Jewish Chronicle* (*JC*), 17 March 1922, p. 32; for Nottingham, *JC*, 28.9.1923, p. 25; for Leeds, *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 24 September 1918, quoted in Nigel Grizzard, *Leeds Jewry and the Great War 1914–1918*, Leeds, 1981, p. 13.

[9] There are two other possible errors in the Roll of Honour; at any rate they are curiosities. It lists Second Lieutenant M.G. Selby, Artists' Rifles and Essex Regt., date of death 27 September 1918 and his residence is given as a hotel in West London. There is a photograph of him, in memoriam, in the illustrations section of *BJBH* but he is not in *ODGW*. The *Jewish Chronicle* (25 December 1918, p. 2) printed a notice of the death on the same day, 27.9.1918, of Private Michael George Selby, with an address in East London. A subsequent entry in the *JC* (13 December 1918, p. 13) gives also his number, rank, and regiment (London Regt.). He is not in the Roll of Honour but he is in the Nominal Roll, p. 485, shown as dead and he is listed in *SDGW*, Part 76, section 11, p. 17: 28th (County of London) Bn (London Regt.) [Artists' Rifles]. This is an odd coincidence of two men of different rank with the same name, in the same regiment, dying on the same day. The other case of a possible error concerns two men listed in the Roll of Honour whose date of death is the same, 16 May 1917, with the same address in London's East End, and the same regiment, 3rd Bn London Regt. (Royal Fusiliers). They are 251374 Corporal S. Lane and 3790 Private S. Marks.

The *Jewish Chronicle* (28.3.1919, p. 14) prints an entry for the death of 3790 Private S. Marks (Lane), London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers). Despite the different regimental numbers and ranks, this looks like a duplication. However, the *JC* of 8.6.1917, p. 15, mentions the death of Corporal L. Chapkofsky (known as Lane), London Regt. I have been unable to resolve this conundrum.

[10] Two examples from among many. Lt A.R.Z. Jessel of Oxford was commissioned in the Northamptonshire Regiment but is not shown in that regiment's Nominal Roll. There are many references to his army service in *The Lily* [Magazine of Magdalen College School, Oxford], e.g. vol. XI, no. 1, March 1915, p. 4; vol. XI, no. 8, July 1916, p. 98; vol. XI, no. 15, December 1917, in 'Roll of Honour. December 1917', where he is described as 'invalided'. He died soon after the war. Private C. D. Greensweig is listed as serving in the Gloucestershire Regiment in 'Men serving 1914–1915 in Navy, Regular Army, Auxiliary Forces and Kitchener's Army', *The Stroud District and Its Part in the Great War 1914–1919*, Stroud, 1919, p. 139. [Stroud Public Library]. He is not in NR. He was presumably a member of one of the two Greensweig families which had lived in Stroud.

[11] The figure of 10,000 Jewish recruits, before conscription was instituted by the Military Service Act of January 1916, is often quoted. It was first put forward by Michael Adler as early as March 1915, nine months before the introduction of conscription (*JC*, 19 March 1915, pp. 24–25.) In an interview, he claimed that the number of Jews in the army was 'much larger than we ever dreamed of'. He had met 400 but more than one-third were not in the lists published by the newspapers. He said, 'I am more convinced than ever before that the estimate of 10,000 Jews in the Army is far below the truth.' He stated that many Jews declared they were Christians when they joined the army.

[12] The first list of serving men was published in the *Jewish Chronicle*, 18 September 1914, pp. 19–25. The complaints of Warburg and Mond, followed by the newspaper's response, appeared the following week on 25 September 1914, p. 13.

[13] Lewis Olsover, *The Jewish Communities of North-East England 1755–1980*, Gateshead, 1981, 'Roll of Honour' p. 163; *What About The Children? 200 Years of Norwood Child Care 1795–1995*, London, 1995, p. 46, illustration of memorial plaque. See also Henry Levine, *The Norwich Hebrew Congregation 1840–1960: A Short History*, Norwich, 1961, pp. 27–28. He lists seven dead, of whom one is not in RH. He omits Lt L.A. Soman, not in RH but listed in the *Jewish Chronicle* (30 March 1917, pp. 15, 17) and *ODGW*. Kosmin *et al.* give four dead for the county of Norfolk.

[14] I refer to these two publications as 'official', since they were first issued by the War Office — although the 1988 versions were produced by a commercial publisher.

[15] H. J. Williamson, *The Roll of Honour. Royal Flying Corps and Royal Air Force for the Great War 1914–18*, Dallington, Sussex, 1992.

[16] Even so, one wonders about some names. For example, two men surnamed Moses are both in NR but not in RH. 9237 Driver John Moses Royal Artillery is shown as not dead in NR but he is in *SDGW* Part 2 p. 151, date of death 17 October 1918, and his residence is given as Rawtenstall,

Lancashire. The other was killed very early in the war and was probably a regular soldier. He was Private William Moses of the Northumberland Fusiliers whose date of death in *SDGW*, (Part 10, p. 13) is given as 20 December 1914. He is also listed as dead in both the *Jewish Chronicle*, 9 July 1915, p. 12 and in NR, but is omitted from RH. He was born in Armagh, Ireland. Neither area was a Jewish settlement, but it is instructive that one undoubted Jewish death in action (on the first day of the battle of the Somme, 1 July 1916) was of Private I.M. Freeman, Highland Light Infantry, a resident of Belfast, who was born in Newry, County Down, on the border with county Armagh: *SDGW* Part 63, p. 91.

[17] His death was on 19 December 1914, the *Jewish Chronicle* entry being 1 January 1915, p. 1. *ODGW* gives 20 December 1917.

[18] The records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission are a major source. They are not open to the public and information can be obtained only on payment of a fee for each inquiry.

[19] *SDGW*, Part 76, section 15, p. 11.

[20] *SDGW*, Part 29, p. 33. It is perhaps no more than an interesting coincidence that one Jewish East Ender who served in the same regiment for 22 years, 1898–1920, and who ended his service as Regimental Sergeant Major changed his name from Moss Solomons to Sam Finch: Harry Finch, 'A Rose by any other name (Could it be a Rosenstein?)', *HaOr* [magazine of the Mill Hill Synagogue], September 1993, p. 8. I am grateful to Mr Harry Finch for sending me a copy of this article and for supplying other details of his father's service. His name is not cited in *British Jewry Book of Honour*.

[21] Private N. Jacobs of Cinderford: *JC*, 24 August 1917, p. 2, death notice of elder son of Mr E. Jacobs. The family had Bristol connections. One member, Isaac Monat Jacobs of Bristol, the 'dearly beloved brother of E. Jacobs, Cinderford' died just before the war, *JC*, 7 August 1914, p. 1; Pte M. Markowitz of Tideswell: *JC*, 7 January 1916, p. 13 (tribute); Second Lieutenant M. Levine and Pte C. Levine of Cromer: Levine, *Norwich*, op. cit. in Note 13 above, pp. 27–28.

[22] I am grateful to Mr Murray Freedman, Mr Jack Lennard, Dr Leonard Mars, and Mr Martin Sugarman who have provided me with additional names including, in Mr Sugarman's case, those of three soldiers who were executed after court martial. The case of one of them was described by E. Sylvia Pankhurst, *The Home Front. A Mirror to Life in England during the World War*, London, 1932, chapter 38, 'The execution of an East London boy', pp. 308–13. She did not reveal his name. I am grateful to Mr Chaim Bermant for giving me the reference to Sylvia Pankhurst's book which was the source of his account of the same event: Chaim Bermant, *London's East End: Point of Arrival*, London, 1975, chapter 14, 'To arms', pp. 221–30.

[23] There is an In Memoriam notice for Judah (Hughie) Cunningham, inserted by his wife Gladys, daughter of Rachel and the late Jacob Fredman of Plymouth: *JC*, 10 August 1917, p. 2. He cannot be found in any other source and his marriage is not listed in the Registrar-General's Index of Marriages. He probably changed his name to Cunningham at some stage. Or perhaps he was a non-Jew.

[24] It is worth emphasising that the phrase 'not there', when used about the absence of a man's name from a particular source, really means 'not found',

given the very large numbers of names in the various lists. A man's name, number, or regiment might have changed. Any of those I have so far been unable to trace might be in some official list, but in an unexpected place. Thus 4044 Pte D. Cohen is shown in the Roll of Honour as having served in the Manchester Regiment and is in its Nominal Roll. However, he is not in that regiment's *SDGW* but in that of the King's Liverpool Regiment: *SDGW*, part 13, p. 31, and he is not in the latter's Nominal Roll in *British Jewry Book of Honour*.

FILIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN JUDAISM

David J. Schnall

MEDIEVAL Jewish communities were tightly structured by religious and social usage and their members were not free to settle where they wished in unfriendly host societies. The kinship group was a very important unit and medieval rabbinic texts deal with the intimate details of family life. It is worth noting that many of the stresses and conflicts which Jewish welfare workers encounter in the twentieth-century family generally, and in Jewish households and kinship groups in particular, were evident several centuries ago.

In this paper, I am concerned specifically with the question of filial obligation in Judaism. The data available on the subject include rulings on points of law, ethics, and morality on such matters as financial liability for the care of parents, inter-generational conflicts, and personal care for an elderly or incapacitated parent, in various parts of the Diaspora — in the Mediterranean region, North Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. My aims are as follows:

(1) to offer an overview of filial obligation as it was understood in classical Jewish texts from Biblical times to the early modern era;
(2) to focus on the obligations of adult children towards their aged and infirm parents, with special regard to institutional and delegated care; and
(3) to discover whether the classical Jewish texts may reveal ethical as well as religious values in the field of care for parents, values which may be of relevance in the twentieth century.

The earliest references to filial responsibility in classical Jewish sources are to be found in the Scriptures. Both Exodus (20:12) and Deuteronomy (5:17) command Jews to honour their fathers and their mothers, while Leviticus advises 'fear every man, his mother and his father . . .' (19:3). But the Scriptures do not define clearly what is entailed in honouring or fearing a parent, or the precise responsibilities of children. However, there are several pages of legal debate, anecdotes, and homily recorded in the rulings of rabbis during the Talmudic period (*c.* 200–500 of the

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Common Era) on the subject of filial obligation (Talmud Bavli: Kiddushin 29–32). They comment on the injunctions cited above and on the fact that in one case a Jew is commanded to honour his father and his mother while in the other, the advice is to fear one's mother and one's father; why does the father take precedence in the former and the mother in the latter? One line of argument is that it might be more natural for a child to honour his mother in the first place, since a mother often 'urges him with words'. However, children must feel awe and respect for their fathers, because a father teaches Torah, not because a father is a disciplinarian. The mother nurtures while the father instructs.

The ideal of equal status for a father and a mother is not always recommended. Maimonides (6:14) states that a child 'leave the honour of his mother and be busy with the honour of his father first, for both he and she owe honour to the father'. Once a father's needs are met, the mother's requirements must be attended to. In the matter of divorced parents, the extreme example of parental conflict, the mother is no longer expected to show honour to her former husband. Moreover, since children owe equal duties to mother and to father, in the case of divorced parents the children must be free to attend first to their mother's needs if they consider that to be necessary: the child has discretion in such circumstances (Maimonides, 6:14 and Ben-Zimra, 6:14).

In adulthood, when children marry, and have offspring, sons are expected to behave differently from daughters. Both sons and daughters must continue to honour and respect their parents, but a son must not alter his attitude or reconsider his filial obligations when he marries: his new status as husband and father must not affect his relations with his parents. A married daughter, however, must give precedence to her new obligations as a wife and mother. Unless she is widowed or divorced, her first duty is to her husband and then to her children (Maimonides, 6:6 and Caro, 240:7). The practice of course has been different in the twentieth century: it is usual for married women to serve as primary carers for elderly (and especially for widowed) parents[1]. Indeed, it has been noted in a 1993 study that a daughter-in-law frequently bears a disproportionate burden in the care of her husband's parents while a son usually does not fully attend to his obligations of personal service to a parent.[2]

To return to the matter of 'honour' and of 'fear'. The Talmud Bavli (Kiddushin, 31b) states:

> Our Rabbis taught, what is fear and what is honour? Fear means that [the child] must neither stand in [the parent's] place nor sit in his place nor contradict his words . . . Honour means that he must give him food and drink and cover him, lead him in and out.

Children fulfil the requirement of 'fear' by restrictions which reinforce the status of parents and of the latter's personal and social positions; these

restrictions were essentially negative or passive, focused on an attitude of respect and deference. By contrast, 'honour' implies an active service, catering to personal needs and providing comfort and security. This section of the Talmud ends with a rabbinic debate about financial responsibilities. Since children are required to provide food, drink, shelter, and other necessities, are they also expected to pay for these, whatever the parent's financial resources, or did filial obligation require only personal service? That question gave rise to an early rabbinic controversy.

The Jerusalem Talmud places the entire liability on the children, ruling that they must pay for a parent's maintenance (Talmud Yerushalmi: Kiddushin 1:7 and Peah 1:1). But the more authoritative Babylonian Talmud states that parents must pay for the cost of the items bought especially for them, while children must not request payment for the time invested in parental care, even if that results in loss of income (Kiddushin 32 a). Medieval codifiers were apparently concerned about the possible consequences of such a ruling: it was reasonable that parents with financial resources should pay for their own maintenance but it would be unpardonable to permit children to ignore the needs of indigent parents. As early as the eleventh century, Rabbi Yitzhak Al-Fassi stated in Kiddushin 13 a–b that 'when the son has profits and the father has not, we compel the son and we collect from him in the form of charity and we give to the father'. That follows the decision of the Babylonian Talmud that when parents cannot pay for their material needs, Jewish authorities will compel a child to provide for those needs. The word 'charity' here does not mean voluntary philanthropy. In Jewish tradition, communal authorities have substantial powers of assessment and taxation to provide for local religious and social services. Al-Fassi in this case used the word 'charity' to refer to a tax or penalty collected and then used by a judicial body with the full sanction of religious law. His ruling was accepted and codified by later authorities (for example, Maimonides, 6:3; Ben-Yehiel, 50; and Caro, 240:3).

Filial obligations were uniformly understood to be incumbent to the end of life, but questions arose about the limits of these obligations, in circumstances when a parent was physically or emotionally incapacitated: could these responsibilities then be assigned to others? The classical sources lacked consensus on this point. A rabbinic homily of the third century deals with the case of Abraham, who was given the divine command to leave the land of his birth for the land that the Lord would show him (Genesis 11:32–12:1) while his father was still alive. Bereshit Rabbah (39:7) states: '. . . because Father Abraham feared that he would cause the Heavens to be demeaned, for others would say he was abandoning his father in his elder time. Said the Holy One: 'You do I free from honouring father and mother but I free no one else'.

That seems to imply that nothing less than Divine dispensation can relieve the obligation to an elderly parent. Indeed, Maimonides rules

(5:11) that a convert to Judaism must show honour to his natural non-Jewish parents, lest observers infer that the convert's new faith, Judaism, undermines the sanctity of family loyalty. Thus filial responsibilities cannot be severed by anything other than death. The claim of a parent upon the loyalty of his or her children may even override the latter's desire to settle in the Holy Land; the only exception is when the Almighty decrees otherwise. Moreover, the Babylonian Talmud declares that aberrant behaviour by a parent does not give a child the right to admonish or otherwise cause shame to such a parent. A child must bear in silence a parent's irrational physical violence and must not even rebuke the parent who takes his purse of valuables and tosses it to the sea — but in such a case, a child may seek legal compensation (see Maimonides 6:7; Ben-Asher, 240:10; and Caro, 240:8). Nevertheless Maimonides advises (6:11):

> He whom the mind of his father or mother is so damaged, must try to direct them according to their understanding, until the Lord have mercy upon them. And if it is not possible for him because they have been deranged in the extreme, he shall leave and command others to direct them as appropriate for them.

In this context, Caro (6:10) invokes a Talmudic homily (Talmud Bavli: Kiddushin 316) that is the mirror image of Abraham's quandary, mentioned above:

> Rabbi Asi had an elderly mother. Said she to him, 'I require jewelry' and so he provided her. Said she to him, 'I require a husband' and he did her bidding. Said she: 'I require a man as beautiful as you'. And so he left for the Land of Israel

One opinion is that the mother's demands indicated that she was incompetent and that Rabi Asi did not need to agonize over his decision to leave her: it would seem that if a child cannot contend with the mental incapacity of a parent, filial obligations cease to be mandatory. Rabbi Asi was free to go to the Holy Land, even though that was not in obedience to a Divine command (as in the case of Abraham), but simply because he was not obliged to countenance the extremes of irrationality of his elderly mother. However, it must be stressed here that such a view is not uniformly held: Rabad of Posquieres expresses strong dissent when he comments: 'I say that this is not a correct teaching. If [the child] will go away and abandon [the parent], whom will he appoint to care for him?' (Ibn-Daud 6:10). Indeed, the weight of general rabbinic judgement is that a parent's right to be honoured by his child, to be given personal service, is not invalidated if that service imposes great strains on the child. That was also confirmed by a later authority (Sirkus, Yoreh Deah 240, s.v. 'Katav Ha-Rambam'):

> If parents are deranged and require supervision in the extreme, sensibility does not provide that [the child] should leave and go. He is not required to

> fulfil their demands and he fears no punishment on their part, for they have no understanding. Therefore he is only required to feed and quench them and watch over them. How can he leave?

Another rabbinic thinker argued: Who would be better aware than a child of his parent's needs and who would be able to care for the parent in a better way than the parent's own child? And if it is contended that the parent's condition is so extreme that filial care is impossible, then to what end would the parent be placed in the charge of others? (Falk-Katz, 240:2).

But such an argument did not convince another authority. A handicapped parent might require to be physically manipulated, restrained, or subject to sharp verbal rebuke — but that would be unacceptable behaviour on the part of a child, because it was undignified and disrespectful to the afflicted parent. A child compelled nevertheless to adopt such a course of action, might indeed impede the cure of the parent. In cases of extreme parental impairment, children who refuse to place their parents in the care of others who are competent to look after their needs would be rendering their sick parents a profound disservice (Ben-Zimra, 6:10). Thus, in specific cases of mental incapacity, when the members of the family are unable to provide adequate care, professional or institutional assistance is permissible (Caro, 240:10 and Epstein 240:32). But there must also be regular review to monitor a parent's progress. If there are indications that the children could again look after an impaired parent personally, then they must do so.

Conclusion

In the modern world, in the 1990s, it is of course still necessary for believing Jews to consider the religious and cultural attitudes about care for indigent or incapacitated parents. There is also some evidence that religious observance may give comfort to the aged: according to Leah Abramovitz,[3] religious services acquire increased importance among elderly Jewish men, while prayer has been found to play an important therapeutic role even among the demented aged.

Contemporary secular clinical opinion confirms the importance given in classical Judaism to the crucial roles of reciprocity and filial responsibility within a kinship group. Feelings connected with natural justice, personal obligation, and affection have a vital effect on the welfare of the elderly. The concern shown by adult children for their frail or disabled parents reflects enduring adherence to Jewish principles even among Jews who are not observant and who may not be aware that the special care they give to their parents follows well-established Jewish precepts concerning filial responsibility. In childhood and adolescence, children are nurtured by their parents who must take full responsibility for their physical and their emotional needs; in return, when they reach adulthood

and middle age, children have a duty of reciprocity and must ensure that their old parents are fed, clothed, and cared for. Moreover, in traditional Judaism, parental care must be primary, not delegated to others and that is also the case for filial care: there must be personal service.

However, elderly parents may easily suffer a loss of pride, dignity, and self-respect when they find themselves dependent on their adult children, although they had in the past cared for their young children in the same way.[4] There is a Judeo-Spanish saying, still in current usage:

> When a parent gives to a child, the parent laughs and the child laughs. When a child gives to a parent, the child cries and the parent cries.

However, the parent may cry even more bitterly if the child does not give personal service or financial assistance when necessary.

The proportion of elderly Jews in the United States far exceeds that of other American ethnic groups. Increasing numbers of Jews are living beyond their 85th birthday: they have been identified as the 'old-old'[5] and many are suffering economic hardship although American Jews generally have incomes well above the national median per household. A study published in 1993 by the NOVA Institute revealed that among the Jews of metropolitan New York, 22 per cent of those classified as living below the estimated poverty level were over 60 years of age, while some 44 per cent of all poor Jewish households were reported to contain at least one elderly person[6].

That situation is a matter for concern for the leaders of American Jewry and the communal agenda must place great emphasis on traditional Jewish ideals and practices when appealing for communal funds and services to care for aged and infirm Jews in the United States.

NOTES

[1] See Katherine Turner and Rosa Karasik, 'Adult Daughters' Anticipation of Caregiving Responsibilities' in *Journal of Culture and Aging*, vol. 5 no. 2, 1993, pp. 99–114; Victor Cicerelli, 'Attachment and Obligation as Daughters' Motivation for Caregiving Behavior and Subsequent Effect on Subjective Burden' in *Psychology and Aging*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1993, pp. 144–55; and Jill Suitor and Karen Pilleman, 'Support and Interpersonal Stress in Social Networks of Married Daughters Caring for Parents with Dementia' in *Journal of Gerontology*, vol. 48 no. 1, 1993, pp. 1–8.

[2] Deborah Merril, 'Daughters-in-Law as Caregivers to the Elderly Defining the In-Law Relationship' in *Research on Aging*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1993, pp. 70–91.

[3] Leah Abramowitz, 'Prayer as Therapy Among the Frail Jewish Elderly' in *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, vol. 19, no. 3/4, 1993, pp. 69–75. See also Gary Kart, Neil Palmer and Alan Flaschner, 'Aging and Religious Commitment in a Midwestern Jewish Community' in *Journal of Religion and Aging* vol. 3, no. 3/4, 1987, pp. 49–60.

[4] Michael Salamon, 'Social Development of the Jewish Family: Mid-Life and Beyond', in Norman Linzer, Irving Levitz, and David Schnall, eds.,

Crisis and Challenge: The Jewish Family Faces the 21st Century, to be published by Ktav, New York.

[5] Ira Rosenwaike, 'Estimates of the Jewish Old Old Population in the United States' in *Research on Aging*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1992, pp. 92–109; and 'Mortality Patterns Among Elderly American Jews' in *Journal of Aging and Judaism*, vol. 4, no. 4, 1990, pp. 289–303.

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2. Rabbi Yacov Ben-Asher (Germany and Spain, 1275–1340), *Tur Shulḥan Arukh: Yoreh Deah*, Peninim Publishers, New York, 1954.

3. Rabbi Moshe Ben-Maimon (Egypt, 1135–1204), *Yad Haḥazakah: Hilchot Mumrim*, Moriah Press, Brooklyn, 1986.

4. Rabbi Asher Ben-Yehiel (Germany and Spain, 1250–1327), 'Chidushei HaRosh' in *Talmud Bavli*, op. cit. in Note 1 above.

5. Rabbi Yossef Caro (Palestine, 1488–1575), *Shulḥan Arukh: Yoreh Deah*, Hatam Sofer Institute, Jerusalem, 1965; and 'Kesef Mishneh' in Ben-Maimon, op. cit. in Note 3 above.

6. Rabbi Hehiel Epstein (Russia, 1829–1908), *Orech HaShulḥan: Yoreh Deah*, Wagshall Publishers, Jerusalem, 1987.

7. Rabbi Yehoshua Falk-Katz (Poland, 1555–1614), 'Drisha' in Ben-Asher, op. cit. in Note 2 above.

8. Rabbi Avraham Ibn-Daud (France, 1125–1198), 'Hasagot HaRavad' in Ben-Maimon, op. cit. in Note 3 above.

9. Rabbi David Ibn-Zimra (Egypt, 1479–1573), 'Yekar Tifferet' in Ben-Maimon, op. cit. in Note 3 above.

10. Rabbi Yoel Sirkus (Poland, 1561–1640), 'Hidushei HaBach' in Ben-Asher, op. cit., in Note 2 above.

11. *Talmud Yerushalmi*, Otzar Hasefarim, New York, 1981.

WHEN PROPHECY IS NOT VALIDATED: EXPLAINING THE UNEXPECTED IN A MESSIANIC CAMPAIGN

William Shaffir

IN earlier issues of this Journal, I wrote about the campaign of the Lubavitch (Habad)[1] movement to popularize their conviction that the arrival of the Jewish Messiah was imminent.[2] Faithful believers asserted that it was their present Rebbe, the charismatic Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who was the long-awaited Messiah and some of them begged him to 'reveal' himself. Advertisements appeared in *The New York Times* as well as in other newspapers, listing the events which were seen as harbingers of the Redemption, and announcing: 'The Era of Moshiach is upon us'.[3] That campaign had been given a dramatic momentum in April 1991, when the Lubavitch Rebbe delivered a memorable speech — later to be much quoted and analysed — in the course of which he had declared that he had done all that he could to spur Jews to work actively for the Messianic Redemption and that his followers must do the rest; he urged them: 'Now do everything you can to bring Moshiach, here and now, immediately'. Such a forceful command from their revered leader caused the Lubavitcher to begin at once an extensive and intensive campaign.

As that campaign was gaining in momentum, nearly a year later, in March 1992, the Rebbe suffered a stroke while he was visiting the grave of his predecessor and father-in-law; that was to be the first of a series of ailments which eventually deprived the Rebbe of his power of speech and caused him at the end to lapse into total loss of consciousness. The faithful had to endure 'cognitive dissonance': the simultaneous presence of two inconsistent happenings, which can be expected to cause great stress. When events challenge belief, the response can be a reinterpretation of the basis of belief; the Rebbe was devoutly believed to be the Messiah, but he was very seriously incapacitated by his stroke and could communicate with any degree of certainty only by vague gestures of one

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hand, difficult to interpret with any assurance. That situation continued for two years. In my last article on the subject, published in the June 1994 issue of this journal, I commented that if the Rebbe failed to regain his health and to reveal himself as the Jewish Messiah, and died, his followers would be shaken as if by an earthquake and added:[4]

> . . . if all attempts to prolong the Rebbe's life fail and he is given a traditional Jewish burial, those followers who have resolutely maintained that their leader was undoubtedly the Messiah-in-waiting will then try to explain that the blame for the failure of the Rebbe to reveal himself as the true Messiah was precisely the result of those doubting Jews, who by being creatures of little faith, did not show enough commitment to provide the final impetus for the advent of the Redemption — so that the Rebbe had to die in despair.

(While the article was in press, the news came that he had in fact died and been buried and that was added in bold type at the end of that page.)

The Rebbe died in a New York hospital in the early hours of 12 June 1994, which was the third day (Gimmel in Hebrew) of the month of Tammuz in the Hebrew calendar and was buried before the end of that day. The prophecy that he had indeed been the Messiah had clearly not been confirmed, so far.

Ever since the Lubavitch Moshiach campaign had gained in momentum, when the Rebbe was already in his nineties, there was much speculation about what would happen to the movement when he died. He was childless, there was therefore no prospective dynastic successor, and no one seemed to know whether he had decided upon the man who would replace him as leader. The Lubavitcher's answer was that there would be no need for a successor, since the Rebbe would initiate the Redemption. However, he did die, there was obviously no Redemption, and he had been buried according to traditional Orthodox Jewish rites. In New York, in the expectation of the hysteria which might well follow the announcement of his death, there had been a special plan devised during the last period of his illness. It was code-named Operation Demise, and police, social workers, and psychiatrists were ready to go to the Crown Heights neighbourhood; the Lubavitch epicentre was at no. 770 Eastern Parkway. Everything was in place to provide counselling akin to that offered in a disaster zone.[5] Two days after his death, the opinion of a psychologist of religion was quoted in *The New York Times*: 'It's clear that the rebbe's death has created a crisis, but it's not an insurmountable one. Some people will expect a resurrection, but most will develop all kinds of rationalizations. . . . the majority of people are capable of accepting the explanations'. Another psychologist commented: 'It does seem to make some sense psychologically, if what one is doing is drowning the dissonance with increased emphasis on one of the cognitions'.

Leon Festinger *et al.* published a study in 1956 entitled *When Prophecy Fails*.[7] A small apocalyptic group, in the American Midwest, with a science fiction eschatology, who claimed to be in communication with beings

from Outer Space, had believed a prediction that on a specific day, a flood would inundate much of the Western Hemisphere and some members had gathered in a vigil, waiting for a flying saucer which they were confident would raise them and carry them to safety before the flood. But there was no flying saucer and no flood. The members of the group then concluded that they had been saved by God and went on to spread their particular gospel. Festinger and his co-authors concluded that the strong ties uniting the members of that group had helped them to overcome their shock at the failure of their predicted events to materialize. Those who were not very closely linked to their fellow-members, however, lost their faith — in contrast to those who proceeded to renew their efforts at proselytisation with great enthusiasm while enjoying a considerable amount of social support from the other believers. A. D. Shupe, referring to that study and to other research into religious movements, concluded: 'It is not unfulfilled prophecy *per se* that irrevocably disillusions believers, but rather it is the social conditions in which such disconfirmations are received that determine their ultimate impact on faith'.[8] J. G. Melton, in a later analysis of the reactions to a failure of prophecy, argued that it was a common error to suppose that millennial movements would be expected to disintegrate after a prediction had failed to materialize, since predictions are typically made within the context of a wider belief system. As a result, if a prediction fails, the members of the group do not abandon the movement but aim to resolve the dissonance while relying on the 'unfalsifiable beliefs out of which religious thought worlds are constructed [and] within that context believers can engage in a reaffirmation of basic faith and make a reappraisal of their predicament'.[9] In that way, the members are reassured that the prophecy had not failed but had merely been misunderstood.

In the present paper, I focus on the attempt by Lubavitcher to reconstruct and reinterpret the events surrounding the Rebbe's illness and death in order to deal with the reality of that death and of the failure of the prediction of imminent Redemption. I have gathered data from a number of sources: about 50 interviews, all in the English language, with Lubavitcher hassidim, including officials of the movement at various levels of the organizational hierarchy; the publications of the Lubavitcher literature about the Moshiach and the Moshiach campaign; and video and audio cassette tapes. Most of the interviews were carried out in Canada — in Toronto and Montreal — and in Israel; and I also spent brief but intensive periods at Lubavitch headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway, in the Brooklyn district of Crown Heights, observing proceedings and chatting informally with the members whom I met there.

The Rebbe Dies

One despairing hassid told me soon after the Rebbe's death was announced: 'What happened was not only unexpected, it's much worse.

This thing that we didn't believe would happen, happened. We really didn't believe it. I can tell you that I'm a broken man and Lubavitch is broken'. Other followers expressed the same sorrow and shock; they had known that the Rebbe was very seriously ill and that his condition had been deteriorating rapidly — but they devoutly believed that as a result of divine intercession, a miracle would restore him to health and vigour and he would continue to lead them in their messianic campaign. Some of them even convinced themselves that he would soon be resurrected. His death had received front-page coverage in *The New York Times*[10] and the article, framing a photograph of the Lubavitcher surrounding the coffin, stated:

> Within hours of his death at 1:50 a.m., thousands of his followers began gathering on the streets around Lubavitch World Headquarters . . . to mourn a teacher and scholar that most of them had hoped would reveal himself to be the Messiah before he died.
>
> But when his plain pine coffin was borne out of the headquarters building into a light rain yesterday afternoon, a huge cry of grief shook the crowd of mourners jammed into Eastern Parkway which the Emergency Medical Service estimated at 12,000. The coffin, draped with the black coat of the Grand Rabbi, or Rebbe, as he was universally known, was supported by about 20 men, and it seemed in danger of toppling to the ground as Hasidim desperate with grief reached to touch it with their fingers or umbrellas. . . .
>
> From the rooftops it appeared that a huge wave of black was cascading down the parkway, following the Rebbe's motorcade. Thousands of people ran until they could run no further, some collapsing into sobs.

The Jerusalem Post reported that in Israel many hundreds clamoured for plane tickets at Ben Gurion airport, some of them standing on counter-tops trying to get tickets, while others rushed in all directions when rumours spread that tickets were available in a particular area of the airport.[11] In Toronto, a charter flight left within hours of the announcement of the Rebbe's death, on 12 June, carrying a planeload of mourners.

Many believed the Rebbe to be immortal and could not be reconciled to the fact that he had indeed died: *The Forward,* an English weekly newspaper published in New York, reported a few days after the burial that a group asserted that their leader's resurrection was imminent and they were sleeping close to the Rebbe's grave, hoping to be the first to see their Messiah rise from the tomb.[12] The resurrection theme was to become within days the subject of public sermons within the movement. On the day of the funeral, moreover, a small group were dancing and singing outside the Lubavitch headquarters, which unnerved the vast majority of the mourners. Allan Nadler described the scene immediately before the funeral cortege set out of the building:[13]

> Still, many of his faithful refuse to be deterred by so small a matter as Schneerson's mortality. When I arrived in Crown Heights that Sunday morning . . . I was amazed to see young Lubavitcher singing, dancing and

> drinking vodka directly across the street from 770 Eastern Parkway, the Lubavitch World Headquarters where the body of their beloved rebbe was lying . . . in shrouds on a wooden floor. Even more stunning was a small group of women encouraging the men with tambourines.

These individuals were convinced at the time that the Rebbe's death signalled the onset of the Redemption and one person was quoted as saying, '. . . any minute now the rebbe will rise up to take us all to Israel'.[14] The same was true of another group of adherents in Kfar Ḥabad, the movement's stronghold in Israel: some hassidim refused to believe that their Rebbe had died, while others asserted that if he had died, it would be only to cause him to rise to redeem the Jews. A driver employed by Ḥabad was quoted in the *Jerusalem Post* issue of 13 June, the day after the death and burial, as stating: 'This is a happy day, because this is the last day of exile', and with the chant of 'Moshiach, Moshiach, Moshiach' blaring from his van's loudspeakers, he added: 'We came here to cheer people up, to tell them this is the last day of exile'.[15]

The tragic news of the Rebbe's final deterioration in health spread quickly, only to be followed at first with the announcement that his heartbeat had stabilized; but soon after came a message on the beepers that it was urgently requested that *Tehillim* (Psalms) be recited, and a few minutes later there came the shattering words '*Borukh Dayan Ha'emes*' ('blessed is the true judge')[16] — the formula which broadcast the fact that the unthinkable had occurred, that the Rebbe had ceased to live. Then sirens were heard, arousing the Crown Heights residents and informing them of the calamity. At 3:25 a.m., a police helicopter hovered over no. 770 and to the blaring sound of sirens, an ambulance arrived, a stretcher was carried out and taken into the building surrounded by members of the *ḥevra kadisha* (the burial society whose duty it is to prepare the body for interment), and the door of the building was quickly closed. Half an hour later, the followers were told that they would be permitted to enter the Rebbe's room and file through while reciting psalms. The funeral was to take place at 4 p.m. that afternoon.

At the cemetery, the Rebbe's grave had been dug to the immediate left of his predecessor's tomb, in the mausoleum, and the male mourners filed past one entrance and the females through another gate, and the *kriya* ceremony proceeded, the tearing of a garment worn by the mourner.[17] Meanwhile, at no. 770 the synagogue was filled with mourners sitting on the floor or on low stools, in the prescribed manner for *shiva*, the seven days of intense mourning. A hassid described the scene in his diary; it was printed in one of the publications of the movement:[18]

> The sound of weeping and lamentation has replaced yesterday's shock and stupor. Wherever you look in Crown Heights you see chasidim, alone and in small groups, standing and crying to themselves. . . . The front lawn of 770 is covered with people. . . . The benches along the parkway are packed with

mourners, some of whom are nodding off after having been awake for almost two full days.

Seven-seventy is packed with people. A steady stream of mourners continues to flow, coming and going. Men, women and children all try to come to terms with what has happened, but they cannot make peace with the new situation.

They cannot understand what has happened . . ..

The majority of those with whom I had conversations in Toronto and in Montreal said that they had learnt the news of the Rebbe's death by a telephone call from a friend or relative, in the early hours of the morning. They already knew that the life of their Rebbe was despaired of by the physicians. One follower commented: 'I knew what that phone call meant. No one calls for social reasons at three o'clock in the morning'. Many of the women could tell that the Rebbe had died when they saw the faces of their husbands, when they had returned from the synagogue. One woman told me: 'As soon as I saw him, I knew. The look on his face said everything'. Another commented that no words were necessary when her husband came home: she just went to rouse their children to prepare them for the journey to Crown Heights: 'We were on the road in twenty minutes', she added.

The Rebbe had been well known as a Biblical scholar in both Jewish and non-Jewish informed circles and the activities of the Lubavitch were often reported in the press of various countries. Condolences were received from the President and the Vice-President of the United States, from the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations in London, from the Canadian Prime Minister, from a United States senator, the governor and the mayor of New York, and many other prominent persons.[19] He was hailed as 'a great leader', as one of the world's 'great moral and religious leaders', as a 'towering religious figure', while Jewish eulogies contained tributes to the Rebbe's efforts to combat assimilation and out-marriage. Such praise not only provided solace to the Lubavitcher in their grief but also confirmed the eminence of their revered leader and reflected the respect with which his scholarship and dedication were viewed by eminent individuals in many countries.

Since the Lubavitch had pursued with vigour their Moshiach campaign for several years, especially in the early 1990s, it was inevitable that comparisons would be drawn with other Messianic groups in Jewish history. The most widely-known, of course, was the case of Sabbatai Zvi who in the seventeenth century had attracted a wide following in Turkey, Italy, and Poland after he had proclaimed himself to be the Jewish Messiah. He proved to be a false messiah, he was eventually converted to Islam, and his followers were engulfed in despair and bitterness, causing a proportion of them to abandon Judaism. In 1994, there was great concern lest the fact that the Rebbe had died, been buried, and not risen from the grave and showed himself to be the Messiah, lest that tragedy of

unfulfilled promises of Redemption would result in very large defections from the Lubavitch movement.

There had been fierce condemnations of the Messianic campaign in the Rebbe's lifetime and his death only served to reinforce the case of the movement's critics. *The Forward* was still on the attack several months after the Rebbe's death; it stated that those who believed that '. . . the rebbe had misled his people during his lifetime, are now perturbed by the fact that a cluster of his most fanatic entourage is perpetuating what the critics see as the false and dangerous notion of Rabbi Schneerson as a super-mortal being'[20] — referring to those who supported the prediction that the Rebbe would without much delay rise from the grave. The paper went on to state that an eminent rabbi who was also a scholar had come to the conclusion that the Rebbe's followers were still deluded, that they failed 'to realize they have been duped by a charlatan who masqueraded as a saint'.[21]

Two weeks later, in December 1994, *The Forward* printed a front-page story with the headline: 'Rabbis Blast Lubavitcher Messianism' and the opening paragraph stated:[22]

> The Lubavitcher Chasidim of Crown Heights are alarming Jewish theologians with their growing fervor of their belief in the imminent "resurrection" of Menachem Mendel Schneerson as the "Messiah," and some critics are warning that eerie parallels to Christianity are flickering inside the Lubavitch movement.

The article was set around a photograph of Sabbatai Zvi, with the caption 'False Messiah', and referred to the continuing belief by followers of the Rebbe that he was indeed the real Jewish Messiah and that he would return to earth. Paradoxically, such attacks only seem to reinforce the commitment of the faithful to that belief.

The Forward also claimed that, several months after the Rebbe's death, '. . . some of his followers are in the throes of despair, and others are deeply disillusioned' and that his leadership might 'be to blame for the angst of the Jews of Crown Heights'.[23] In fact, the movement has experienced neither mass suicide nor even a minimal exodus from the Crown Heights area. While Lubavitcher with whom I had frequent conversations admitted freely that they were still shaken by the Rebbe's death, they insisted that they were still committed to their movement's style of Judaism. One of them told me:

> Generally speaking, if I tell you it didn't affect anyone, I'd be lying to you. But I don't know anybody who lost their faith or converted out of Yiddishkayt. No one shaved their beard, stopped putting *tefillin* [phylacteries], or took off their *shytl* [wig]. . . . To say that there aren't problems that people have to deal with, *bin eech kein mentsh nit* [I am not human]. We're not pure *neshomo* [soul].

There has been much soul-searching about the unfulfilled Messianic prophecy, with the death of the Rebbe. The adherents had been aware

for months and years that the Rebbe's health was failing, since they were kept informed by daily reports of his condition, but they had still expected nothing less than a miraculous recovery and the realization of the Messianic prophecy. They had found reassurance in the fact (according to them) that the Rebbe had never been proved wrong in any of his advice or predictions and only a few days before his death, a Lubavitch publication stated:[24]

> As this newsletter goes to press, our beloved guide and mentor,... the Lubavitcher Rebbe... lies grievously ill.... It is now many weeks that the Rebbe lies unconscious.... Medically the situation seems hopeless. Naturally, rationally — it would seem appropriate to prepare for the "inevitable." ... the reaction of this Jew at a time when everything seems so hopeless, is one of unbridled hope in totally supernatural salvation. Even at this time, and perhaps precisely because of it, we remember that the same Rebbe who accurately predicted the safety of Israel during the Gulf War, in spite of countless indications to the contrary, has prophesied that the "time of your Redemption has arrived" — a prophecy in which we must continue to have absolute faith.

Techniques of Neutralization

We must now consider the techniques, the vocabulary of motives,[25] which the Lubavitcher commonly employed in order to neutralize any dissonant feelings and to reinforce their faith in the imminent Redemption by their King Messiah, their Rebbe. In order to minimize the disjuncture between their expectations and the obvious reality, they drew upon a series of explanations which would not only preserve but enhance their commitment to the messianic prophecy.

No single explanation is uniformly advanced by all the followers, but they all do adhere to the belief in Divine Providence, *hashgocheh protees*, a belief which provides them with the underlying foundation on which they rest their interpretations of the events preceding and following the Rebbe's death. For them, the hand of Divine Providence must be seen in all that occurs but God's intentions may be difficult to grasp with our finite intelligence. An article in a Lubavitch publication[26] stated three months after his death: 'Even with all the explanations which have been advanced, the bottom line is that we don't understand the ways of Hashem' (the Name: that is, God) and: 'Hashem has taken the Rebbe from our physical presence for reasons only He understands'.[27] Variations on this basic theme were consistently advanced during my conversations with the faithful. For example, a woman did not deny that the Rebbe's death had come as an enormous shock, but she remained firmly dedicated to the cause: 'If you believe that Hashem guides us in everything, then you accept what happens as for the good. Who knows why the Rebbe died? Only one thing is clear: it's part of Hashem's master plan'.

For an observant and pious believer, it is inconceivable that God could have erred in his judgment — while the Rebbe's statements on Redemption had the seal of prophetic utterance and must therefore not be considered as false assertions. If the prophecy must remain unchallenged, the Rebbe's statements had to be reinterpreted to conform to the present reality. One follower explained to me:

> We haven't been wrong [in identifying the Rebbe as the messiah]. We have only been wrong in assuming that this is going to happen in the rebbe's lifetime. . . . So we were wrong in the calculation of the timing . . . but not in terms of theology. To me nothing has changed except the Rebbe's presence.

I had a conversation with two Lubavitch women, in the course of which they stressed that the movement in general, and they in particular, had failed to comprehend adequately the Rebbe's views on Redemption; the fault for the misinterpretation was theirs alone, and one said:

> By now we have learned to realize that the only sure things are things we heard straight from the Rebbe. . . . The things the Rebbe said clearly in the last four years are things that always always happened. So the way we understood there would not be a period of no life [that is, the Rebbe would not die], on these things we were wrong. But those were our own views. As long as we are going on the words of the Rebbe, those things can't go wrong.

She concluded by saying that the followers were re-examining the statements of the Rebbe: 'Now, there are many things that people are finding in the words of the Rebbe'. The Rebbe's behaviour immediately before his first stroke in 1992 was carefully being reconsidered as it now seemed that there was evidence to show that he was fully aware that he was on the verge of death: 'Truthfully, on his own, for a half a year the Rebbe was preparing his staff, and the Rebbe was preparing all of us [for his death]', asserted a Lubavitcher. The Rebbe was able therefore to decide on the path to be taken after he had ceased to live. He could have ushered in the Redemption, if he had chosen to do so, but he had taken another course. A Lubavitch publication claimed: 'Our Rebbe . . . was just about ready to cross the finish line when he decided at the last second to give the baton . . . to us, and said, "It is now in your hands to bring Moshiach"'.[28]

The accusation that Lubavitcher failed to foresee (and therefore to be prepared for) the Rebbe's death was countered by the argument that the disappointment about the hopes for Redemption had occurred precisely because the present generation had failed to deserve Divine Redemption. A woman told me: 'Moshiach would have come, but we didn't merit it. . . . if we merited it, things would have worked out differently' and another follower had come to the same conclusion: 'If it didn't happen, this means we were not worthy of it'. There was some discussion of the various natural and supernatural sequences leading to the coming of the Jewish Messiah; I was told: 'We blew it. Obviously, whatever we have

done is not enough' and by another follower: 'Obviously we didn't do everything right, or not enough. . . . Otherwise we wouldn't be discussing it now. We'd be sitting in the *Bays Hamikdosh* [the Holy Temple] and enjoying Moshiach and the Rebbe'.

Immediately after the Rebbe's death, there circulated a printed statement[29] on a single page from the Chairman of the International Campaign to Bring Moshiach; it included the following words:

> The rebbe's instructions are clear. It is up to us to respond. The campaign . . . urges all Jews to continue to carry out, with renewed vigor, the Rebbe's directive to study the sections of the Torah which discuss the Redemption and the coming of Moshiach and to do more acts of goodness and kindness. . . .

The Rebbe, as we noted above, died and was buried on Sunday, 12 June 1994; and on the Sunday following the week-long traditional *Shiva*, a Moshiach Day was convened in Crown Heights. An afternoon teach-in lasted into early evening and was attended by several hundred members who were assured by a panel of rabbis that the Rebbe's prophecy remained as relevant after his death as it had been in his lifetime. All the speakers stressed that the Rebbe's guidance remained valid, reiterating what the chairman had stated in his opening statement to the gathering: 'As far as what we are supposed to do, we have to listen to what the Rebbe tells us. . . . There's no doubt that we will find in the Rebbe's words all that we need for every step of the way'. Indeed, on that day, that was the core theme of the various speakers. One declared:

> And. . . he clearly gave us a program which is so meticulous. . . . He took us from step to step. Our work has been defined very very clearly. . . . And even though we may not be able to see him [the Rebbe] with our eyes . . . he's here with us today telling us what he told us for forty-four years. Nothing is missing in his instruction.

The Lubavitcher were told that in spite of suffering overwhelming grief in mourning for their revered leader, they had to take immediate action to obey the Rebbe's directives and the Rebbe's emissaries, the *shluchim*, who had gathered in Crown Heights for the funeral, were urged to pursue their activities as zealously as before. The report of a meeting of these emissaries contains the following passage:[30]

> "We will continue!" was the sentiment of all the shluchim assembled in the room. Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan . . . chaired the event and said: ". . . we all know what the Rebbe wants of us, and each one of us knows his responsibility."
>
> Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky spoke in the same vein. "None of us knows what should be *said* at such a bitter time. No one knows what to say, but we all know what to *do*.
>
> . . . All participants spoke about the special mission and obligation of shluchim at this critical hour. . . .

A Lubavitch woman affirmed this decision when she told me in the course of an interview: 'The Rebbe told us what to do. The job the Rebbe

gave us to do we must continue'. The followers also recalled the advice and comfort which Rabbi Schneerson had given when his predecessor had died and they read and re-read a letter he had written at the time of their bereavement. He had stated that 'salvation lies not in mourning, and that despair and sorrow do not lead towards light'[31] and he had then asserted as a second principal guideline that a true bonding with the Rebbe is derived from the study of his discourses and by fulfilling his requests. A Lubavitch publication commented on the first point, and an excerpt reads (*Gimmel Tammuz* refers to the day and the month on which the Rebbe had died):[32]

> We have lost a limb. If we look at the events of Gimmel Tammuz with *fleishige oigen* — physical eyes — we lost our head . . . and our heart. Now we could walk around feeling totally handicapped, with little ability to overcome this shock to our lives. . . . The Rebbe never allowed us to look at anything in life negatively — how much more so in a situation like this.

One of the Rebbe's secretaries urged the members of the movement to remember that the Rebbe's presence must continue to dominate every aspect of their life (thus reiterating the Rebbe's own recommendation when his predecessor had died):[33]

> The Alter Rebbe [the first Lubavitcher Rebbe] in Tanya [the first Lubavitcher Rebbe's work outlining the philosophy of Ḥabad] . . . quotes the Zohar, "A Tzaddik who departs from this world, is present in all the worlds more than he was during his lifetime." And the Alter Rebbe explains, that the Zohar also means to say, that the Tzaddik is present in this physical world more than during his life on this world. He also tells us that after the departure of the Neshomo [the soul] from this world, the Neshomo of the Tzaddik generates more strength and more Koach (power) to his devoted disciples.

In that context, a Lubavitcher commented: 'The leader remains a leader even now and even though not seen physically still remains a leader', then he cited sacred texts in support of that statement: 'It's also a principle in the Torah, the Zohar, and the Talmud that a *tsaddik* (righteous person) even after his death, his presence can be felt more than even before, not being limited by the physical body'. Another said: 'The Rebbe is here. We feel and sense this' and then gave several examples of the Rebbe's miraculous powers which were being manifested now, after his death. A third follower was convinced of the Rebbe's continued presence and support:

> I'd venture to say that I'm stronger now than before. Now I can't slow down because he [the Rebbe] sees me 24 hours a day. And I know that he sees me. If I can function today, it's only because he sees me. It is only because he gives me strength. . . .

The Rebbe had given a talk several months after his predecessor's death in 1950 and some of his advice contained in the record of that talk

was repeatedly cited by the Lubavitcher to derive comfort in their mourning and grief several decades later:[34]

> . . . Even when we find ourselves in a low, fallen state, we should not feel removed from the Rebbe after his passing. We should know, that now too, the Rebbe answers and responds to questions . . . as before. . . . The Rebbe is here with us as before.

An editorial in a Lubavitch publication declared: 'The Rebbe remains our Rebbe, and we remain his chassidim',[35] adding that his death had been 'the most forceful event that has so dramatically changed our world. . . . We know that the "faithful shepherd does not abandon his flock" and he continues to watch over us and guide us'.[36] The Rebbe's secretary asserted in another article: 'And just as the Rebbe served his flock before his departure, so is he continuing to serve them now, but with an increase both qualitatively and quantitatively'.[37]

Lubavitcher had to accept the fact that the Rebbe was no longer alive and they now came to believe that the unexpected tragedy of his demise might have been expected. Sources were being identified and interpreted to show that the Jewish Messiah would in fact die: this meant that the Rebbe's death was *not* a proof that he had been only a false Messiah. However, some followers did not immediately grasp that vindication; a woman commented: 'Everyone's confused and everyone doesn't know how to interpret this and how to understand it. . . . it forced a lot of people to go to the sources . . . and to find some consolation from this'. That reliance upon sources, or that use of the sources, was expressed again and again during the conversations I had. When I asked a Lubavitcher, whom I had known before the Rebbe's death, how he reconciled the fact that he had previously asserted that the Rebbe would not die with the reality that he had indeed died and been buried, he invoked the sources:

> There's also things which are written, which are predicted and which talk about this possibility. The Talmud talks about it, the Zohar says it in no uncertain terms, the Kabbalists speak about it. Moshiach will go through that period. There will be a period of moshiach dying and reviving.

Some Lubavitcher with whom I had conversations after the Rebbe's death were clearly not familiar with the texts of the sources, but they did not doubt their validity: 'There are several sources but I'm not exactly sure where'; but others demonstrated a measure of expert knowledge:

> We can talk about specific sources in the Talmud, in the Zohar specifically . . . that speak about moshiach's passing away. There are contradictory statements in the Talmud about moshiach's arrival and they all boil down to two things: miraculous and natural . . . and within this miraculous and natural there are many stages. There can be sickness, natural recovery, severe sickness, miraculous recovery. . . . Different sources point to different possibilities. . . .

According to that follower, the scenario in the most extreme case was that the advent of the Messiah would be miraculous and would therefore involve the Rebbe's complete recovery. Sadly, he had to admit that clearly the miracle had not taken place, the Rebbe had not recovered, he had died: there had been several possibilities, according to the sources, for the Rebbe to have been restored to health and to have revealed himself as the Messiah but, he admitted, 'It didn't go that way'.

Although familiarity with the relevant sources had become more widespread after the Rebbe's death, their contents had been known also during his lifetime but had not been publicized. There were two reasons: first, no one dared to entertain the thought that the Rebbe might indeed die, especially as there were what they believed to be many signals to the contrary — he had successfully recovered from severe illnesses following his first stroke, to the amazement of qualified medical specialists; they were familiar with a particular religious tenet that the Messiah might manifest himself from either the living or the dead, but the indications at the time were that a living man would declare himself as the Messiah. The second reason was that the various sources dealing with the advent of the Messiah, in Biblical commentaries on the subject, were not derived from the actual texts of the Halakha, of Orthodox Jewish law; the important point to bear in mind was that predictions of that kind should not be expected inevitably to occur, to be realized literally. One of the speakers at the teach-in previously mentioned, stressed that all that is stated in the Midrash (the exposition and commentaries on the Old Testament) does not constitute a legal ruling, is not embodied in the Halakha. 'It doesn't have to be fulfilled . . .' argued the speaker, adding that you cannot base Jewish law on the commentaries, which do not have the same legitimacy; but one must still heed the words of the Midrash, a competent religious exposition, although 'it doesn't mean that it's the way it's going to happen, but it's definitely a possibility', when it comes to predictions in the Midrash.

Such techniques of rationalization were not used by all the Lubavitcher, or not generally known to all, but they were a spur for the active members to encourage them in their Messianic proselytization and even in some cases to enhance their enthusiasm. The Lubavitcher retained their belief in the Rebbe's assurance that the redemptive process had begun: it was now their task to see that the necessary further steps were taken to fulfil the Messianic prophecy. A Lubavitch woman declared: 'The Rebbe said that the process has begun and everything that needs to be done to bring Moshiach has been done. The reservoir is filled, so it's filled. The Rebbe promised in the words of prophecy'. Another follower concurred: 'To me, nothing has changed except the Rebbe's presence. So I still look forward to the Rebbe's prediction. I believe it'll happen in our generation simply going by the Rebbe's track record'. It was that deep-seated confidence in the Rebbe's wisdom and in

his knowledge of the Divine purpose that strengthened their devotion to him and to his teachings even after he had died and not risen from his grave. One woman supported her steadfast commitment with the use of the following analogy:

> So they stood there in front of the sea and Moishe [Moses] said 'Go'. Did anyone of them, in their wildest imagination, know they were going to cross the sea? Did anyone of them imagine the sea would split? A moment before it happened, nobody knew how they were going to cross the sea. So, in a way, we're standing in front of the sea and we know we are going to cross it. How it's going to happen, we'll see.

Conclusion

A Lubavitcher elaborated on the subject of the profound conviction of his fellow-members that the Messiah's advent would assuredly take place. He illustrated their adherence to that belief with the following tale:

> I'm not sure at which airport it was . . . A plane . . . full of hassidic Jews and they're waiting at the conveyer belt for their suitcases. There this Lubavitch man found himself standing between two Gerer hassidim. About one hundred suitcases passed and it just so happened that they happened to be standing right at the beginning where the valises start coming out. And they're standing for 15 minutes watching suitcases falling out and being sure that the next one is his. . . . So he [the Lubavitcher] turns around to them and says, 'You know, it's an amazing thing. The three of us are focused here on this opening and although hundreds of suitcases have passed, we're convinced that the next suitcase will be ours. And if another hundred suitcases are going to pass by, until the last suitcase, we are still going to be convinced that our suitcase is coming at any minute. And although a long time has passed, it doesn't diminish my ultimate belief that my suitcase is coming'. It's the same story with Moshiach. We've had two thousand years of suitcases travelling and flowing. . . . Nevertheless, I'm convinced that the next suitcase, the next moment, Moshiach is coming. . . . There's no question in my mind and I can talk for every hassid.

There is great variation in the manner in which different religious groups deal with their disillusionment or shock that the predictions of their leaders, which they had whole-heartedly believed, failed to materialise. In some cases, the reaction has been to persist in the commitment to their particular religious tenets, to find or manufacture explanations for the failure of the promised events, and to continue with their efforts to recruit more adherents; the overwhelming majority in the Lubavitch movement reacted in that way. An article, marking the conclusion of the 30-day mourning period after the death and burial, stated in an English-language Lubavitch magazine:[38]

> Some antagonists had initially predicted a diminishing of Chabad activity after the Rebbe's passing, or even a complete breakdown and collapse of Lubavitch. Thank G-d, the doomsayers were proven false, and their bad

predictions did not materialize. On the contrary, we are witnessing a world-wide spur of new activities, projects and institutions established in the Rebbe's honor.

That statement was indeed true: the December 1994 issue of *World of Lubavitch* listed 93 institutions which have been established since the Rebbe's death.[39] A journalist commented: 'If Chabad has managed to outwit despair, that is partly because hasidim believe the rebbe continues to guide and protect them; he has simply exchanged a physical for a spiritual body'.[40] That was also my own experience when hearing again and again the Lubavitcher say to me as if intoning a refrain: 'The Rebbe remains the Rebbe'. The most common theme in the prolific Lubavitch literature which was published after the Rebbe's death was that of the enduring value of his teachings and the validity of the belief that a Messianic Redemption would come to pass while the arguments to refute critics and doubters were advanced with force.

But such faithfulness and determination does not characterize all the members of the movement. In the matter of interpreting the last will and testament of the Rebbe, which was dated 14 February 1988 and filed for probate immediately after his burial, there was concern that he had left his entire estate — valued at about $50,000 — to the Lubavitch movement but had left no instructions about the procedure for appointing his successor. Much significance was attached to the fact that he had named as his sole executor one of his senior secretaries — a man who had long opposed the rising tide of Messianism in the movement, a man who was reportedly the most pragmatic and conservative of his principal assistants. The role of an executor of a modest estate is theoretically a minor one; but in this particular case, his selection gave him a status superior to that of other members of the Rebbe's secretariat, and seemed to mark him as a man appointed by the revered Rebbe to exert considerable influence and authority to chart the movement's future along a conservative course.

It must be noted here that even in the Rebbe's lifetime, after his stroke had rendered him speechless and as his condition steadily deteriorated, there had been disagreements about the manner in which the Rebbe's teachings and advice were to be implemented. These disagreements had chiefly been voiced about the intensity of the Messianic proselytising campaign as well as about the confident tone used to identify the Rebbe as the Jewish Messiah who was about to manifest himself. Since his death, there have been disputes about what the Rebbe would have sanctioned if he had been still alive: for example, a Rabbi in Oxford who has been generally considered to be a follower of the Lubavitch movement was compelled to resign by the Lubavitch Foundation in Britain because it objected to the invitation he had extended to the prime minister of Israel to give a public lecture at Oxford University after he had been awarded

the Nobel Prize for Peace. Since that prime minister had committed himself to surrendering some Holy Land territory during his peace negotiations with Palestinian leaders, it was argued that such an invitation was disrespectful to the Rebbe's memory:[41] the Rebbe had been firmly opposed to the surrender of Biblical Jewish land. The resulting conflict was publicized in the Jewish press in England and elsewhere, but the Lubavitcher have gone to some pains in cases such as these to describe such public disagreements as events of little significance.

The Rebbe's published works and the audio and video cassettes of his *farbrengens* (gatherings of his Hassidic followers) are readily available and enable the members of the movement to recall his extraordinary presence and the contents of his teachings. The vast organizational infrastructure which has shaped the movement provides it with a measure of momentum for the maintenance and the intensification of its activities. In this way, the Rebbe's death has failed to alter dramatically the movement's educational and religious endeavours.

Nevertheless, the faithful are now bereft of the living presence of their spiritual leader and there will have to be a decision eventually to designate a successor. A rising star in the Lubavitch intellectual firmament has stated boldly in print: 'Either our family gets closer, and the loss brings us together, or G-d forbid, the opposite'.[42] Clearly, the Lubavitch movement is not immune from the bitter dissensions and factionalism which occur in other religious groups when a momentous event causes shock, reappraisal of policies, and rivalries between potential new leaders. There is evidence now that there is some turmoil among the Lubavitch senior officials, with various segments which are each considering mobilizing support for the claim to best represent the Rebbe's legacy. It will not be easy for a successor to follow into the late Rebbe's footsteps and to provide the guidance and care which so endeared him to his followers. He had earned their affection and respect, their reverence, for decades and he was the central figure which provided the focus and unity of the movement.

Acknowledgement

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NOTES

[1] The terms Lubavitch and Ḥabad are synonymous and refer to followers of the same hassidic sect. Ḥabad is an acronym for the Hebrew *ḥokhmah*, *binah*, and *da'at* — intelligence or wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. In Israel the term Ḥabad is commonly used, while in North America the term Lubavitch or Lubavitcher is more popular.

[2] See in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* 'Jewish Messianism Lubavitch-Style: An Interim Report', vol. 35, no. 2, December 1993, and 'Interpreting

Adversity: Dynamics of Commitment in a Messianic Redemption Campaign', vol. 36, no. 1, June 1994.

[3] *The New York Times*, 22 August 1991.

[4] W. Shaffir, op. cit. in Note 2 above, p. 52.

[5] A New York congressman, who represents the Crown Heights district in the state assembly in Albany, remarked: 'It's a community in some ways in denial. . . . People are going to feel immensely let down when something they believed in for so long, the expectation that he would return after death, doesn't happen': see *Toronto Star*, 13 June 1994, p. A4.

[6] *The New York Times*, 14 June 1994, p. A11.

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

[8] See Anson D. Shupe, Jr., *Six Perspectives on New Religions: A Case Study Approach*, New York, 1981, p. 141.

[9] J. G. Melton, 'Spiritualization and Reaffirmation: What Really Happens When Prophecy Fails', *American Studies*, vol. 26, no. 2, 1987, p. 82.

[10] *The New York Times*, op. cit. in Note 3 above, p. 1.

[11] *The Jerusalem Post*, 14 June 1994, p. 1.

[12] See *The Forward*, 17 June 1994, p. 1.

[13] Allan Nadler, 'King Of Kings County', *The New Republic*, 11 July 1994, pp. 16–17.

[14] Ibid., p. 17.

[15] *The Jerusalem Post*, 13 June 1994, p. 1.

[16] The blessing which mourners recite after death.

[17] *Kriya* is the rending of the garment of the mourner. The rent, at least four inches long, is made in the lapel of an outer garment before the funeral. For parents, the *kriya* is made on the left side; for other relatives, on the right.

[18] See *Chabad Magazine*, June 1994, p. 17.

[19] Ibid.

[20] See *The Forward*, 18 November 1994, p. 13.

[21] Ibid.

[22] *The Forward*, 2 December 1994, p. 1.

[23] *The Forward*, 18 November 1994, p. 13.

[24] See *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, June 1994, p. 21.

[25] C. Wright Mills, 'Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive' in *American Sociological Review*, vol. 5, no. 5, 1940, pp. 904–13.

[26] See *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, September 1994, p. 32.

[27] Ibid.

[28] *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, September 1994, p. 34.

[29] 'Moshiach And The Test of Faith', n.d.

[30] *Chabad Magazine*, 18 June 1994, p. 22.

[31] Ibid., p. 6.

[32] *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, September 1994, p. 33.

[33] Ibid., p. 47.

[34] *Chabad Magazine*, June 1994, p. 6.

[35] Ibid., September 1994, p. 5.

[36] Ibid.

[37] *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, September 1994, p. 47.

[38] *Chabad Magazine*, August 1994, p. 47.

[39] *World of Lubavitch*, December 1994, p. 4.
[40] See *The Jerusalem Report*, 28 July 1994, p. 22.
[41] See *The Forward*, 21 October 1994 and *The Canadian Jewish News*, 20 October 1994.
[42] *Chabad Magazine*, August 1994, p. 78.

BOOK REVIEWS

JANET S. BELCOVE-SHALIN, ed., *New World Hasidism: Ethnographic Studies of Hasidic Jews in America*, xv + 285 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1995, $18.95.

Solid foundations for the study of hassidism, based on fieldwork, were laid in the 1960s and 1970s by various scholars; the most thorough among them were George Kranzler, who published in 1961 *Williamsburg: A Jewish Community in Transition*; Solomon Poll, who a year later published *The Hasidic Community of Williamsburg*; while in 1974 Israel Rubin gave us *Satmar: An Island in the City* and William Shaffir, *Life in a Religious Community: The Lubavitcher Chassidim in Montreal.*

There was a revival in North America, after the Second World War, of hassidic movements. After the 1960s and the 1970s, publications on the subject became less frequent; but now that there is a notable growth in ultra-Orthodox Judaism, more authors have engaged in further studies of hassidism. Thus, in 1992, there appeared *Hasidic People: A Place in the New World* by Jerome Mintz and *Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry* by Samuel Heilman; these two books could be described as competent journalistic reports, based on scholarly sources.

The volume under review has the virtue of putting together some texts, admittedly short but the result of prolonged fieldwork and of well-thought-out analyses of North American hassidism. Indeed, some of the authors of these contributions are the founding fathers mentioned above: Kranzler, Poll, and Shaffir. In his 'Boundaries and Self-Presentation among the Hasidim', Shaffir stresses the importance of fieldwork: he can claim to speak with some authority, since he has been engaged in research among various hassidic groups in Montreal for more than two decades and is well aware of various trends and developments in North American hassidism, which he has described and analysed lucidly.

However, it is not always easy to engage in fieldwork among hassidim, especially so in the case of the very traditionalist groups, such as the Satmarer: they are the most influential in the whole range of hassidism, as well as one of the most numerous groups, and they are imbued with a virulent anti-Zionism. It is worth noting that in the present volume under review, there is no contribution which is entirely about the Satmarer: there is only Kranzler's essay, which deals with the district of Williamsburg in New York, in Brooklyn — where the Satmarer are very prominent. On the other hand, five of the contributions (amounting to half of the total number), are concerned with Lubavitch hassidism. It is

certainly much more practicable to carry out research among that group, since it is engaged in outreach activities which aim to persuade non-observant Jews to become practising religious Jews. Here it must be stressed that such concentration on the Lubavitch might lead the ordinary reader to believe that the Lubavitch are the most numerous and the most typical of the world's hassidic movements; and that would be a misrepresentation of the facts.

One interesting contribution is that of Laurence D. Loeb, entitled 'Habad and Habban: 770's Impact on a Yemenite Jewish Community in Israel'. A group of traditional Yemeni Jews had settled in Israel and then were 'converted' by the Lubavitch in the 1950s to hassidic Judaism and became known as the Habbani. The reason for their inclusion among North American hassidic movements is that they attend the *farbrengen* (the major reunions) which take place periodically at 770 Crown Heights in Brooklyn, the Lubavitch headquarters. These reunions had as their chief focus Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitch charismatic rebbe who died in 1994 (and about whom William Shaffir has written in earlier issues of this Journal as well as in the present December 1995 number). Loeb believes that the Habbani case is one of a specific form of acculturation; these Yemenis have learnt to make use of modern technology and to participate in Israel's civic, political, and social processes, while ensuring the preservation and enhancement of Jewish religious values and practices.

Ellen Koskoff deals with the music of the Lubavitch and tells us that some *baalei teshuva* (those who have 'returned' to Judaism under the influence of the Lubavitcher) have introduced a new musical genre, which bears a striking resemblance to rock and heavy metal. The older Lubavitcher regard such a trend as highly suspect, but they do recognize that it is effective in attracting otherwise unapproachable Jews to hassidic life.

Lyn Davidman and Janet Stocks, in 'Varieties of Fundamentalist Experience: Lubavitch Hasidic and Fundamentalist Christian Approaches to Contemporary Family Life', make interesting comparisons between the family values of the hassidim and those of fundamentalist Christians. They show that the set of beliefs and practices which are to be found among all traditionalist groups — whether Jewish, protestant, or catholic — are in fact based on the ideal Victorian model. Unfortunately, this study is not well balanced: the data relating to the Lubavitch are derived from fieldwork research in a centre 'for resocializing secular Jewish women to Orthodoxy' — while for the Christians, the authors have relied on such texts as those of Jerry Falwell or of James Dobson, well-known radio and television evangelists. Never the less, some of the points of differentiation are worth recording: the Christians are not aware of biblical laws which forbid marital relations during a woman's menstrual period and for seven days thereafter, and in an

entirely different sphere, they note that the Lubavitch favour the use of a matchmaker, a *shadhan*, but that such a practice is much rarer among fundamentalist Christians. The latter are also much more explicit than are the hassidim in dealing with details of sexual relations.

Two other contributions to the volume are concerned with women — still mainly among the Lubavitch. Debra R. Kaufman writes on 'Engendering Orthodoxy: Newly Orthodox Women and Hasidism' and Bonnie Morris on 'Agents or Victims of Religious Ideology: Approaches to Locating Hasidic Women in Feminist Studies'. The authors of these two essays describe the ideological justifications employed in explaining the position of women in hassidism; for instance, when dealing with rituals which are incumbent only on men, hassidic women comment: 'Men need the discipline; we don't. We are closer to God . . .' (p. 145) Bonnie Morris cites, without making any critical comment on the matter, a truly specious line of reasoning: since women have been active Nazis and have persecuted Jews, 'Hasidic women cannot afford to consider themselves oppressed by their own people, their male relations and leaders' (p. 174). On the other hand, as this author recognizes, little is known about the actual way of life of hassidic wives, who often have eight to ten children to care for (see Kranzler's contribution in the present volume, p. 191), while their husbands spend a large part of the day engaged in praying, studying, and chatting in rooms set aside for that purpose, 'prayer-rooms'. That is surely of special importance — to deal with such realities of day-to-day life rather than with the complacent comments of some 'intellectual' women who have been converted to Lubavitch hassidism.

In 'The Economic Revitalization of the Hasidic Community of Williamsburg', George Kranzler provides a detailed description of the economic activities which help some 40,000 hassidim to live in Williamsburg. The religious pursuits and the various gainful occupations are closely linked and it is noted that close to 50 per cent of the population is still living below the poverty line, since Jewish Williamsburg has remained a primarily low-middle-income neighbourhood.

The editor of the present volume contributes an essay entitled 'Home in Exile: Hasidism in the New World', describing how the hassidim have taken over the Orthodox district at Boro Park, which now has a large majority (85 per cent) of hassidic residents. They occupy most of the 'public space', according to the author, who goes on to state: 'I am not just referring to the emergence of stores, schools, and shuls ubiquitous throughout the area . . . What I have in mind, rather, is a cheerfully transparent attitude of comfort and familiarity' (p. 217). She adds that space is re-emerging as a key dimension of Jewish existence. The Bobover rebbe and his followers, of largely Galician origin, are one of the pillars of hassidic Boro Park and the author notes that a key factor in Bobov's success at community building was that it established hassidic schools.

'All together, Bobov educates more than 2,000 students with a budget that exceeds $5.6 million' (p. 222). Bobov has a large number of members who are employed in the diamond industry, so that they prospered when diamonds commanded a high price. It is regrettable that the link between the diamond business and hassidism is not investigated in some detail, since such a link is very strong in Antwerp, in Tel Aviv, and in New York.

Shifra Epstein writes on 'The Bobover Hasidim Piremshpyl: From Folk Drama for Purim to a ritual of Transcending the Holocaust'. She describes how every year, on the occasion of Purim, the Bobov celebrate the miraculous survival of the Jewish people. In the years immediately following the end of the Second World War, the folk drama was directly focused on the Nazi genocide of Jewry, but nowadays the Bobover prefer more general themes of survival.

Solomon Poll analyses the role and the qualities of the rebbe, 'the charismatic leader of the Hasidic community'. He takes a position which contrasts markedly with those of the very intellectual and theological analyses of hassidism — such as are often found in fact in the volume under review here. He is a skilled observer and he has noted that religious beliefs are an inherent component of hassidic culture and that the members of the groups do not prove, confirm, or declare that their rebbe is a godly man: they simply behave towards him as if he is indeed a godly person. Some readers might think that this observation is somewhat pedestrian, but it is none the less apposite and does reflect the realities which a field worker will observe among hassidic groups, except in the peculiar case of the Lubavitch who, as noted above, are over-represented in the present volume. It is admittedly true that fieldwork method requires the researcher to understand the subjects of his study from the latter's point of view, but that does not imply that the researcher must lean over backwards in stressing mainly the informants' case — and regrettably, that is the attitude which Janet Belcove-Shalin, George Kranzler, and the authors concerned with hassidic women take in the present volume.

However, the book provides valuable data as well as suggestions which will help future field workers to progress in the objective study of hassidism, which requires many further analytical approaches.

JACQUES GUTWIRTH

JOSEPH DAN, ed., *BINAH, Studies in Jewish History, Thought and Culture*, Volume 3 xiii + 200 pp., published for the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, Jerusalem, and for the Open University of Israel, Tel Aviv by Praeger Publishers and Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut and London, 1994, £16.95 (paperback).

Volume three in the BINAH series focuses on Jewish intellectual history in the Middle Ages, providing students (on the lines of the earlier two

volumes) with English translations of seminal articles, previously published in Hebrew in learned journals and inaccessible to them because of their unfamiliarity both with the nuances of the language itself and the niceties of advanced scholarship. The translations are rightly described as more akin to adaptations since they appear in a form suitable to English-speaking undergraduates. To the copious footnotes in the essays, the translators add explanations of terms the original authors take for granted that their readers will know — but which may be opaque to newcomers to the field. Each translation is prefaced with a brief observation of what the essay seeks to achieve. The BINAH volumes are obviously geared to American students (note, for instance, the Americanism 'meaningful' in the prefaces on pages 1, 35 and 159). But all students of Jewish cultural life and history will benefit from these volumes. There is no talking down to the students; they are invited to participate fully in the scholarly activity and to observe in detail how scholars arrive, often only tentatively, at their conclusions. BINAH is thus helpful not only in the provision of these highly important articles but, especially, in showing how modern scholarship actually works. Of the eleven articles translated only two of the authors are no longer alive; the nine living authors have helped in the adaptation for the new readership.

The articles have been admirably chosen to cover a wide range of subjects; in each case, new ground is broken. Robert Bonfil in 'Cultural and Religious Traditions in Ninth-Century French Jewry' manages to cull information regarding French Jewish life from the writings of Agobard, archbishop of Lyons. That cleric's attacks on the Jews incidentally reveal indirect data from a hostile observer about how French Jews actually lived in the ninth century. This brilliant article, even with its occasional dash of sheer *pilpul*, is a model of how keen scholarship can succeed in drawing on the most unpromising sources for sound historical reconstruction. Joseph Dan in 'Kabbalistic and Gnostic Dualism' examines the relationship between these two mystical trends, pointing out, in the process, that caution must be exercised when using the very term Gnosticism as applied to Jewish sources. José Maria Millás Vallicrosa writes on 'The Beginnings of Science Among the Jews of Spain' and Warren Zev Harvey on 'Political Philosophy and Halakhah in Maimonides'. Sarah O. Heller Wilensky in 'The First "Created Being" in Early Kabbalah: Philosophical and Isma'illian Sources' examines chiefly this theme in the work of Isaac Ibn Latif, a thirteenth-century Jewish thinker. Israel J. Yuval in 'German-Jewish Autobiography of the Fourteenth Century' analyses what, so far as we know, seems to be the earliest example of medieval autobiography and examines the whole history of autobiography among Jews. 'Rashi and the World Around Him' is an article by the famous historian, Yitzhak Baer, published in 1956 in *Sefer Rashi*, on the 850th anniversary of the great French commentator's death.

Gerald J. Blidstein in 'Menahem Meiri's Attitude Toward Gentiles — Apologetics or Worldview?' considers whether the fourteenth-century Provencal Halakhist, Menahem Meiri, by speaking of Christians and Muslims as 'peoples governed by ways of religion' (a better translation of *gedurot be-dat* than, on p. 119, 'peoples restricted by ways of religion') really intended to suggest that such religious people fall into a third category between Jews and Gentiles. Yoram Jacobson in 'The Image of God as the Source of Man's Evil. According to the Maharal of Prague' discusses a startling religious idea in the writings of this sixteenth-century unconventional but very influential thinker. Mordecai Pachter shows in 'Kabbalistic Ethical Literature in Sixteenth-Century Safed' how a new mystical approach to ethics in which two systematic manuals were compiled emerged out of the mystic circle in a city renowned for its holy men. Jacob Elbaum in 'The Influence of Spanish-Jewish Culture on the Jews of Ashkenaz and Poland in the Fifteenth-Seventeenth Centuries' demonstrates how strongly Eastern-European Jewish culture was influenced by Sephardi thinkers.

Volume three of Binah joins volumes one and two in making available, in the language of the blurb, 'a valuable resource for teaching this rich period in Jewish civilization on the undergraduate level'. Fortunately, the new price, about half of that of the others, places this volume more within the reach of those to whom it chiefly caters.

LOUIS JACOBS

H. M. WINAWER, ed., *The Winawer Saga*, 444 pp., London, 1994, available from H. M. Winawer, 20 Forman House, Frendsbury Road, London SE4 2LB, £15.00 plus postage.

Maxim Vinaver (the name is pronounced Vinaver and was spelled in that way by members of the family whose émigré existence was focused on France) figures in both Jewish and Russian history as a leading exponent of Jewish claims in the last years of Tsardom and as a prominent figure in the Constitutional-Democratic Party (of which he was one of the founders) in the Duma, and after the Bolshevik Revolution in the regional government in the Crimea and later in exile. His biography would be worth writing in full — material for it is abundant, much of it in New York. The second and shorter part of the present volume gives an adequate though not very searching account of the events of his life and would be of considerable help to anyone attempting a larger study. The editor, a fairly distant relative, has chronicled here what is much more challenging and of greater interest: the fate of all those members of the family who can be traced, mainly the descendants of Abraham Winawer, the acknowledged head of the Warsaw Orthodox Jewish community in the first half of the nineteenth century. The pages

devoted to 'Early Winawers' encapsulate in a highly informative way the dilemmas of Warsaw's Jews from their emancipation under brief Prussian rule established in 1795 to their chequered relationship with the Russian Empire in which Warsaw figured after the Napoleonic era and the twin urges — either to make the best of loyalty to the Tsars, hoping that greater enlightenment would prevail, or partnership with their Polish fellow-citizens during Poland's successive struggles for national independence.

Like other Jewish families in the Pale whose fortunes have not been chronicled so lovingly, the Winawers began a process of outward movement as soon as this became possible, both into other parts of the Russian Empire, as with Maxim Vinaver, and abroad. The upheavals of the Russian Revolution, antisemitism in the years after the First World War in Poland, where much of the family remained, and ultimately the Nazi horror precipitated further movement to France, Great Britain, Palestine/Israel, the United States, Yugoslavia, and even further afield. The impulses to move on and seek survival in a less threatening environment were intertwined. The editor of this work sought refuge in England in 1938 from the antisemitism of Poland; all his own close relatives — thirty-two in number — remained behind and perished in the Holocaust.

This saga of migration, survival, and in many cases of considerable achievement, is dealt with by means of more than 30 brief biographies which together take up most of the book. The individual reader — and the volume deserves a wide readership — is left to draw his own conclusion both as to the intrinsic interest of the clan, including their capacity for helping each other, and as to the light it throws on the fate of twentieth-century Jewry. While secularization had been common among the Winawers in Europe, it is interesting to learn that Abraham Winawer's descendants in the United States became leading figures in local synagogue-based Jewish communities. Perhaps it is not surprising that in a Jewish clan, business, the law, music, and above all medicine, figure so largely — along with literary scholarship and literary talent directed above all to the theatre.

While all this adds to the book's interest, it also raises queries. H. M. Winawer describes himself as the 'editor': who are the authors? It is clear that no one person could have written the book alone; that would have demanded a knowledge of many languages — Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, German, English, French, Serbo-Croat — to tap the sources so abundantly accounted for in the notes. Since the Latin alphabet was the only one at the disposal of the authors, this means that a great many of the transliterations are inevitably haphazard, particularly as between Russian and Polish versions of proper names. It is also clear that a number of different hands have made their contribution, but not always in what form. Some of the Americans have appended their own

signatures to what are certainly autobiographical sketches. The same is true of the French eminent man of letters, Michel Vinaver, Maxim Vinaver's grandson. The long chapter on Eugène Vinaver — an eminent scholar in medieval and Renaissance literature who had a long and distinguished academic career in both England and America while remaining true to his mainly French upbringing — is by his widow, herself English (non-Jewish) by birth and education. The chapter on Aleksander Markovich Winawer, who only narrowly survived Stalin's post-war purges, is by Kena Vidre.

One would like to know who had the requisite background to write about Soava Gallone (born, about 1880, Stanislawa Winawer), a star of Italian films of the silent era; or about Chemjo Winawer, who became the main authority on the hassidic musical tradition — interesting in the light of his Warsaw forbear's hostility to hassidism; or about Steven Winawer, an early and important collaborator of the BBC television show 'That Was the Week that Was'; or, to go to a different end of the intellectual spectrum, who was sufficiently conversant with the Polish theatre of the inter-war period to assess the contribution of Bruno (Bernard or Bernhard) Winawer, born in 1883; or with Serbian literature to consider the achievements of Stanislav Vinaver, who turns out to have been Rebecca West's guide in collecting material for what became *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, which she published in London in 1942, as a record of her journey through Yugoslavia in 1937.

Sometimes, a brief biography illuminates an aspect of general history of which not much has been known. How many students of the early years of the Bolshevik regime are aware that there existed a 'Political Red Cross' dedicated to following the fates of those arrested by the authorities and even occasionally being able to intercede for them, or that while its nominal head was Peshkova, Maxim Gorki's wife, its real moving spirit was Michal (Mikhail) Winawer? It was probably he who in 1927 secured the release from prison of Rabbi Yosef Yitshok Schneerson, the sixth leader of the Lubavitch hassidim.

But to come back to Maxim Vinaver. It must be presumed that we owe this part of the volume to the editor himself. It obviously relies a great deal on the memoirs of Maxim Vinaver's widow, Rosa Georgevna, which have been available to him in mimeographed form; it is amazing that so important a source has remained unpublished. However, the present editor's somewhat bald and episodic treatment of Vinaver's career does give room for dealing with his constant efforts to achieve Jewish unity against Jewry's foes. In the early years of this century, this meant incurring the charge of 'assimilationism' from the Zionists. At the time of the Russian Civil War, when American Jewry began to play a more important part, there was the question of whether the ideological and hence ineradicable hostility of the Bolsheviks to any idea of Jewish identity was more dangerous than the traditional hostility to be found in

the ranks of their Civil War opponents. In between were the issues raised by the crisis of 1917 and the divergences among the members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party (the Kadets) as to where to seek allies, and among Jewish leaders as to the extent to which Jewish rights should be pursued as part of an overall constitutional settlement. The whole question of whether the Jews were a recognizable national minority in European countries, or merely adherents of a particular religious group, was raised during the conversations which took place among representatives of Jewish organizations at the Paris Peace Conference; but the present book adds little to what is generally known and the bibliographical notes are rather thin. On the other hand, it was worth noting Maxim Vinaver's role in exposing the virulent *Protocols of the Sages of Zion* as an outrageous forgery — although, of course, that publication is still widely available in many countries. He had been absorbed in politics both in Russia and later as an émigré; but he found time for some other interests: he was, for example, Chagall's first patron; that enabled the artist to pursue his studies in Paris and it is worth noting that examples of Chagall's early work have only recently come to light in Russian collections.

Clearly, culture in the broadest sense was part of the Winawer inheritance.

MAX BELOFF

JEAN-PHILIPPE SCHREIBER, *Politique et Religion. Le Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique au XIX^e Siècle*, with a Preface by Hervé Hasquin (Directeur de la collection 'Spiritualités et Pensées libres'), viii + 439 pp., Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, Brussels, 1995, 1,500 Belgian francs or 277 French francs.

This large volume is based on a doctoral thesis submitted to the Université libre de Bruxelles. In the Preface, Hervé Hasquin states that the research carried out by the author involved the use of hitherto largely inaccessible data concerning Belgian Judaism in the nineteenth century. In his Introduction, the author tells us that the title of his thesis was 'Immigration et intégration des Juifs en Belgique de 1830 à 1914'.

Several small Jewish communities had lived in the area which is now Belgium since the thirteenth century, and there was a settlement of Jews in Antwerp: it is said that they had been converted forcibly to Christianity in the sixteenth century. An influx of immigrants later came from neighbouring countries — mainly from the Netherlands at first, and later from Germany and France. There was also a trickle of Jews from the Ottoman Empire. In more recent times, the greatest Jewish immigration was from Eastern and Central Europe. From 4,000 at the time of Belgian Independence, the Jewish population grew to about 40,000 by the eve of

the First World War; the main settlements were urban: in Antwerp, Brussels, Liège, Gand, Arlon, Ostend, and Namur.

The Eastern and Central European immigrants had to reconcile three cultures, according to Schreiber: that of their Jewishness, that of their native land, and that of their new host country. Belgian Jews had been influenced by the first *Haskalah* (the Jewish Enlightenment at the end of the eighteenth century) and later by Jewish nationalism — mainly Zionism at the end of the nineteenth century. Finally, they were influenced by Marxism. The trends were reflected, according to the author, by the establishment of a Jewish bourgeoise, of a rising middle class, and of a proletariat.

The first chapter deals with the formation of various Jewish communities in Belgium (pages 13–126); the second chapter is comparatively short and is entitled 'La doctrine du Consistoire: le libéralisme religieux'; the third chapter is concerned with religious and primary education; the fourth analyses the political situation of the Jewish community and the strategy employed by the leaders of the Consistoire since 1840. That organization at first was the only representative body of Belgian Jewry and it formally wrote to Adolphe Crémieux to approve of his initiative in rebutting the accusations of Jewish ritual murder at the time of the Damascus affair. However, the Consistoire consistently refused to plead publicy the cause of the Jews of Belgium, expressing sympathy only for the oppressed Jews in foreign lands. But that did not prevent Jewish leaders of the Consistoire from making unofficial representations to Belgian prelates or to government ministers in order to counteract antisemitic publications; Chief Rabbi Astruc also approached the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris to ask that the Alliance use its influence to protect Jewish interests in Belgium.

Chapter Five considers the relations between the civil authorities of the country and the various Jewish communities as well as the Consistoire in later years. Various articles of the Belgian Constitution have regulated the position of religious groups vis-à-vis the state. There was an apparent intent to respect all religious freedoms and religious practices; but it was decreed that a religious wedding must be preceded by a civil marriage. The state would decide whether any religion should be accorded official recognition, with the benefits which such recognition would entail. These benefits included financial assistance towards the building and maintenance of religious buildings.

Chapter Six deals with the integration of the Jews who settled in Belgium in the nineteenth century. The educational institutions were the chief means of achieving integration. A Jewish school had been established in Brussels in 1822 and by 1855, the vice-president of the Consistoire was able to boast, justifiably, of the achievement of the pupils: the majority of them had grown into productive and respectable adults who included successful industrialists, competent employees, and 'braves

militaires' — many of whom had attained superior rank in the armed forces (p. 263). In 1846, several leaders of the Consistoire had sponsored a system of apprenticeship for Jewish workers; three years later, in 1849, the sphere was extended to provide training for Jewish girls who had been pupils of the Jewish school in Brussels.

By 1873, various benevolent and educational organizations had joined forces to establish a committee for vocational education and for the welfare of young Jews. It declared that its aims were to rescue children from poor households leading a deprived existence and relying on what they could receive by begging; these children would be taught the value of education, of honest work, and of thrift; and they would be helped to earn their living honourably and to become good citizens so that they would be an asset to their community and to the country (p. 263). Young Jews were to be discouraged from engaging in the lowly occupation of pedlars; their parents would be compensated for the children's lack of earning while they were being trained to acquire a respectable trade which would allow them to receive wages much superior to the small amounts obtained from peddling. That decision of the leaders of Jewry had been taken as a reaction to the influx in the 1860s of Jewish pedlars from the Netherlands, whose young children were frequently absent from school. The established and respectable Brussels Jews were embarrassed by the visibly indigent immigrant households who were lowering the status of the Jewish community. It was arranged to visit these families in their homes and to attempt to educate them socially and to encourage them to take advantage of the opportunities provided for their children by their Belgian correligionists.

These efforts bore fruit and by 1892, many Jews in Belgium were employed as jewellers and watchmakers and as leather workers (mainly footwear and gloves) while a growing number of women had acquired tailoring skills. Men who wished to engage in small commercial enterprises could be helped with interest-free loans in order to expand their business or in some cases in order to save them from bankruptcy. Such assistance from fellow-Jews helped to keep those from a lower socio-economic stratum within Judaism: it integrated them while preserving them from conversion to Christianity or from assimilation. That type of Jewish philanthropy was also in accordance with the prevailing Protestant and Catholic practice in Belgium, as well as with the efforts of liberals and freemasons to raise the standards of the poor by educating their children and teaching them trades which would enable them to earn a respectable living.

A by-product of this energetic benevolence was the emergence of Jewish women as schoolteachers, school inspectors, organisers of charitable works, and as supervisors of workshops and of institutions for the poor, the sick, and the aged. It also became a matter of *noblesse oblige* and of morality to give rewards to those who had shown themselves to be

good pupils and good citizens. Prizes were given (by charitable associations founded by rich Jews) to orphans who had shown merit; scholarships were awarded to pupils to enable them to proceed to schools offering a secondary education while another benevolent association sponsored some (presumably middle-class but not affluent) students to acquire a tertiary education which would lead to recognized qualifications in the liberal professions.

The last three chapters of the volume deal with the doctrines of Belgian Judaism; with religious practice; and with developments in the Consistoire. In that last chapter, there is an interesting small section entitled 'La Communauté de rite portugais d'Anvers'. In the 1880s, Jews from Salonica and from Turkey had settled in Antwerp and others went to Brussels. The Antwerp Sephardim within a few years (in 1898) had established their own synagogue and the following year they invited a rabbi from Constantinople to become their religious minister in Antwerp and they paid his salary. In 1903 the Antwerp Sephardim petitioned the Minister of Justice of Belgium to become a legally-recognized religious community. The authorities consulted the Consistoire as well as prominent Jewish citizens and did not receive from the latter an entirely favourable approval for the proposal; but eventually, after repeated petitions, the Sephardim were granted official recognition in 1910, by royal decree. They numbered only some 400 individuals (about 200 in Antwerp and another 200 in other Belgian cities regularly coming to Antwerp to worship in the Sephardi synagogue); but they were a prosperous community and did not seek any financial assistance from the state or from their Belgian correligionists after they achieved legal recognition. They built their own synagogue from funds provided by the members of their community. By 1913, there were about a thousand Sephardim and it was then that the community asked the state formally to provide for a salary for its rabbi.

After the volume's Conclusion, there is a valuable list of sources and a bibliography (pp. 403–25) followed by a short glossary of Hebrew and Yiddish terms and a short index of proper names. This is a scholarly volume and it is regrettable that there is no subject index.

JUDITH FREEDMAN

CHRONICLE

The Community Research Unit of the Board of Deputies of British Jews published last July a 'Report of Community Statistics 1994'. That Report notes: 'Numbers of births are complete only up to 1993 since the institutions which provide basic data to the Unit carry through their own collection processes later in the year'. The figures for births from 1991 to 1993 are as follows: 1991: 3,427; 1992: 2,808; and 1993: 2,847. 'The most consistent data are for milot [circumcisions] and it is here that the absolute fall has been the greatest. Between the peak in 1988 and 1993 the number of milot fell by 20% . . . To put these figures in context it should be noted that there has been a national decrease in births since 1990.'

There was a marked decrease in synagogue marriages in 1994: a total of 914, 101 less than the 1993 total of 1,015. 'This is a decrease of 10 per cent and is emphatically the most marked annual decrease (absolute or proportional) since 1975–76 when recorded marriages fell by 191 over one year. This fall echoes the British pattern: 1993 saw the recorded number of marriages in England and Wales fall to below 300,000 for the first time since the Second World War. Previously, this low was reached this century only in the Great Depression of the 1920s. This decline in national numbers since the 1970s has been greater for first marriages than for all marriages — indicating the growing tendency to cohabit. . . . Since most synagogue marriages are first marriages, this national trend can be expected to show in the community statistics. Furthermore, the marked reduction may also reflect the decline in births in England and Wales which began in 1965 and continued until 1993. . . . Jewish births fell from 3934 per annum in 1965–69 to 3200 per annum in 1975–79. It is this age cohort which is now reaching average age at marriage.'

The rate of decline in synagogue weddings was most marked among the Central Orthodox and the Reform groups; in each case, there was a fall of about 13 per cent. Weddings in Liberal Judaism synagogues showed an increase of 28 per cent — but this was only 14 weddings in absolute figures. But even Right-Wing synagogue weddings fell again in 1994 by 18 ceremonies of marriage (representing a fall of 11 per cent), after a fall of 12 (16 per cent) from 1992 to 1993. '. . . the importance of fluctuations within individual groups must not be over-stressed, but it is possible that Right-Wing numbers are stabilising after a peak in the early 1990s. Certainly, in absolute numbers, the largest reduction is in that section of the community which is showing the most declining membership viz. Central Orthodox.' It must be pointed out that about 10 per cent of all synagogue weddings are religious confirmations of civil marriages which took place either in the United Kingdom or abroad.

As for religious divorces, *gittin* (plural of *get*), there were 236 in 1994, 'a reduction of 39 (14 per cent) on the 1993 figure. However, the annual averages suggest a fairly constant range . . . with 1983 being exceptionally high and 1989 very low'.

There was also a drop in burials and cremations carried out under Jewish auspices: from 4,359 in 1993 to 4,069 in 1994 — 'thus continuing the overall downward trend noted since 1979'.

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The April–June 1995 issue of *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions* (published by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris) includes an article — in English — by Arno J. Mayer entitled 'The Perils of Emancipation: Protestants and Jews' (pp. 5–37). The author starts this article by stating: 'While in the long run revolutionary situations benefit oppressed not to say persecuted religious minorities, in the short run they put them in peril as well. In 1789 the Protestants — and in 1790–91 the Jews — of France were fully emancipated; in 1917 the Jews of Russia. Both times, however, there was a price to be paid. . . . Following the emancipation of 1789 anti-Protestantism played a considerable role in the resistance to the nascent *nouveau regime* in southeastern France, . . . following the emancipation of 1917 anti-Semitism played a similar role in southwestern Russia, mainly in the Ukraine' (p. 5). In the Russian context, the Jews 'were reviled for being not only modernizers, strangers, and infidels, but also Christ-killers and westernizers, as well as master revolutionaries' (p. 22). In February 1917, at the beginning of the Revolution, 'less than 1000 of the approximately 23,000 members of the Bolshevik party were of Jewish origin, or less than five per cent. . . . While close to 3000 Jews joined the party in 1918, nearly four times that number joined in 1919 and 1920, the season of the floodtide of pogroms. All this time about twenty per cent of the Central Committee was Jewish. But perhaps most notable, after the seizure of power Jews occupied important positions in the central executive of the Soviet as well as in the Council of People's Commissars' (p. 23). The Bolsheviks of Jewish origin were generally fully assimilated, acculturated and secularized Jews and many of them adopted Russian surnames. They did not convert to Eastern Orthodoxy, 'but to a secular religion and creed promising a world without not only class iniquities but above all also free of religious and national oppression' (p. 24).

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Antisemitism World Report 1995, a publication of the Institute of Jewish Affairs and the American Jewish Committee, states that the '*Report* documents antisemitism throughout the world in the year 1994' (Preface, p. v). The Introduction notes that militant Islamic antisemitism is a growing threat to Jewish security, that neo-fascists came to power in Italy, that there have been serious attacks on Jews and Jewish properties in Argentina, Germany, Russia, and the United Kingdom, and that the pro-Islamic Welfare Party in Turkey is hostile to Jews. There are also antisemitic parties in coalition governments in Slovakia and in Romania. Although both Canada and the United States have reported an increase in antisemitic incidents, there has not been a worsening of antisemitism overall in these two countries.

More countries have now enacted anti-racist laws and new methods have been devised by some police authorities to combat manifestations of race hatred. The Introduction specifies that countries where the overall antisemitic climate

deteriorated are Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey, while there was an improvement overall in Hungary, Mexico, and Sweden (p. xxviii).

The Institute of Jewish Affairs and the American Jewish Committee have also published three short reports in 1995; a 'policy paper' entitled 'Combating International Terrorism', by Paul Wilkinson; 'The Salience of Islamic Fundamentalism' by Martin Kramer; and 'Jerusalem: Past, Present and Future' by Bernard Wasserstein.

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The April 1995 issue of *Les Cahiers de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* states that the *Alliance* school which was established in Damascus in 1880, and which functioned until the school year 1993–94, is now closed. Only about 230 Jews remain in Syria, including some 35 children of school age. These children now go to private schools and their religious education is provided by a Talmud Torah sponsored by the Syrian Jewish community. Many Syrian Jews recently settled in Israel and so far, 46 children of Syrian origin have become pupils of *Alliance* schools in the Holy Land.

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The Board of Regents of the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization (ICUTJC) met in Jerusalem last June and launched 'a Foundation for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization in Honor of Moshe Davis who will reach his eightieth birthday in 1996'. The Board of Regents put on record their appreciation of 'the seminal role of Professor Moshe Davis who, with unique foresight, realized that the legitimation of the scientific study and teaching of the Jewish People's experience created the need for a new vocation in Jewish life — the University Jewish Scholar trained to harmonize Jewish commitment and high scholarship in the university setting'.

Last summer also saw the publication of a volume edited by Moshe Davis: *Teaching Jewish Civilization: A Global Approach to Higher Education* (New York University Press, New York and London). The various chapters are entitled: Jewish Studies in the University; Reconsiderations: Problems and Partial Solutions; Expanding and Deepening the Field; Cooperative Projects; The Israel Experience; Motivations; The Future; World Register of University Studies in Jewish Civilization; and International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization. The list in the World Register 'includes institutions of higher learning in which Jewish civilization is taught or researched, ranging from full departments and programs to single courses totally or partially devoted to Jewish subjects. A list of sources for the information is provided' (p. 253). The largest number of institutions are in North America and Latin America (pp. 255–330), followed by Europe (pp. 330–53), Africa (pp. 353–56), Asia (pp. 356–61) and Oceania: Australia and New Zealand (pp. 362–363). In Europe, several former communist countries are listed — Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovak Republic — as well as Russia and former Soviet republics. The majority of the institutions listed under Russia are in Moscow; they include the Jewish University in Moscow (where Jewish civilization is taught in the departments of Religion and Philosophy, History, Philology, and Sociology and Pedagogics). There is also a Jewish University in

St. Petersburg. Ukraine has courses in Jewish Studies in Donetsk State University, Dragomanov Institute of Education in Kiev, Kiev University, and in three other universities in Chernivtsi, Kharkov, and Uzhgorod.

In Africa, the largest number of institutions listed are in South Africa with more than a dozen universities in the country teaching courses in Jewish subjects; Egypt figures with five universities (three in Cairo and two in the provinces) while in Morocco the Hebrew language is taught in seven universities. Other countries listed in Africa are Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya (with four universities mentioned), Nigeria (with also four universities listed), Swaziland, and Zaire.

Under Asia, in alphabetical order, are China (ten institutions); Hong Kong; India (six institutions); Japan (which shows the greatest number in Asia: 31 universities and several colleges); Lebanon (four institutions); Philippines (eight institutions, six of which are in the capital, Manila); Singapore (in two theological colleges); South Korea (universities, seminaries, and theological colleges numbering a total of 12 institutions nearly all in the capital, Seoul); Sri Lanka (three universities and a Bible College); and in Thailand: Mahidol University.

Finally, 11 universities are listed in Australia and in New Zealand, seven universities and six colleges.

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The Sociological Institute for Community Studies of Bar-Ilan University publishes regularly *Sociological Papers*. The 1995 issues (in Vol. 4, nos. 1 and 2) are entitled *The Resurgence of Anti-semitism in Eastern Europe*, by Radu Florian and *Public and Private Violence Against Jews and Other Ethnic Minorities in France* by Pierre Birnbaum. Professor Radu Florian is 'Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest and Director of the Institute for Social Theory at the Romanian Academy'. A Note at the end of the paper states that this paper 'is a critical account and analysis of the development of anti-Semitism as a form of aggressive chauvinism during periods of Romanian totalitarian regimes'.

Pierre Birnbaum 'is Professor in the Department of Political Science, Université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne and Fellow of the Institut Universitaire de France'. He states that the number of foreigners in France increased sharply from 653,036 in 1866 to 1,130,211 in 1891; they were predominantly labourers. Belgians constituted the greatest proportion (43 per cent), followed by Italians (24 per cent). The Italians were mainly young unmarried men who 'sought employment in the chemical, mining and metallurgical industries, or in construction. . . . From time to time the Italian immigrants encountered open hostility, in particular from the French working classes who were worried about their competition in the labor market. . . . Against the background of disagreements between Italy and France, the rejection of Italians as foreigners acquired all the classic forms of an all-pervading xenophobia: fear of treason and espionage, invasion fantasies, sexual fear of these single men seducing and abandoning their over-naive prey, . . . charges of being disloyal to French workers and of knuckling under to the employers, and so on . . . acts of violence and murder succeeded each other without respite.'

Shortly before the end of the nineteenth century, there was general unbridled xenophobia, a rejection of all foreigners. The Dreyfus Affair whipped up antisemitism. The Jews were accused of corrupting members of parliament, by bribing them; 'socialist and extreme-right currents met, as their militants jointly

denounced the France of the Rothschilds, opportunism that had sold out to the Jews, . . . This economic angle on antisemitism . . . was also based not only on an antisemitism deriving from racial anthropology . . . but also on the inveterate old-style Catholic diehards, who were constantly being whipped up by the Bonne Presse . . . which propagated overt antisemitic hatred' (p. 4).

France in the 1980s and early 1990s had a recrudescence of xenophobia: between January 1980 and the end of 1993, 23 persons of North African origin were killed in racist incidents and a further 253 were injured. 'The 19th century events right up to contemporary events show the cruelty and violence that the children of immigrants, whether Italian or from the Maghreb, had to confront. This face-to-face violence has been going on mainly between Frenchmen of poorer background and youths of foreign extraction' (p. 9). However, 'up to 1993 antisemitic violence was steadily waning, primarily taking the form of vandalism of cemeteries and synagogues' (p. 10). But Professor Birnbaum warns that several recent polls have revealed that almost 70 per cent of respondents believe that there are 'too many Arabs in France' while 'just under 20% think the same about the Jews . . . ethnocentrism appears equally on the moderate right as well as the left, and even, and above all, among the extreme left, whose militants are sometimes recruited from the ranks of the underprivileged. . . . in the case of the Jews, there is a considerable distance between prejudice and actual action taken, a barrier which turns out to be far less solid in the case of racism' (pp. 10–11).

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BOOKS RECEIVED

(Books listed here may be reviewed later)

Daniel, Ruby and Barbara C. Johnson, *Ruby of Cochin: An Indian Jewish Woman Remembers*, xxvi + 211 pp., The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1995, $29.95.

Davis, Moshe, *America and the Holy Land. With Eyes Toward Zion — IV*, ix + 193 pp., Praeger, Westport, Ct. and London, 1995, n.p.

Davis, Moshe, ed., *Teaching Jewish Civilization: A Global Approach to Higher Education*, x + 375 pp., New York University Press, New York, 1995, $20.00 (hardback, $50.00).

Dresner, Samuel H., *Can Families Survive in Pagan America?*, 332 pp., Huntington House Publishers, Lafayette, 1995, n.p.

Frank, Daniel H., ed., *Commandment and Community: New Essays in Jewish Legal and Political Philosophy*, xiv + 285 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1995, $19.95.

Friedlander, Henry, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, xxiv + 421 pp., The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London, 1995, $38.45.

The Institute of Jewish Affairs and the American Jewish Committee, *Antisemitism World Report 1995*, London and New York, 1995, n.p.

McClintock, Anne, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, xi + 449 pp., Routledge, New York and London, 1995, £13.99 (hardback, £37.50).

Ram, Uri, *The Changing Agenda of Israeli Sociology: Theory, Ideology, and Identity*, State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1995, $23.95.

Sutton, Nina, *Bruno Bettelheim: The Other Side of Madness* (translated from the French by David Sharp in collaboration with the author), xvi + 524 pp., Duckworth, London, 1995, £25.00

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

POLLINS, Harold; B.Sc. Formerly Senior Tutor at Ruskin College, Oxford. Chief publications on Jewish History and Sociology: *A History of the Jewish Working Men's Club & Institute, 1874–1912*, 1981; *Economic History of the Jews in England*, 1982; *Hopeful Travellers: Jewish Migrants and Settlers in Nineteenth Century Britain*, 1989; 'German Jews in British Industry', in W. W. Mosse, ed., *Second Chance: Two Centuries of German-Speaking Jews in the United Kingdom*, 1991.

RUBINSTEIN, William D.; Ph.D. Professor of History at the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth; formerly Professor of Social and Economic History at Deakin University, Geelong, Australia. Chief publications: *The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History, 1945–Present*, 1991; *Capitalism, Culture and Decline in Britain, 1750–1990*, 1993; and *A History of the Jews in the English-Speaking World: Great Britain*, 1995.

SCHNALL, David J.; Ph.D. Professor of Management and Administration at the Wurzweiler School of Social Work of Yeshiva University in New York. Chief publications: *Contemporary Issues in Health Care*, 1984; *Beyond the Green Line: Israeli Settlements West of the Jordan*, 1984; and co-author, *Crisis and Challenge: The Jewish Family Faces the 21st Century*, 1995.

SHAFFIR, William; Ph.D. Professor of Sociology, McMaster University. Chief publications: *Life in a Religious Community: The Lubavitcher Chassidim in Montreal*, 1974; co-editor, *The Canadian Jewish Mosaic*, 1981; and several articles on Hassidic communities.

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