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EDITOR

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CONTENTS

Aspects of the Social Life of Kurdish Jews <i>by Dina Feitelson</i>	201
Blood Groups of the Jews, The <i>by A. E. Mourant</i>	155
Books Received	134, 272
Chronicle <i>by P. Glikson</i>	139, 275
Cultural and Economic Problems of Jewish Migration in the Post-War World <i>by Julius Isaac</i>	234
Demography of the Jewish Community in Canada, The <i>by Louis Rosenberg</i>	217
Editorial	3
Family, Kinship, and Marriage among Ashkenazim in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries <i>by Jacob Katz</i>	4
French Summaries	143, 278
Hebrew Summaries	151, 288
Jacob Katz on Jewish Social History <i>by Joseph Agassi</i>	261
Jewish Trade Union Movement in Israel, The <i>by Ferdymand Zweig</i>	23
Jews as an Indian Caste <i>by Schifra Strizower</i>	43
Jews of France, The <i>by H. Tint</i>	127
Max Weber on the Sociological Basis of the Jewish Religion <i>by I. Schiper</i>	250
North African Jewry Today <i>by André Chouraqui</i>	58
Notes on Contributors	138, 273
Observations on Church-State Problems in America and the Interest of the American Jewish Community <i>by Shad Polier</i>	69
On Prejudice <i>by Morris Ginsberg</i>	114
Position of the Jews in English Society, The <i>by Howard Brotz</i>	94
Resurgence of Hebrew, The <i>by Leon Roth</i>	177
Statistical Publications on the Jewish Population of Great Britain: A Bibliography <i>by S. J. Prais</i>	136
Synagogal Organization in Anglo-Jewry <i>by V. D. Lipman</i>	80
Trends in Occupational Structure and Distribution of Income among the Jewish Population of Israel <i>by A. Bonné</i>	242
Two Iraqi Jewish Short Story Writers: A Suggestion for Social Research <i>by Emile Marmorstein</i>	187

AUTHORS OF ARTICLES

Agassi, J.	261	Marmorstein, E.	187
Bonné, A.	242	Mourant, A. E.	155
Brotz, H.	94	Polier, S.	69
Chouraqui, A.	58	Prais, S. J.	136
Feitelson, D.	201	Rosenberg, L.	217
Ginsberg, M.	114	Roth, L.	177
Glikson, P.	139, 275	Schiper, I.	250
Isaac, J.	234	Strizower, S.	43
Katz, J.	4	Tint, H.	127
Lipman, V. D.	80	Zweig, F.	23

AUTHORS OF REVIEWS

Abel-Smith, B.	266	Lewis, A.	269
Diamond, A. S.	271	MacRae, D. G.	272
Freedman, M.	132, 269	Tropp, A.	132
Glikson, P.	133	Watt, D. C.	267

BOOKS REVIEWED

- | | | | |
|---|-----|---|-----|
| <p>Aubery, P. <i>Milieux juifs de la France contemporaine</i></p> | 127 | <p>Jullian, P. ed. <i>The Snob Spotter's Guide</i></p> | 272 |
| <p>Bakan, D. <i>Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition</i></p> | 269 | <p>Katz, J. <i>Tradition and Crisis—Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages</i> (in Hebrew)</p> | 261 |
| <p>Bibby, C. <i>Race, Prejudice and Education</i></p> | 269 | <p>Lipman, V. <i>A Century of Social Service (1859-1959)</i></p> | 266 |
| <p>Borwicz, M. <i>Écrits des Condamnés à Mort sous l'occupation allemande (1939-1945)</i></p> | 133 | <p>Roucek, J. S., ed. <i>Contemporary Sociology</i></p> | 132 |
| <p>Boyd, W. C., and Asimov, I. <i>Races and People</i></p> | 269 | <p>Sachar, H. M. <i>The Course of Modern Jewish History</i></p> | 267 |
| <p>Elman, P. ed. <i>An Introduction to Jewish Law</i></p> | 271 | <p>Simpson, G. E., and Yinger, J. M. <i>Racial and Cultural Minorities, An Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination</i></p> | 132 |
| <p>Hays, H. R. <i>From Ape to Angel, an Informal History of Social Anthropology</i></p> | 269 | | |

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VOLUME I NO. I

APRIL 1959

CONTENTS

Editorial		3
Family, Kinship, and Marriage among Ashkenazim in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries	<i>Jacob Katz</i>	4
The Jewish Trade Union Movement in Israel	<i>Ferdynand Zweig</i>	23
Jews as an Indian Caste	<i>Schifra Strizower</i>	43
North African Jewry Today	<i>André Chouraqui</i>	58
Observations on Church-State Problems in America and the Interest of the American Jewish Community	<i>Shad Polier</i>	69
Synagogal Organization in Anglo-Jewry	<i>V. D. Lipman</i>	80
The Position of the Jews in English Society	<i>Howard Brotz</i>	94
On Prejudice	<i>Morris Ginsberg</i>	114
Book Reviews		
The Jews of France	<i>H. Tint</i>	127
Shorter Notices		132
Books Received		134
Statistical Publications on the Jewish Population of Great Britain: A Bibliography	<i>S. J. Prais</i>	136
Notes on Contributors		138
Chronicle	<i>P. Glikson</i>	139
French Summaries		143
Hebrew Summaries		151

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EDITORIAL

THIS JOURNAL has been brought into being in order to provide an international vehicle for serious writing on Jewish social affairs. There are few opportunities at present for publishing academic and scientific papers on the sociology of the Jews; the purpose of the Journal is to expand the opportunities and to make it possible for good work to appear in print which might otherwise have lain unpublished. At the same time, we hope that the very existence of the Journal and the forum which it provides will encourage scholars to turn their attention to Jewish topics. *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* cannot become a permanent institution unless it rests on a broad foundation of research and systematic thinking.

The title of the Journal cannot adequately express its scope. The word 'Jewish' refers to the nature of the subject-matter, not to the authorship of the papers, and defines a field of study. Papers which are concerned with general sociological questions and which help incidentally to throw light on Jewish matters (both in Israel and the Diaspora) will be as welcome as papers which concentrate on purely Jewish subjects. The word 'Sociology' in the title of the Journal is a shorthand term for the systematic study of social affairs; the study may be concerned with the past or the present and with any aspect of society. Academically we address ourselves not only to sociologists, but to social scientists in general, to historians, to philosophers, and to students of comparative religion.

The primary aim of the Journal is academic, but the audience we have in mind is by no means confined to academics. We hope that the common reader will find in the papers we publish facts and analyses which will help him to make a rational appraisal of Jewish questions. The Chronicle and book reviews which we expect to include in each issue are intended to furnish a guide to matters of topical and scholarly interest.

English is the language most widely spoken among Jews at the present, and for the time being we propose to use it as the main language of the Journal. Summaries of all papers will appear in Hebrew and French. At a later date we may find it possible to publish papers in languages other than English.

We should like to stress both that the Journal is editorially independent and that the opinions expressed by authors are their own responsibility.

We wish, finally, to take the opportunity of inviting contributions. Papers may be sent direct to the editorial office in London or through any member of the Advisory Board.

FAMILY, KINSHIP, AND MARRIAGE AMONG ASHKENAZIM IN THE SIXTEENTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES¹

Jacob Katz

THE JEWISH FAMILY in the period under discussion was in the sociological sense a small one.² It was composed of the marriage nucleus of husband and wife, and the children born into it or introduced into it from a previous marriage of one or both parties. All the members lived in one household, with the property which served as the basis for the family's existence belonging to the father, whether considerable wealth was involved or only the bare means of housing and subsistence. The mother had certain rights in the use of this property. She was entitled to make the ordinary expenditures involved in housekeeping and to meet religious and moral obligations, such as giving the customary amount to charity. To the extent that she shared her husband's business activities, her word was as binding as his in current transactions. In fact, there were instances where the task of providing for the family lay entirely or primarily with the wife, while the husband devoted all his time to the study of Torah.³ The children were regarded as dependent on the will of the parents, particularly that of the father. They did not enjoy economic, legal, or political independence.

This inner family nucleus was frequently supplemented by living partners of secondary connexion, the father or mother of the husband or wife, or other relatives without homes of their own. The right of the parents to be supported by their children was guaranteed by custom and law.⁴ Other relatives, and occasionally even an orphan who was not related at all, were taken to live with the family as an act of charity and mercy. An intermediate position was occupied by sons- and daughters-in-law who lived with their parents-in-law for the first few years after their marriage. Even though their relationship was definitely a primary one, their joining the household was based on a contract which ensured the young couple their maintenance for a predetermined

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG ASHKENAZIM

number of years.⁵ A contractual relationship without any family status bound the menservants and maidservants, the cook and the wet-nurse, as well as the teacher, who was something like a private tutor. The last was generally to be found in the rich homes of the period.⁶

We have before us a monogamous, patriarchal family structure as this developed in the urban culture of Europe. In any event, close examination reveals typically Jewish traits, both in the mode of life and in the consciousness which accompanied it. The purpose of this study is not comparative, however. We are not interested in discovering the differences between the Jewish and non-Jewish family, but in thoroughly understanding the Jewish family—its structure, functions, atmosphere and, if we may so express it, the spirit or the ideology which gave it life.

The specific character of any given family structure is reflected in the way in which the family evolves. The Jewish family of the period was founded by an agreement between those regarded as the natural representatives of the couple, the parents, or, if they were no longer alive, their relatives or public guardians. No formal bond (that is, a matrimonial tie which could be severed only by divorce) was created except by the personal act of the couple themselves—by the man's act of betrothal and the woman's voluntary acceptance. This tie took effect at the *huppah*, when the marriage ceremony actually occurred, in contradistinction to medieval practice by which it was still customary to make the betrothal precede the marriage ceremony by several months or even years.⁷ But betrothal was always preceded by the writing of the 'betrothal terms', which was an agreement in which the parties plighted their troth and which stipulated the amount of the marriage payments, the wedding date, and the place where the couple would live. As a rule, the couple themselves had no voice whatsoever in formulating the terms of the agreement. Only in a second marriage, where the parties were independent in a domestic sense, or, in exceptional cases, where the marriage was postponed until social and economic independence was achieved, were the betrothal terms fixed by the couple themselves.⁸ But even in such cases, the formal signing was delegated, as a matter of courtesy, to the parents or other representatives.

As we have said, the signing of the betrothal document did not create matrimonial ties nor did its cancellation require a divorce. But in practice the document contained guarantees of sufficient substance to warrant regarding the future of the couple as entirely settled upon its being signed, no less than upon their entering into actual betrothal. In the first place, each party undertook to pay a heavy forfeit on violating the agreement—generally half the amount of the marriage payment. Secondly, and more important, the undertaking involved the acceptance of a ban regarded as 'a ban of the *kehillot*' (i.e. like a decree of the Early Sages) on anyone who violated the betrothal terms and

injured the good name of the other family. In Germany there were places where payment of the forfeit released one from the ban. But in Poland it was specifically set forth in the betrothal document that the validity of the ban did not expire upon payment of the forfeit. The seriousness of the bond forged by the betrothal document was supported by public opinion, which frowned on its cancellation. The writing of the document was executed at a public ceremony in the presence not only of the members of the family, but also of prominent personalities, the rabbi or preacher, a scribe, and witnesses.⁹ Since the choice of a mate was not regarded as an intimate, personal decision which could be changed at will, the violation of the agreement cast an aspersion on the good name of the prospective mate or his family. Anyone who violated the agreement without receiving the dispensation of a competent court not only had to suffer the consequences by paying the forfeit, but would be held in contempt and his chances of again making a worthy match would be diminished.

The parents were given the say in making the match because the parties themselves were young, inexperienced in life, and did not know their own minds. Indeed, the tendency to arrange a marriage as early as possible was typical of the period. This tendency sprang, first of all, from the parents' desire to settle their children's future while they were still alive. But perhaps even more important than the personal, material concern was the influence of the accepted code of religion and sexual morality. All sexual contact and erotic satisfaction outside of monogamous marriage was prohibited. The ideal of sexual purity applied equally to both men and women. Moreover, sinful thoughts in a man were regarded as more reprehensible than in a woman, for they might lead to nocturnal emissions and masturbation, offences for which there was practically no atonement other than difficult and bitter self-mortification. This view of sexual morality was derived from Talmudic literature, and it became even more entrenched by the force of the ethical literature of the period, which was saturated with the ideas of the Zohar and other Cabbalist works which are most strict on this subject.¹⁰ On the other hand, that literature itself, from the Talmud and the *Midrashim* to the *musar* works, appreciated the intensity of the ordeal of sexual temptation. Talmudic Judaism is far removed both from the optimism of Catholic sexual morality, which believes in man's ability to overcome his desires, and from the glossing over of the problem and the minimizing of its importance which we find in the liberal view. Jewish law and ethics emphasize, in no uncertain terms, that a celibate has practically no hope of withstanding the temptations of the flesh. A Jew who was bred on this outlook was left with no alternative but to arrange as early a marriage as possible both for himself or for his sons, as the case might be. At the very most, a man was permitted to postpone his marriage for a few years in order to study in

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG ASHKENAZIM

a *yeshiva*, as one whose soul longed for the Torah. But even with regard to devotees of Torah study, the ideal remained to marry first and study Torah afterwards, in purity.¹¹

There were thus many incentives for carrying out the ideal of early marriage, and anyone who could do so fulfilled this ideal. Sixteen was considered the proper age for a girl and eighteen, at the very latest, for a boy. Parents who arranged a match—or even married off—their daughters at thirteen or fourteen, or their sons at fifteen or sixteen, were considered praiseworthy and were certainly not criticized.¹² But it would be a mistake to suppose that such early marriages were the general rule in society as a whole. Admittedly, of course, there were lacking the subjective restraints which sometimes delay the finding of a mate where marriage is conditional on personal attraction. The great majority of matches were arranged through the agency of others, and every eligible person was open to marriage proposals, particularly from professional matchmakers. The matchmakers' beat extended far beyond the local parish, and they often matched couples living in different countries.¹³ It is safe to say that no one with the necessary qualifications for establishing a family would find any difficulty in arranging to meet a suitable mate. The hindrances to marriage at the desirable age, or to marriage altogether, derived from these 'necessary qualifications', which were more difficult to come by at times than we are likely to imagine. The establishment of a family was regarded as the establishment of a new economic unit. Although it was customary for the newly married couple to eat at the parents' table for two years or more, this time was devoted either to further study (at home, at a *yeshiva*, or at a *beit hamidrash*) or to acquiring one's first experience in business. When the specified period elapsed, the new couple left the house, or at least started to manage their own affairs while continuing to live with the parents.¹⁴ In order to make such economic independence possible, a sum of property was brought into the marriage by one or both parties. If the couple themselves or their parents did not have the wherewithal for this sum, they had to fall back on other sources: the generosity of relatives or wealthy donors, the funds of charitable societies which were sometimes especially earmarked for this purpose, or even the funds of the *kehillot* and super-*kehilla* organizations.¹⁵ The readiness on the part of individuals and public bodies to help in marrying off poor girls is evidence in the first place of the religious importance attached to early marriage. But this readiness is also an expression of the assumption, self-evident in this period, that entering into marriage required the ownership of means which would serve not only as the basis for establishing a home, but also as an instrument for furthering independent economic activity. The first condition for a marriage was thus the existence of an adequate endowment of property. The larger the endowment the greater the prospects of achieving a suitably balanced match.

The marriage payment was not the only consideration in the match. The new couple had to acquire the right of domicile in one *kehilla* or another. If one of them was heir to such a right and it also passed to the spouse, this was sometimes a consideration of the first order. For the *kehilla* was often responsible for the postponement of marriages in its wish to limit the number of breadwinners in the locality, and it imposed a marriage ban for a specific period, limited the number of marriages, or made them conditional on the couple's possession of a certain amount of property.¹⁶ In other places, it was necessary to purchase the right of domicile from the local prefect. An undertaking to do this, on the part of one of the parents, constituted one of the preliminaries to the marriage agreement.¹⁷ Occasionally the prospective son-in-law was promised a position by the girl's parents. During the period when rabbinical livings were sold in Poland, the conferring of such a position was occasionally a condition, although it was probably not explicitly stated in the official betrothal document.¹⁸ Marrying into a family with good social and economic connexions was a consideration, even without the specific promise of any immediate benefit. Some weight—although very limited—was placed on a good lineage, that is, descent from prominent scholars or other famous personages. In contrast, an apostasy or sexual irregularity in the family constituted a stain which had to be compensated by other considerations.¹⁹ Finally, there were also personal considerations—the prospective groom's learning or the bride-to-be's efficiency (where a woman had had previous domestic experience or had helped, for instance, in her first husband's business). Some weight was attached to good looks, too, although not to so great an extent as in a society where the system of free choice in marriage prevails.²⁰

A person's eligibility could be determined both in terms of the age at which he would marry and the match he would make. Sons and daughters of the rich and scholarly ruling class might expect to find mates from the same class and at an early age, just as the ideal prescribed. The great mobility of this class is indicated by the fact that the prospective bride and groom were brought together from distant places, at times even from another country, the only limit being the social and cultural frontiers of the Jewish centre concerned. The chances were slimmer that a young man or woman of the lower classes would find a mate of first rank and at an early age. The geographical area from which a match would be proposed for such persons was also more restricted. Their marriages were almost always with persons from the immediate locality and took place at a later age than most marriages.

But social considerations, as has been indicated, were not the only ones. Negative or positive personal traits might decrease or increase the prospects for making a good match. Even a rich and well-educated

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG ASHKENAZIM

widow or widower—a status quite common in those days of early mortality—would be content with a spouse from a lower class, particularly if the widowed person was left with a number of children. This was even truer in the case of a person with a physical deformity or in whose family there was a stain of one kind or another, even through no fault of his own.²¹ Conversely, an individual endowed with some personal mark of distinction in the field of scholarship, looks, or business standing, could expect to rise in the social scale through marriage. But it was precisely such gifted individuals who were likely to defer marriage until they had a chance to show their mettle—the talented scholar until he distinguished himself in his studies and the commercial adventurer until he made a name for himself in the business world.²² As a matter of fact, it was only the members of the upper class, outstanding in both wealth and learning, who could afford the luxury of an early match without lessening their prospects. They were assured of a 'good match' by their very position. Members of the lower classes, however, would carefully appraise their present and future prospects before making a decision. Even the weight attached to the religious ideal of an early marriage varied from family to family, depending on the intensity of its loyalty to religious values. The *musar* works reflect this problem when they warn against postponing marriage in the hope of making a better match later on. This problem was one which faced the middle class in particular. The lower class in this respect was dependent on factors beyond their control, such as the generosity of others, finding a domestic position which did not interfere with setting up a family, and obtaining a permit to settle in a particular locality. The ideal of early marriage in their case operated more through its influence on public agencies facilitating matrimony than by any personal effort in that direction on their own part.

The outstanding feature in the attitude of members of society towards arranging a marriage was the cold, calculating approach with which they weighed up the pros and cons. Personal compatibility, not to speak of romantic attachment, was not taken into account at all. This does not imply that there were no instances of love affairs between young people. In many places there were even opportunities for contacts of an erotic nature, such as dances and excursions on the occasion of celebrations or holidays. Nevertheless, the ideology did not include the belief in the right to choose one's mate on the basis of falling in love, even after the event where a person had already been caught in 'the web of desire'. Certainly, falling in love was not regarded as a necessary preliminary to a matrimonial proposal. Even if it happened that matrimonial choice, in a particular case, was made on a personal basis, a matchmaker would be employed for appearance' sake and, in any event, the negotiations and the formulation of the betrothal document were entrusted to the parents or their substitutes.²³ Every effort was

made to give the impression that the match had been arranged in the customary way. If a boy or girl who had fallen in love encountered parental opposition, they would give up their choice almost as a matter of course. But even if they attempted to circumvent their parents' will, they did not easily achieve their object. Situations of this kind were often echoed in the questions regarding 'clandestine betrothals' which were the subject of considerable discussion in the responsa literature of the period. The usual case was that of a youth who had been betrothed to the girl in the presence of witnesses, without any previous official matrimonial negotiations. The consideration of questions of this kind concluded either with the annulment of the betrothal on technical grounds (the witnesses were incompetent, the girl did not give her consent, etc.) or with the ruling that a divorce be given. In no case did the rabbi who was making a ruling suggest that the parties recognize one another as their life partners. Not only had Talmudic tradition already regarded betrothal unaccompanied by prior negotiation and agreement as a moral defect, but public opinion in the period censured it as an attempt by irresponsible elements to usurp the parental privilege to choose their children's marriage partners. Moreover, such surprise marriages were condemned as violations of social etiquette. In this manner, a person from the lower classes could illicitly achieve a match beyond his station.²⁴

This last consideration will help us understand one of the reasons for the opposition to marriages based on free choice. We have before us a society based on a strict class division, but which lacked adequate barriers between one class and another. Precisely because Judaism ruled that 'all families are presumed to be fit'²⁵ and might intermarry with one another—and in exceptional cases did so—society could not permit the choice of a spouse on the basis of a chance encounter. As life was organized in the isolated *kehilla*, members of the different classes were bound to come together in such casual meetings. Members of the same class, on the other hand, who on the basis of objective considerations could be suitably matched, were often geographically separated and would meet only if an interview was deliberately arranged.

But this was certainly not the only reason. The objection to marriage by personal choice in this society was bound up with its entire conception of the role of love and sex. As we have seen, the temptations of the flesh were clearly recognized and frankly admitted. On the other hand, there was no deliberate cultivation of the erotic life, in which the individual might find an emotional outlet or even room for self-expression. Sexual activity and the accompanying erotic experience were relegated to the marriage institution. Even within marriage, sexual activity was restricted by the religious laws governing the menstrual period, which add about one week each month to the time that physiology rules out sexual intercourse. Within the permitted period, however,

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG ASHKENAZIM

there was no ascetic tendency. In any case, married life was not subjugated to its formal-religious purpose of procreation. Permission was given to have intercourse with one's wife even where conception could not possibly result, for example, when the woman was already pregnant or was not capable of having children.²⁶ Although such sanction seems to run counter to the severe condemnations of masturbation by the *musar* writers, scholars who pointed out the discrepancy managed to resolve it dialectically; in practice the sanction was never doubted.²⁷ On the contrary, the severity of the prohibition against all sexual contact or erotic thoughts outside the marriage bond strengthened the need to give the sexual impulse a legitimate outlet. Religious law and ethics here pay perhaps more regard to the needs of the woman than to those of the man. If the man tends to asceticism and would like to curtail sexual activity to a minimum, this curtailment is limited by the husband's obligation to satisfy his wife's sexual needs. This reciprocal attachment between man and wife is an erotic one as well. The wife is admonished to attract her husband's attention to the point of monopolizing completely his erotic impulse. The husband is exhorted to show consideration for his wife's feelings, and not to regard her merely as an instrument for gratifying his lust or for observing the Divine command to procreate.²⁸ The height of erotic-cum-religious experience was reached in married life where the influence of the Cabbala had taught the couple to regard their union as symbolic of parallel processes in the Divine sphere, a conception which became widespread in the period through the cabbalist *musar* literature, especially the '*Sh'lah*' of Rabbi Isaiah Horowitz and cognate works.²⁹

At any rate, success in married life was determined by the criterion of mutual satisfaction on the sexual plane. Of course, it was always common knowledge that some marriages turned out well and some did not. But there was no belief that falling in love was a necessary preliminary to a successful marriage. What were depended on to produce a successful marriage were objective factors such as the level of culture in the homes of the prospective couple. Even where such personal characteristics as good looks were taken into account, the evaluation was not reached on the basis of the individual taste of the two parties. Even in such matters they were expected to rely on the opinion of experts in these matters. For this reason, the marriage of young people who had not met each other beforehand was not regarded as a violation of their rights. Such an arrangement, however, was limited mainly to the wealthy scholarly circle which contracted marriages with families living at a considerable distance. In the lower classes, it was often customary deliberately to arrange for erotic contact between the betrothed couple.³⁰ But even here, this was done only after the match was sealed, and it is unlikely that sexual attraction ever served as a test of compatibility. In any event, the young people did not consider

themselves ill-used, even where there was no prior acquaintance at all with the prospective mate. After those responsible had done all in their power to pick the best possible partner, there was nothing to be done but trust to luck and pray to Him who held the fate of all men in His hand.³¹ This, in fact, was the attitude of the times towards every activity, after all practical measures had been taken to achieve the desired end.

Even though an internal criterion of the success of a marriage thus existed, with some couples deriving more satisfaction than others, marriages as a rule were not dissolved except after they had obviously and signally failed—in the complete absence of sexual satisfaction, infidelity (especially on the part of the woman), childlessness, or social incompatibility such as public and perpetual bickering. Indeterminate dissatisfaction with one's husband or wife or the wish to find happiness in another marriage was not considered grounds for divorce.³² The absence of any philosophy promising happiness in marriage, on the one hand, and the many difficulties facing the dissatisfied partners, on the other, served to prevent divorce unless objective circumstances forced it on them. For the husband the economic aspect of divorce acted as a serious deterrent. The original aim of the *ketuba*, the marriage contract, 'that it should not be a light thing in his eyes to send her away', operated also in this period. The amount of money stipulated in the marriage contract, which the husband had to pay the wife upon divorce, was fixed in accordance with the size of the marriage payment,³³ and the latter was generally invested in a business which would collapse if the money was withdrawn. As for the woman, the status of a divorcee was such as to deter her from demanding a divorce from her husband. The chances of a divorced woman's remarrying were slight, particularly if it was she who was at fault, whether through childlessness, suspicion of infidelity, or shrewishness. For a woman to be independent in this society was no advantage from any point of view. Only a widow with children, who might be considered as a substitute for her husband, was likely to maintain the family's economic and social position—as did Glückel of Hameln, for example. But it was doubtful whether a young divorced woman would be able to fit into economic life, and she certainly could not maintain an independent position socially. She had no choice but to seek asylum in the home of others, either with her parents or relatives, and, in the lowest class, as a servant in a rich house.

All these considerations acted as deterrents to hasty divorce as the solution for tension in family life. In fact, there were many instances where rabbis were asked to permit a marriage to continue, although according to law the husband was required to divorce his wife, e.g. if she had not borne children after ten years of marriage.³⁴ The secondary economic and social functions imposed on the family carried such

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG ASHKENAZIM

weight that they were capable of sustaining a marriage even where it fell short of its primary erotic and biological purpose.

Although public opinion and personal motives alike impelled the individual to get married, it is clear from all that has been said that not every individual was capable of fulfilling this demand. Voluntary bachelorhood was not accepted by society, and was certainly far from being an ideal; even a person who lost his spouse once or twice through death or divorce would try to remedy the situation by marrying a second and third time. But if voluntary bachelorhood was not to be found, enforced bachelorhood was—stemming from the various obstacles to matrimony we have already enumerated.³⁵ It followed therefore that, from its public aspect, the problem of sex was not one which was always settled. The door was open to what society considered sexual deviation of greater or lesser seriousness. While it is difficult to estimate the extent of such deviations, there is no question that they took place. The ordinances of important *kehillot* set forth the rules of conduct to be observed towards those guilty of deviation, and the responsa literature, in every generation and in every locality, deals with cases in point. As has been indicated, these violations of the sexual code may be traced to involuntary bachelorhood: men and women who did not find a mate in good time, domestic servants whose jobs condemned them to long years of bachelorhood, unattached widows and widowers, *agunot* (widows whose husbands were missing) who had given up hope of ever seeing their husband again, bachelor teachers who had left their homes to follow their calling, travelling salesmen, and itinerant beggars. The very nature of their lives made all these groups suspect,³⁶ and they also served as a constant temptation to possible deviation on the part of others. To be sure, even marriage was no absolute guarantee against the evil inclination. As the Talmud so realistically puts it, 'There is no guardian against unchastity.'

Even this society, therefore, had to fight against violations of the sexual code. But it may be said that the battle was not one between one part of society and another, but rather a fight in which both the successfully chaste and the defaulters made common cause. Deviations occurred not as part of any conscious free thinking, but as temporary lapses regretted by those who committed them. This fact explains the inquiries regarding ways of doing penance for sexual sins, ranging from masturbation to adultery, in which the responsa literature abounds. The concept of *ba'al tshuva* (a penitent) was applied almost exclusively to persons who had committed a sexual offence; only homicide and apostasy (voluntary or compulsory) were dealt with so severely. The tradition of the German hassidic movement (thirteenth century) bequeathed to this period a veritable catalogue of penances for each separate sin. The severity of the mortification and self-abasement that these penances involved goes beyond what people today are likely to

regard as reasonable or within man's capacity to endure.³⁷ The fact that the guilty parties themselves asked for severe penances to atone for their sin—and there are cases where the rabbi gave a more severe ruling only in order to pacify the questioner—indicates that although sexual purity did not reign supreme, the ideal itself was firmly entrenched, and that it operated both as a restraining and a corrective force which, even after the deviation, restored the equilibrium.

So far we have analysed the family structure, its living content, and described the way it evolved. We have dealt with its primary functions, purpose and *raison d'être*. The family, however, also fulfilled a whole series of secondary functions, and served as the basis for a substantial part of social activity. It was the family that provided the framework for various religious ceremonies, and it was the family that acted as the first and the 'natural' agency in moulding the new generation.

All this applies only to the 'small family', an institution which occupied a well-defined place in the structure of society. But its members, who actually shared day-to-day living, felt themselves part of a larger whole which embraced a number of small families. This wider attachment sprang from a consanguineal or marriage relationship, and it bound part of the members of society to one another. Uncles, cousins, brothers-in-law, and brothers-in-law of brothers-in-law regarded each other as kinsfolk. Although they were not bound by any hard and fast social ties, as is the case in societies organized strictly on a kinship basis, they by no means ignored this link. The existence of such kinship feeling appears to be a universal phenomenon, stemming from the individual's need for a sliding scale of social relationships. The primary intimacy of the small family is communicated through the medium of the connecting members, even with regard to relatives outside the immediate kin circle. We are thus entitled to regard the existence of the wider kinship circle as an anthropological phenomenon, varying in accordance with the sociological data. Our analysis of the society in question would thus be incomplete if we ignored the kinship ties prevailing within it.

The traditional Jewish family took a broad view of the concept of kin relationship, both from the aspect of the scope of the circle and from that of the nature of the obligations of relatives to one another. In Jewish religious law the concept of kinship is defined only in the context of forbidden unions and the disqualification of witnesses. On grounds of kinship, marriage is prohibited only within the inner circle of relatives, as between brother and sister or aunt and nephew (but not between uncle and niece).³⁸ Disqualification from bearing witness (and from acting as a judge) applies to great-uncles and cousins as well. In practice it does not matter whether the relationship is one of con-

sanguinity or marriage; even if it is the women of the family who are related, the disqualification applies to their husbands.³⁹ This definition of kinship also served as an example for disqualifying a person from taking part in the ruling institutions of the *kehilla* and the *super-kehilla*. Here, as in the case of the judicial institutions, there was need for a fixed legal definition. But with regard to the feeling of kin solidarity, no such restriction was recognized. Anyone who was known to be related came within the terms of the injunction: 'Hide not thyself from thine own flesh' (Isaiah lviii. 7). This text, as interpreted by the Talmud,⁴⁰ constituted a proverbial expression denoting a person's obligation to come to the assistance of his less fortunate relatives.

Aid to one's relatives implied, first of all, supporting them in the event of economic setbacks and actual poverty. Ancient religious law obliged the benefactor to give his relatives preference over the poor in general.⁴¹ According to the view prevalent in the period we are studying, a person was expected to help his needy relatives more substantially than he would an ordinary charity case. Particular emphasis was placed on the duty of helping to marry off the daughters of one's poor relatives, particularly if the girl's father was dead. To bring up and eventually to marry off the orphan of a poor relative was regarded as an especially meritorious deed, and one which charitable persons took pride in performing.⁴²

The obligation to support one's relatives was regarded as an accepted norm in society, although the degree of such support naturally varied from person to person, depending on how loyal he was to the principle of implementing religious obligations which involved a monetary loss. In this readiness to aid one's relatives, the object of preserving the family honour constituted, at the most, a secondary motive. For even the richest families were not in a position to maintain a uniform socio-economic standard among all their members. The fundamental condition necessary for the purpose was lacking, namely, property of permanent value, such as land. Business methods and conditions led to fluctuations in the social hierarchy. Well-to-do families kept their poor relations in mind; they could perhaps save them from destitution, but they could not sustain their socio-economic position.⁴³

The obligation of inter-family assistance constituted a norm which evolved out of the actual functions discharged by ties of kinship, under the prevailing social conditions. The chief economic activity of this society was intimately bound up with its continued unity, which was preserved despite the geographical dispersion of its members. The possibility of constant communication with people living in other countries, with whom there existed a kinship of language and culture, was what gave an economic advantage to the Jews, who were scattered over many lands. But even in the competition of the members of this society between one another, the connexions of secondary groups, whose

members were related and loyal to each other, constituted an advantage over individuals without any outside ties. This advantage was not confined to the economic sphere alone. To the extent that common political interests existed, whether these involved intercession with outside authorities or with the internal organizations, the primary ties were regarded as an asset. Connexions with persons outside the immediate locality were helpful in every field of activity which was not completely parochial in character. The roving talmudic student, the rabbi who was called to serve another *kehilla*, and even a person who had made a match with someone in a distant city needed assistance or, at least, information.⁴⁴ The organized agencies which existed were inadequate to meet society's need for connexions between one city and another. There was actually no institution or agency other than the kindred to which the individual could turn for assistance in making contact with persons outside his locality.

Moreover, kin ties were important within the life of the *kehillot* themselves. In the struggle for power by individuals and groups, and in the attempt to acquire economic or social advantages, the opposing forces occasionally divided along kin lines. Here, too, the reason was mainly negative: the lack of groupings on a class or ideological basis. Although these were not entirely absent, they were not yet strong enough to serve as cohesive forces. The struggle, for the most part, was between equals in property, class, and general outlook on life. The conflict was essentially over the question of who would acquire power, honour, and prestige. Under the circumstances, it was natural that the opposing forces should crystallize on the basis of the immediate kin connexion, and this was a common occurrence in the history of the *kehillot* of the period, with entire 'families' engaged in a struggle—sometimes a remorseless one—against one another.⁴⁵

Now we can return to define the social conditions which particularly favoured Jewish family and kin solidarity in this period. Economic, political, and social life had become so diversified that the activities of secondary groups ensured substantial advantages to those who belonged to them. This situation paved the way for the formation of groups which filled the need for cohesion of a secondary degree in their localities. But, first and foremost, these conditions strengthened the cohesive power which existed 'naturally'—the cohesion of the family.

Mutual responsibility among kin became an uncontested principle. It was observed not only when it was to the individual's advantage, as in the case of the poor man who was assisted by rich relatives, or the community leader who owed his authority to the support of the members of his kindred in the *kehilla*; it was also followed when it meant fulfilling the moral obligation to give financial assistance to one's less prosperous relatives or advance their interests in the *kehilla* or the super-*kehilla*. But owing to the social conditions we have described, this kinship

attachment did not operate without clashing with other principles. Kin interests did not always harmonize with those of the communal institutions. The judiciary, the government, and the economy, by their very nature, transcend the narrow kinship basis. Their function is to serve members of different families, and they must operate irrespective of kin connexions.

The problem is clearest with regard to judicial institutions. A court is a public institution which, intentionally and as a matter of principle, has been removed from the kinship ties which exist between the members of society. Talmudic justice is supra-kin justice; it does not recognize any privileges on the basis of a kin relationship between the judge and the judged. Contemporary Jewish society relied on a clear tradition which had evolved under conditions similar to its own. For even in the period of the Mishna and the Talmud—excluding the Biblical period on a number of counts—law was based on the public principle transcending tribal or kin connexions. Later, Jewish law tended to be excessively strict over the barriers to be maintained between relatives by blood or marriage.⁴⁶

In the judicial context, however, there was no clash between the principle of the law and the kinship tie. Anyone who violated the rules of the law with regard to the composition of the court, or who took kin ties into account in judging a case, was regarded both by himself and others as deviating from the principles of Jewish law and ethics.

It was otherwise with the governing institutions. As a matter of principle, the governing institutions—the *kehilla* and super-*kehilla*—were regarded as standing above kin ties. Rules were therefore adopted which precluded inter-related persons from participating in the governing institutions, whether local or country-wide ones. Particular care was exercised in the composition of the assessment committees charged with the function of distributing the tax burden among the members of the *kehilla*. In fixing the degree of kin relationship permitted, institutional authorities relied on the accepted tradition governing the judiciary. But a clearly defined tradition which directly applied to this sphere was lacking. This explains the different usages that prevailed and the clashes that took place over the definition of kinship where public bodies exercising functions of secondary rank were concerned. Was it only on the communal board of management that relatives were precluded from serving or even on the broader body of the whole community and the committee which chose the leaders?⁴⁷ Such questions arose with respect to the rabbi in relation to the members of the *kehilla*. Many *kehillot* adopted the rule that a rabbi might not be elected who had relatives among the congregation.⁴⁸ Possibly, in this way, they wished to ensure that the rabbi would be qualified to serve as head of the *beit din* in any dispute that might arise between members of the *kehilla*. But it would also seem that the rabbi's official status as the

supreme arbiter of his community impelled it to find a person who would stand above the differences which, as has been shown, sometimes crystallized on a kin basis. But even this preventive measure concerning the rabbi was neither general nor consistent. Not every *kehilla* strictly observed this prohibition. Those communities which scrupulously adhered to the principle did so only *ab initio*. If the rabbi formed a marriage connexion with a member of his *kehilla*, he did not forfeit his position.⁴⁹ The same practice was usually observed with regard to other official appointments on communal bodies. If the families of communal officers intermarried during their term of office, they were not *ipso facto* disqualified. Obviously, communal institutions, unlike judicial ones which had explicit halachic warrant, could not even theoretically exclude the incidence of kin connexions. It is safe to conclude that even where the principle of excluding relatives was accepted in theory, there was no adequate guarantee that it would be carried out in practice. Certainly they were not so careful about observing the rules forbidding relatives to hold communal appointments as they were where judicial institutions were concerned.

This conflict of loyalties—to the kindred, on the one hand, and to the supra-kinship institutions, on the other—may be observed in other contexts as well. The *kehilla*, as has been noted, ensured its members equal opportunities for a livelihood, whereas strangers enjoyed only minimal rights. Outside merchants were permitted to do business only to the extent that this did not interfere with the livelihood of the local residents. As a matter of principle, this restriction was presumed to apply to every outsider without distinction, whether he had relatives within the *kehilla* or not. On the other hand, the livelihood of many of the residents was based precisely on kin ties which created the economic contact necessary between different localities. If, for example, the *kehilla* were to prohibit the acceptance from outsiders of goods to be sold on a commission basis—for in this way the owner of the goods, who did not belong to the *kehilla*, would profit—would such prohibition also apply where the consignor was the father or brother of one of the *kehilla*? The supra-family principle on which the *kehilla* was based inclined opinion to prohibition, even in such a case. But the deeply rooted kinship attachment which also served practical economic ends militated against consistency in implementing this principle. There were places where, in spite of this, *kehillot* tended to insist on following the supra-kinship principle, and forbade the granting of any advantage to a relative who was not a member of the *kehilla*. In other places, the conflict between the two principles was resolved by a compromise between them even in theory, and no doubt in practice it operated everywhere in that direction.⁵⁰

However, neither the *kehilla* nor the other supra-kinship organizations ever abolished the principle of kin solidarity. In fact, some of

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG ASHKENAZIM

them exploited it in order to transfer their responsibilities to the members of the family and kindred. This is quite obvious with regard to the support of the weak, the poor and those who had suffered economic ruin, for whose needs the supra-kinship organizations felt themselves responsible. The *kehilla* and the super-*kehilla* undertook this responsibility only after those in need had, in the first place, applied to their wealthy relatives. Where there were relatives in a position to give support, the institutions absolved themselves of all responsibility.⁵¹ It thus transpired that the *kehilla* itself which, on the one hand, attempted to base itself on the principle that it was above the family, did not hesitate to seize on the principle of kin ties where this was in its interest. The well-to-do citizen with a host of poor relatives had not only to contribute to their support, but to that of the poor of the city as well.

While we have attributed to the economic activity of the period a unifying influence within the framework of the kindred, we must point out that it also acted as a disuniting and isolating force. Jewish economic activity of the period, in almost all its stages, was based either on money or on what could be calculated in terms of money. This fact put each family unit, that is each small family, on an independent economic basis. The son or daughter, unless they entered into an actual business partnership with their family, relinquished all economic connexion with it on receipt of the dowry. In that case, however, the bond between the related partners was no different from that existing between ordinary partners. After the settlement of the dowry, the only economic ties existing on the basis of family relationship were those of inheritance and of support in case of need. Financial support was something which ordinarily involved relatives of quite different economic positions. But relatives of the same economic class would help one another only on a business basis, as agents, lenders or borrowers, buyers or sellers. This kin connexion, however, in no way removed the barrier which existed between the small family units, each one of which existed on its own economic basis. Personal considerations ceased to figure in the calculations of profit and loss the more economic activity came to be conducted along anonymous lines of credit. A negotiable promissory note would eventually be presented for collection by someone other than the person to whom the money was originally due. Once the note entered the market, the creditor could not waive reimbursement even if he wished to do so. The individual increasingly found himself facing not parties well-known to him, but the market, which also included his friends and relatives. Inasmuch as every small family constituted an economic unit in itself, economic responsibility was felt mainly with regard to the existence of this unit. Far-reaching concessions to others were likely to destroy the equilibrium of the independent economy. The talmudic dictum, 'Your life takes precedence over that of your

fellow man' (Baba Metzia 62a), was applied in this context, and was taken to include relatives.⁵²

In brief: in the economic context, the kinship factor played the positive roles of bringing together and giving assistance. But the fundamental fact which determined the framework of economic activity was the independence of the small family, with the individual forced to stand on his own feet, trusting to his ability and good fortune. In spite of the much-publicized closeness of the Jewish family, the society with which we are dealing is one where the responsibility of individuals to one another was quite limited, and this applied even to members of the same family if they did not live together in one household. The unit in the struggle for existence was actually the small family, with the kinship circle to be called upon in times of necessity.

NOTES

¹ Translated version of two chapters of *Tradition and Crisis, Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages* (in Hebrew), Bialik Institute, Jerusalem, 1958. The English version of this book is in preparation.

² I have dealt with this subject in my article 'Nisuim V'haye Ishut B'motzae Y'mei Habenayim', *Zion*, X (Jerusalem), 1946, pp. 21-54. There I limited myself to a description of the state of affairs in Western Europe. Here I broaden the perspective to take in all of Ashkenazi Jewry.

³ Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, Yore Dea, 248, para. 4; Moses Isserles on *Shulhan Aruch*, *Even Haeser* 86, para. 2. M. Balaban in *Jahrbuch der juedisch-literarischen Gesellschaft*, X, pp. 351, 365. The prototype of 'the woman of valour' who supports her husband was not as usual during this period as it was in the nineteenth century in Eastern Europe. See Jacob Emden, *M'gilat Sefer*, p. 157.

⁴ See Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, Y.D., 240, para. 5; 251, para. 3.

⁵ See my cited article in *Zion*, p. 25.

⁶ The presence of Jewish servants in the homes of the rich is proved by many sources, e.g. J. Halpern, *Constitutiones, Congressus Generalis Judaeorum Moravien-sium*, 203, 205; S. Dubnow, *Pinkes Medinat Lita* 28; Hayim Yair Bachrach, *Responsa*, 105.

⁷ See A. H. Freimann, *Seder Kidushin V'nisuin*, Jerusalem, 1954, pp. 28 ff.

⁸ E.g. D. Kaufmann, *Die Memoiren der Glueckel von Hameln*, p. 270 ff.

⁹ All this is explained in Samuel b. David ha-Levi, *Nahlat Shiva*, 8. Also see *Zion*, op. cit., p. 38.

¹⁰ For the laws which govern these limitations see Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, *Even Haeser*, 21. The seriousness of the sin of masturbation is stressed, e.g. in Joseph Hahn, *Yosef Omez*, Frankfurt on/M., 1928, 195-6, pp. 286 f.

¹¹ Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, *Even Haeser*, 1. Solomon Luria fixed 24 as the maximum age to which a student of the Torah should postpone marriage (*Yam shel Shlomo, Kidushin*, chap. I, sec. 57). Also see *Zion*, op. cit., p. 23.

¹² On the age of the groom, see Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, loc. cit., based on the Talmud. In Lithuania, aid in raising a dowry was given to poor girls from the age of 15 (S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 42, 93, 128). Also see M. Balaban, in *JJLG*, X, p. 345; *Zion*, op. cit., p. 35, footnote 98).

¹³ The Halacha fixed the match-makers' fee in accordance with custom (Moses Isserles on *Shulhan Aruch*, *Hoshen Mishpat*, 185, para. 10), and their activity was controlled by the regulations. (J. Halperin, *Acta Congressus Generalis Judaeorum Regni Poloniae (Pinkes Vaad Arba Arazol)* p. 50; idem, *Constitutiones*, 170-3, 353; S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 34, 36). The regulations differentiate between the fee for a locally-arranged match and the fee for one involving considerable distance.

¹⁴ See Samuel b. David ha-Levi, *Nahlat Shiva*, loc. cit., S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*,

232. Solomon Maimon (*Geschichte des eigenen Lebens*, Berlin, 1935, p. 29) speaks of the custom in rich families in Lithuania of maintaining the son-in-law for from six to eight years. See also Joseph Hahn, *Yosef Omez*, p. 282 (J. Halperin, *Acta*, p. 47 and note 3; M. Balaban in JJLG, XI, p. 102, D. Kaufman, *Die Memoiren der Glueckel von Hameln*, p. 68). On the definition in the period of free board as years of preparation for business, see Jacob Reischer, *Responsa*, part 2, 142.

¹⁵ M. Balaban in JJLG, X, p. 345; J. Halperin, *Acta*, pp. 46, 215; idem, *Constitutiones*, 174, 175; S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 41-2, 93, 128, 466. Rich householders would provide dowries for their maidservants. Netter, *Vingt siècles d'histoire d'une communauté juive*, Paris, 1938, p. 105; Taglicht, *Nachlaesse der Wiener Juden*, p. 24.

¹⁶ M. Balaban in JJLG, X, pp. 329, 339; B. D. Weinryb, *Texts and Studies in the Communal History of Polish Jewry*, New York, 1950, pp. 19-22.

¹⁷ E.g. J. Taglicht, *Nachlaesse*, p. 9.

¹⁸ The author of 'Die Beschreibung vun Ashkenaz un Polak' (YIVO, *Philologische Schriften*, vol. 3) lists the positions of cantor, sexton and rabbi as those on which the groom would spend the dowry. S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 917, hints at a similar situation.

¹⁹ See Ephraim Lenczyca, *Ir Giborim*, Lublin, 1924, III, p. 21, where families whose good name had been damaged had to pay a higher dowry.

²⁰ See *Zion*, op. cit., pp. 33 f.

²¹ An example will be found in Ezekiel Katzenellenbogen, *Responsa*, 77.

²² Not in vain did the *musar* writers warn that marriage should not be put off in the hope of making a better match (Moses b. Isak on *Shulhan Aruch*, *Even Haeser*, 2, 1).

²³ See the material presented in *Zion*, op. cit.

²⁴ For the war waged against secret marriages by the *kehillot* and the organizations, see Freiman, *Seder Kidushin V' Nisuin*, pp. 210 ff.

²⁵ Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, *Even Haeser*, 2, para. 2.

²⁶ Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, *Orah Hayim*, 240, para. 1; Abraham A. Gumbiner on the same paragraph.

²⁷ See *Zion*, op. cit., p. 42.

²⁸ See Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, loc.

cit. The same ideas are repeated in the *musar* literature.

²⁹ See *Zion*, op. cit., p. 42.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, p. 43.

³³ Samuel b. David ha-Levi, *Nahlat Shiva*, 16.

³⁴ Jona Land-Sofer, *Responsa*, 33.

³⁵ The situation was particularly difficult where the authorities limited the number of marriage licences, in the absolute monarchies, from the first quarter of the eighteenth century and thereafter (F. Baer, *Das Protokollbuch der Landjuedenschaft des Herzogtums Kleve*, Berlin, 1922, p. 59).

³⁶ See *Zion*, op. cit., p. 45. Beggars were generally suspected of immorality—see S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 88, and servant girls even more so—Joseph Hahn, *Yosef Omez*, p. 286; Ezekiel Landau, *D'rusha Zalah*, pp. 4a, 33b, 45b, 52a.

³⁷ See *Zion*, op. cit., pp. 46 f.; Meir b. Gedaliah of Lublin, *Responsa*, 45.

³⁸ These laws are set forth in Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, *Even Ha'ezzer*, 15.

³⁹ Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, H.M., 33.

⁴⁰ *Ketuvot*, 52b; *Tana d'be Eliahu*, chap.

27.

⁴¹ Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, Y.D., 251, paras. 3-5.

⁴² See note 15.

⁴³ In the wills of the rich we find that priority was given to the poor relatives of the testator, from which it may be deduced that it was regarded as quite natural that not all the members of the kindred were rich. (See J. Taglicht, *Nachlaesse*, p. 39; Horovitz, *Frankfurter Rabbinen*, IV, p. 64.)

⁴⁴ See *Zion*, vol. X, p. 30. For commercial ties with relatives, see below.

⁴⁵ See the realistic description of Ephraim Lenczyca, *Ir Giborim*, III, p. 21. The history of the two families, Drach and Cane in Frankfurt is an illuminating example (J. Kracauer, *Geschichte der Juden in Frankfurt a. M.*, II, pp. 49 ff.) See Gershom Ashkenazi, *Responsa*, 49.

⁴⁶ See Joseph Karo, *Shulhan Aruch*, H.M., 33, paras. 2, 6. A good example of the increasing strictness of these barriers is the relationship of the father of the bride and the father of the groom. According to the Talmud they are qualified to testify about one another (*Sanhedrin* 28b), for the stated reason that this relationship does not bring them

particularly close to one another. But there were authorities who tended to disqualify them, at least *ab initio*, from sitting as judge where the other was a party to the case. See Moses Isserles on *Shulhan Aruch*, *ibid.* R. Meir b. Gedaliah of Lublin disqualified them absolutely, 'because it stands to reason that there will be no better friends than the father of the bride and the father of the groom' (*Responsa*, 63). The Moravia Regulations also followed this rule (J. Halpern, *Constitutiones*, 133). The regulations are particularly strict that the members of any one ruling body should not be related to one another (S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 68, 276; J. Halpern, *Constitutiones*, 27, 30, 35, 43, 46, 133, 184, *et al.*; B. D. Weinryb, *Texts and Studies*, p. 165). The laws of testimony served as the terms of reference in defining the degree of relationship that was forbidden. (See also next note.)

⁴⁷ A controversy of this sort is discussed in Benjamin Aaron Slonik, *Responsa*, 7, where one group wished to extend the concept of kinship even to the committee which chose the leaders. (See also B. D. Weinryb, *Text and Studies*, p. 155.) J. Halpern *Constitutiones*, 132-3. A different degree of strictness was imposed with regard to different bodies.

⁴⁸ See Gershon Ashkenazi, *Responsa*, 2; Ephraim Kohen, *Responsa*, 67; Hayim Yair Bachrach, *Responsa*, Frankfurt ed., p. 230b.

⁴⁹ Clear evidence of this is found in Ephraim Kohen, *Responsa*, 67; L. Lewin,

Die Landessynode der grosspolnischen Juedenschaft, pp. 106 f.

⁵⁰ The Lithuanian Council in 1623 charged the *kehillot* with settling the question, with due regard to the degree of family relationship (S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 8). In 1625 a prohibition was issued on receiving merchandise from relatives in the Polish states, but from the wording of the regulation it appears that here too there was a greater tendency to permit relatives to engage in such dealings (S. Dubnow, *Pinkes*, 172). In J. Halpern, *Constitutiones*, no attention is paid to family attachment of this sort. See, e.g., secs. 283, 284, 649.

⁵¹ They found authority for this custom in *Nedarim* 65b; Moses Mat, *Mate Moshe*, part 3, chap. 6 (Warsaw ed., p. 208). See B. D. Weinryb, *Texts and Studies*, p. 38, where the rich man was obliged to lend money to his poor relative. Also see *ibid.*, pp. 157, 158, 197. Menahem Krochmal, *Responsa*, 111, obliges the relatives to pay the expenses, to a certain extent at least, for bringing a (Gentile) murderer to trial. Only where it appeared that the relatives could not meet the expenses does he impose the obligation on the public.

⁵² The behaviour of relatives towards a man who went bankrupt is typical (D. Kaufmann, *Die Memoiren der Glueckel von Hameln*, pp. 216 ff.). The members of the family to whom the bankrupt owed money did not hesitate about seizing his property.

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

Ferdynand Zweig

I. THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

THE JEWISH trade union movement in Israel, as represented by the *Histadrut Klalit* (the General Federation of Jewish Labour), plays a great and often decisive part not only in the life of the workers but also in the social and sometimes political life of the country as a whole. Its power was much greater before the emergence of the State of Israel, but it is still one of the three main centres of authority, the other two being the Government itself and the Jewish Agency. The Kingdom of the Histadrut, as it is often called, is still a sort of state within the state. It was literally so in regard to the internal affairs of the Jewish population in former Palestine, but even now it has enormous resources, authority, and vitality.

When the new State took over, the Histadrut provided the main source for recruiting civil servants and politicians for the labour parties. It served as a school for citizenship and administration, while many practices in the civil service and administration are simply a development or elaboration of former Histadrut practices.

The Histadrut also shapes and moulds the working classes which are in the process of being formed. Paradoxically we can say that the Histadrut preceded the formation of the working classes and brought them into existence, often by creating employment opportunities. The habits, customs, and practices of the working classes have not been formed by tradition, but shaped by the Histadrut. It follows that the Jewish trade union movement in Israel is one of the keys to the understanding of the new society.

The Jewish trade union movement can be divided into two main broad streams. The first is of a purely political character, as a mere appendix to specific political parties. The second is a confederative trade union movement which is the common enterprise of many political parties.

In the first stream there are three movements, which I mention in the order of their importance in terms of membership.

The first is the movement of national workers which is organized by the national party of *Herut* (Freedom Party). The party itself has members both among employers and workers. It claims a membership of about 10 per cent. of all organized workers. Its main centre of activity is in the Tel-Aviv area, where it has control over Workers' Committees in a number of firms. It concludes collective agreements in these firms. But its purely trade union activities are still undeveloped, and there is hardly a division of workers according to their trades and industries. It is the strongest of all movements apart from the Histadrut and gained momentum after the last Knesset elections in 1955. It is especially strong among clerical and technical staff. It has its own well organized Sick Fund with dispensaries, clinics, and convalescent homes, and other insurance funds.

Next in importance is the movement of religious workers under the name of *Hapoel Hamizrachi*. It claims about 7 to 8 per cent. of all organized workers, but it has neither Union activities nor its own Sick Fund. In all these activities it co-operates with the Histadrut. The arrangement is that the members of the *Hapoel Hamizrachi* are not members of the Histadrut as such, but are members of its Union; that is, they take an active part in the purely trade union activities of the Histadrut, and participate in its health service (*Kupat Cholim*).

The third labour movement is also that of religious workers, with a more orthodox bent, under the name of *Poalei Agudat Israel*. It is the weakest movement. It has scarcely developed union activities, and its members do not take part at present in the union activities of the Histadrut.

However, all these three movements co-operate together and with the Histadrut in one important field, namely in the running of the Jewish Labour Exchange system, which is a partnership of all the Jewish labour organizations.

We come now to the Histadrut itself, which is the strongest and best organized movement, and really decisive for all aspects of labour relations, comprising about half of the Jewish adult population of the country and about three quarters of all workers (wage and salary earners, independent workers, and members of co-operatives).

As the title of the Histadrut suggests, it is a federation of Jewish labour.¹ To what extent is this title justified?

The Histadrut is not a federation of labour unions. At the time of its foundation in 1920 labour unions scarcely existed on a national scale. In 1920 only small local unions existed,² such as those of printing workers, Jewish railway workers, and workers in agriculture and building; while on the national scale there was only one union (founded in 1919), that of the clerical workers. Practically all national unions (apart from that of clerical workers) came into existence later on,³ in most cases 25 years later. Most unions came into being after the Sixth

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

General Conference held in 1945 and on the basis of its general resolutions which called for the foundation of labour unions. A very large proportion of labour unions was called into existence by and through the efforts of the Histadrut itself, some even after the establishment of the State.

At first the Histadrut was mainly the organization of members of farm collectives and co-operatives (the *Kibbutzim* and the rural settlements), and there lay the centre of gravity of its organization. Even now, when the wage and salary earners form a majority of its members, the influence of the *Kibbutzim* and rural settlements is still in fact predominant in many ways, through their hold on the parties controlling the Histadrut, through their higher standards of education, and in other ways.

The Histadrut is not therefore a federation of labour unions; it is a monolithic structure, all of one piece. The usual historical process found in other countries, by which labour unions come into being and then federate, is in the case of the Histadrut quite reversed. But we have to remember that when the Histadrut started, there was only a handful of industrial enterprises with a few thousand workers. (The membership of the Histadrut grew from 4,433 in December 1920, to 509,000 in 1955.) The whole process of industrialization came later, and with it also a radical change in the character of its membership.

The Histadrut is actually a federation in another sense: the political. It is a confederation of all political parties which claim a working class interest or working class membership. The Histadrut is based on the co-operation of the following seven parties: *Mapai*, *Achdut Avoda*, *Mapam*, General Zionists, Progressives, Communists, and the Religious Workers (*Haoved Hadati*). *Mapai* has a clear majority (57.74 per cent. in the last elections in May 1955), the first three parties providing the bulk of the membership (about 89 per cent.).

Originally the Histadrut was a confederation of working class parties, but since the participation of the Progressive Party (a non-socialist Party), it is a confederation of all parties which have a working class membership.

Originally the Histadrut claimed a Zionist-Socialist character, but since the Communists, who are not Zionists, take part in it and a number of parties are non-Socialist or anti-Socialist, this claim can no longer stand. But as the three main parties (*Mapai*, *Mapam* and *Achdut Avoda*) have a definite class philosophy, based on a unique combination of Zionism and Socialism, it can be said that the Histadrut reflects this philosophy in action, at times Zionism gaining the upper hand, at times Socialism.

In the international field the Histadrut belongs to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which it joined in 1953, and all its labour unions joined the international Secretariats co-operating with the I.C.F.T.U.

The Histadrut is completely a-political in the sense that it does not follow one party line, since it is based on the co-operation of so many divergent parties. On the other hand it can be said that the Histadrut is political in its very structure and character, since its organs and representatives are elected on a political basis in a ballot in which the political parties present their lists of candidates in a national forum. The system of elections (equal, direct, secret, and proportional) is very much like that for the *Knesset*, and most of the national parties take part in it. Most of the national representatives appearing in the *Knesset* appear also on the national lists of the Histadrut. The Histadrut member votes for national representatives of his party, whom he sends to the Convention, and not for his local union representative.

Both the Convention and the humblest Labour Councils in the towns and villages are elected on the basis of proportional representation. The Histadrut is a politically built structure which tends to overcome its political divisions by eliminating political strife within. It proclaims internal peace. Its political neutrality, however, is an aspiration, while its political character is a fact.

This political character can be seen most clearly in all the debates in the Histadrut institutions, Conferences, Councils, and Executive Committee. One speaker after another stands up and represents his view not in his personal capacity, but as a representative of his party. The reports state the speaker's party allegiance. Discussion usually takes place between parties, and not between members of the same party.

This political character makes both for strength and weakness. The Histadrut has a strong centre of gravity in the *Mapai* with its clear majority, and if this majority were lost, the danger of instability would become very real. As a confederation of political parties the Histadrut must also be very cautious in its actions so as not to strain the loyalty of the parties, and to avoid splits and ruptures. The freedom of action is really small, and the space for manoeuvre is very restricted, both because of the huge mass of membership with contradictory interests, and because of the number of parties with contradictory ideologies. The tendency towards political and ideological splintering within the Histadrut has constantly asserted itself. There was a time when 80 per cent. of the Histadrut membership belonged to one united workers' party; now the parties are so numerous, with so great a range of contradictory programmes, that the apparatus of the Histadrut itself comes to the fore and takes the upper hand over programmes and ideology.

The main weakness, however, consists in party rivalry and party agitation. All issues are actually party issues and the danger of playing to the gallery is very real.

Actually all really big decisions are taken outside the Histadrut, in party headquarters. What *Mapai* and possibly one or two other parties decide in their inner party caucuses stands for the Histadrut. In this

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

way, the centre of gravity moves from the Histadrut to the party. A student who would like really to understand the mechanism and the motivation of Histadrut actions, would have to study the machinery and functions of the parties which govern the body of the Histadrut.

Now let us see how far the term 'general' in the name of the Histadrut applies to this organization. It applies in the sense that it is the main and the most general organization. It applies also in the sense that it covers all sorts of aspects, all kinds of fields of activity in which labour organizations can interest themselves. And here we come to the unique character of the Histadrut, in that it was actually the forerunner of the Jewish State, covering all aspects of Jewish social, economic and cultural life. This explains many of its unique features, and *inter alia* also this unique fact that, while labour organizations in other countries often opposed the immigration of foreign labour, the Histadrut has always been instrumental in organizing Jewish immigration and in helping in the task of absorbing immigrants.

The Histadrut is often regarded abroad as a trade union, but it is doubtful whether one can call it such. It engages in trade union activities, but it is doubtful whether they form its most important aspect. The Histadrut is actually a combination of a union movement, co-operative movement, comprehensive health service, friendly society, social insurance, land pioneering in rural settlements of various kinds, industrial development, workers' education movement, a machinery of labour exchanges established in co-operation with other workers' organizations, and so on. Such a combination is unknown in any other country.

There are four main lines of Histadrut activity:

- (1) Education and Culture.
- (2) Health service and social insurance.
- (3) Economic activities.
- (4) Trade unions.

Each section has developed many basic and some subsidiary institutions.

To start with Workers' education: the Histadrut has its own publishing house (*Am Oved*), its own newspaper (*Davar*), theatre (*Ohel*) and periodicals, and its own trade union college. Since 1945 the Histadrut has run a special Department of Vocational Education and Training with a series of trade schools and training centres, and a chain of 200 libraries.

The sector of health and social insurance has at least four main classes of insurance:

(1) Social insurance on a *national* scale, such as the Health Service (*Kupat Cholim*), with its marvellous network of 884 dispensaries, 14 hospitals and 12 rest homes, with 1,500 physicians and 2,100 nurses, serving 1,050,000 people, and giving a comprehensive and effective

health service. Another form of insurance on the national scale is the Invalid Fund.

(2) Social insurance on the scale of particular industries, such as the fund for building workers, or fund for agricultural workers, or fund for industrial workers, or fund for citrus packers, or special funds in rural settlements.

(3) Social insurance on the scale of a *single enterprise*, such as compensation funds (*Kupat Tagmulim*) for retirement. Although there exists a national centre for these funds under the name of *Muvtachim*, insurance in this field is basically on the scale of a single enterprise.

(4) Finally there exists 'Mutual Aid', which is actually not insurance but rather a means of providing grants-in-aid, like the fund for the aid of elderly workers (called from 'Generation to Generation', *Dor l' Dor*), and the Assistance Fund (*Mishan*) for quick and short term aid. The Work Fund (*Keren Avoda*, previously Unemployment Fund) is now used mostly for production credits to stimulate additional employment.

In the sector of economy the institutions are so numerous and heterogeneous that it is hardly possible to do them justice by mere enumeration. Still we may distinguish six broad fields of activity with characteristics of their own:

(1) The sector of rural settlements, including *Kibbutzim* on one side and *Moshavim* and *Moshavot* on the other, with their numerous institutions of all sorts, including their own industries, and even with their peculiar trade organizations, which in some sectors come near to trade unions (for example, the Union of Fishermen, *Igud Dayagim*, a mixed union both of *Kibbutzim* and *Moshavim* as well as wage earners). By the end of 1954 there were 474 labour agricultural settlements with a population of over 150,000 and 500,000 acres of cultivated land.

(2) The pioneering and building ventures of Histadrut. The Histadrut takes a leading part in house and road building with the powerful and all-embracing *Solel Boneh*, employing about 15,000 workers in 1954, and a number of co-operative housing societies. Here we can mention other pioneering ventures, such as the Water Corporation (*Mekorot*) owned jointly with the Jewish Agency, the most important instrument of Water Planning in the country; the first shipping Company, *Shoham*, a joint Government-Histadrut venture; and the Port Service Company in Haifa, which is a daughter company of *Solel Boneh* employing the dockers of Haifa. These are actually key institutions in opening up and developing the country.

(3) Histadrut industry which is administered by a special administrative unit, *Koor*, as a sub-company of *Solel Boneh*. It covers more than 30 large factories, mostly of the heavy and basic industry type, often in partnership with private capital.

(4) Large co-operatives on a national scale belonging to public bodies, mainly to rural settlement movements, like *Tnuva* for marketing

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

agricultural produce, *Hamashbir Hamerkazi*, Israel Co-operative Wholesale Society, which is the leading supplier of the agricultural settlements and consumer retail societies, or *Yakhin-Hakal*, the public contracting company for agricultural enterprises, especially in the field of citrus groves, for settlement and the manufacture of agricultural products. Some of the co-operatives also have factories in light industry, in food processing, like *Shemen* in Haifa which employs about 500 men, or the textile firm *Shilim*, both belonging to the *Hamashbir* group.

(5) Large scale co-operatives of a half-private character, like *Egged* for inter-urban bus transport and transport in Haifa, *Dan* for bus transport in Tel-Aviv, or *Hamkasher* for bus transport in Jerusalem. They are under the wing of the Histadrut, and under its strict supervision, but belong to their members, who can sell their shares, which are quite valuable.

(6) Completely private co-operatives which are under the wing of the Histadrut, such as the glass factory *Gavish* in Rishon-le-Zion, with about 180 workers, half of them members, half wage earners.

Here we see the enormous scale and variety of the Histadrut economy, which employs about one quarter of all workers in the country.

The fourth large field of activities are the trade unions. But before we discuss them let us briefly review the government of the Histadrut and its membership.

II. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HISTADRUT

The government of the general body of the Histadrut is a very complex affair based on many rules and provisions as well as customs and traditions. One cannot always go by the provisions of the by-laws. The by-laws say one thing and the practice another.

But before entering the complex field of provisions and rules for government, let us examine the provisions for membership.

All who belong to the working class can qualify for Histadrut membership, but the concept of the working class is all-embracing. It includes all who work for their living without employing others, that is, all non-employers engaged in manual labour or brain work. It includes not only the clerical worker, but also the foreman, the professional manager, and the professional man. It includes also the *Kibbutznik*, the independent farmer in the *Moshav*, the member of a transport or industrial co-operative, members of the police force, and the independent artisan or contractor who works by himself, or only with one help; it includes also the actor, the painter, and sculptor. Finally, it includes the housewives not otherwise employed.

There are actually four main classes of members:

- (1) Members of co-operatives, especially in *Kibbutzim* and *Moshavim*.
- (2) Wage and salary earners.

(3) Self-employed artisans, or members of the professional class including artists.

(4) Housewives.

Among the 510,000 members of the Histadrut in 1955 there were about 162,000 housewives and about 72,000 members from *Kibbutzim* and small holders' settlements. The full membership by housewives is a tribute to the important role of the housewife in modern society; it helps to raise her status, especially among the Oriental population. But at the same time it introduces a large amorphous mass of voters whose civic education, especially in the Oriental part of the population, is low and subject to all sorts of unexpected influence.

The centre of gravity in membership moves invariably with the industrialization of the country towards the group of wage and salary earners, but the group of self-employed, as far as representation in the highest authorities of the Histadrut is concerned, is up to now predominant, not so much numerically as organizationally, educationally, and culturally.

If we disregard the housewives, we have three main classes of membership, which can be reduced actually to two: the self-employed, including the members of *Kibbutzim* and *Moshavim*, and the wage and salary earners. The two groups show different characteristics.

The members of rural settlements are mainly old hands (*valikim*) with a very strong class-consciousness, a very crystallized outlook and social philosophy, and very high standards of education and culture. The wage and salary earners are in the main new hands, new immigrants who need care and help, with lower standards all round. The two groups in the Histadrut consequently differ in status. The rural settlement movement enjoys a much higher status and independence than the wage and salary earners' movement, and in fact up to now it is represented to a much higher degree in the Histadrut authorities.

The Histadrut is a mass organization in the truest sense. It comprises more or less one third of the whole Jewish population of Israel. But this proportion cannot be directly compared with the percentage of trade union membership in other countries. If we excluded housewives (162,000) and members of *Kibbutzim* and rural settlements (*Moshavim*), non-wage earners (72,000), the Histadrut youth (up to the age of 18: 15,000), as well as some professional men and artisans (at least 10,000 men), the wage and salary earners in the Histadrut would amount to no more than 250,000, which would come near to the British proportion (18 per cent.) of the trade union membership in total population. And this must be regarded as a remarkable achievement in view of the much smaller ratio of industrial population in Israel.

The other unique feature of the Histadrut movement is its characteristic distribution between wage earners and salary earners. Among the 250,000 wage and salary earners organized in the Histadrut, the

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

wage earners number about 145,000 of whom about 77,000 are in industry and 68,000 in building, transport, and agriculture. The rest are salary earners. We see in these figures how relatively small is the number of wage earners in the total membership of the Histadrut.

We must say something about the rights and duties of members. The main right is the right to participate in all the affairs of the Histadrut, and to take advantage of its many health, insurance, housing, co-operative, welfare, educational, and assistance schemes. The main duty is to pay the membership due which amounted in 1956 to 4 per cent. of the gross salary up to a maximum of I£250. The dues in most cases are deducted directly from the wage packet, in an organized way which corresponds to what is called 'check-off' in the U.S.A. This is a regular method in industry and all public or semi-public institutions, stipulated in the collective agreement; about 70 per cent. of all Histadrut dues are collected in this way.

Moreover, by agreement with employers the Histadrut also collects what is called an 'organization fee' (*Mass Irgun*) from non-members. This is a fee for all the benefits of organization accruing to non-members from their participation in social conditions and fair wages achieved by the efforts of the Histadrut. The 'organization fee' amounts at present to 2-2½ per cent. of wages, making a difference of 1½-2 per cent. in dues between members and non-members. For 1½-2 per cent. the workers can have all the benefits of the Histadrut organization including its Health Service. Needless to say, this sort of arrangement is an important incentive for joining the ranks of Histadrut.

Now let us briefly review the complex set of rules and by-laws concerning the government of the Histadrut. A clear distinction must be made between the general body of the Histadrut as a single entity and its many specialized agencies, including trade unions. There are authorities governing the whole body of the Histadrut and authorities governing each main sector or sub-sector, including authorities governing local and national labour unions; the general principle prevails that specialized authorities are subordinated to general authorities in such a way that unity of action can be safeguarded. However, the general principle is applied in practice with varying degrees of success. Some specialized bodies enjoy practically full independence; an especially large measure of independence is granted to the Histadrut economy, both in rural settlements and in industry. Other bodies, especially trade unions, are kept in strict dependence.

Another clear distinction must be made between central and local bodies. In both general and specialized agencies there are central authorities, operating on the scale of the whole country, and local authorities, operating within a town or large village.

The structure of government in general and central agencies follows a threefold pattern: the National Convention; the General Conference;

and the Executive Committee. The National Convention is the main legislative body and meets only once every four years in principle, although in practice much more rarely. There were only eight Conventions in the span of the 36 years of Histadrut history up to 1956, and seven years elapsed between the seventh and the last Convention in February 1956. In between Conventions, the General Council, assembling in principle once every four months, acts as the highest authority of the Histadrut. Next comes the Executive Committee (of 58 members), meeting once a fortnight and being the highest executive body of the whole Histadrut. The General Convention is elected by the whole membership once every four years; the Council is elected by the Convention, the Executive Committee by the Council. The Executive Committee itself nominates an abbreviated version of its own membership as the Executive Bureau (*Vaada Merakazit*) and elects its General Secretary.

All the main authorities mentioned above are smaller replicas of the National Convention; they are all composed of party representatives in proportion to the voting strength the parties muster at the elections once every four years. This means that all the minority groups are represented in the executive organs according to their voting strength.

The actual government (that is, the centre of power) is concentrated in the Executive Committee (*Vaad Hapoel*) and its Executive Bureau. The Executive Committee itself is divided into two main departments: one for the economic activities directed by the *Chevrat Ovdim*, which is the holding company of the Histadrut enterprises and the general co-operative association; and the other for labour unionism.

We now come to the local authorities in the general body of the Histadrut. Here the centre of authority is concentrated in Labour Councils (*Moatzot Hapoalim*) which exist in every town and large-scale settlement. In 1955 there were about 57 such Councils, covering about 180 municipal units. The Labour Council is conceived as a very strong, unitary authority for the general body of the Histadrut at the local level, to which all specialized agencies, including labour unions, are subordinated in all local affairs. It is the counterpart of local trade and labour councils in Britain or in the U.S.A., but with a considerable difference. In England and the U.S.A., the local councils are a more fleeting and piecemeal affair with little authority or executive power, while in Israel they are permanent, highly integrated bodies with authority of their own and strong executive power. Their authority is derived primarily from the fact that they are elected as such once every four years by the entire electorate of the locality (including housewives) on the basis of the proportional representation of all parties in the general Convention. Here we also see a tripartite division of powers. First, the full Labour Council is elected by all the Histadrut members of the locality once every four years; in turn the Council elects the

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

Executive Committee, which in turn elects the Secretariat with the General Secretary of the Labour Council.

Again, representatives of parties sit on all these bodies according to the strength they muster in the locality. And here the weakness of this political system is even more apparent, as local affairs hardly lend themselves to political treatment. The Labour Council has a great many Committees, such as those for organization and membership, for education and culture, for housing, for co-operatives, and for mutual help.

III. THE TRADE UNIONS WITHIN THE HISTADRUT

It is clear from the brief description of the general set-up of the Histadrut that it is not primarily a trade union but conducts trade union activities. The trade unions are subordinated to the Histadrut as a central organization in many ways. One cannot become a member of a trade union without first joining the Histadrut; on the other hand there are a number of Histadrut members who do not belong to any trade union. The unions have no financial independence, and by and large do not have their own membership fees. The member of the union does not pay his dues to the union; he pays the *Mass Achid* to the Histadrut. In most cases the unions have no budget of their own. The expenses of the unions are paid from the general funds of the Histadrut, the expenses of local unions by local Labour Councils and the expenses of national unions by the Executive Committee of the Histadrut.

In most cases the unions have no legal existence; they cannot acquire property or enter obligations as such; only the Histadrut can do so. Some of the unions have special funds, such as insurance funds, which have legal existence, but they themselves are only parts of the Histadrut.

The appointment of the secretary of the local union must be confirmed by the local Labour Council of the Histadrut, and the appointment of the secretary of the national unions must be confirmed by the Executive Committee of the Histadrut. Their salaries are paid from general funds of the Histadrut. All major decisions, including those to strike, must be confirmed by the general authorities of the Histadrut. In fact quite a number of unions carry on with Executive Committees entirely appointed by the Histadrut authorities. This is especially true of national unions.

Only a few unions have by-laws of their own. In most cases the unions function within the general by-laws of the Histadrut. However, there are unions with greater authority; they are mostly those which joined the Histadrut after they were fully grown. This is especially true of unions of professional workers (academic) which assume greater independence, often defying the authority and discipline of the general Histadrut institutions, as was shown most clearly in the unofficial strikes of the intelligentsia in 1955/1956.

Union government is on three levels:

(1) That of the Workers' Committee in every plant or establishment (we shall speak separately about its structure and activities in the next section).

(2) The level of the local union.

(3) The level of the national union.

The local union is subject to dual supervision and control, in local matters to that of the local Labour Council, in national matters to that of the national union. The national union is subject to supervision and control of the Executive Committee of the Histadrut.

The government of the unions is on the whole a replica of the structure of the general Histadrut bodies. The local union has a Council elected by its members, again on the basis of a proportional and political vote; the Council elects the Executive Committee; and the Executive Committee elects its Secretariat.

The national union is governed by the Convention elected by the members on the basis of a proportional political vote for the country as a whole, and the Convention elects the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. As in the main body of the Histadrut, minority groups are represented in the elected executive organs in proportion to their voting strength. However, in quite a number of unions elections have not been held for a great many years, and the national authorities are merely bodies appointed by the general Histadrut, mostly on the basis of an inter-party agreement.

By and large members of the unions are wage and salary earners. However, members of co-operatives take part in union membership, although rather passively, as they do not need union protection. In some cases also *Kibbutz* members join their appropriate unions if they work in the trades.

Altogether there are 26 national unions, the largest being that of metallurgical workers, claiming in 1956 a membership of about 35,000; clerical workers (45,000); building workers (30,000); textile workers (13-14,000); workers in the food industry (14,000); woodworkers (8,000); and engineers and architects (7,000).

The basis of union organization is sometimes the craft or profession, sometimes the industry, and sometimes employment by one big employer. There are a number of industrial unions, like those of the building workers, textile workers, and workers in the food industry; a number of craft-unions like those of composers and carpenters; and multi-craft unions like that of the citrus packers. The industrial unions are actually only semi-industrial unions, since the clerical and technical staff in industry have each their own organization.

In this short sketch we see the preponderance of the central bodies of the Histadrut over the unions. The union officers are elected not on union issues, union problems, or union personalities. In many localities

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

the wage and salary earners form a small minority of the general electorate, and their tendencies and aspirations may not be reflected in the composition of the bodies which have power over them. In the unions' day-to-day affairs the real centre of gravity lies in the local Labour Councils in local matters, and in the Executive Committee of the Histadrut in central issues.

Many trade unionists feel that union affairs are handicapped by their subordination to the comprehensive, all-inclusive structure and the general policy of the Histadrut and by their insufficient representation in the general body of the Histadrut. However, it must be admitted that the tendency since 1949 has moved in the direction of a greater independence of the unions from this general tutelage, and towards the strengthening of the purely union organizations within the Histadrut, although this tendency has not yet had time to express itself fully.

IV. THE WORKERS' COMMITTEE

The Workers' Committee is the cell of the Histadrut organization and the foundation of its power and strength in industry. Practically every establishment, even the smallest one with five or six organized workers, will have such a Committee. The smallest establishments have usually one Committee both for clerical and technical staff and for manual workers; the larger establishments usually have two Committees, and the largest may have even three: one for clerical staff, usually called *Vaad Haovdim*, one for technical staff, and one for workers. However, there are very large establishments which have in principle only one Committee, which is called the Employees' Committee. The largest single enterprise in Israel, the textile firm *Ata*, which has about 1,550 employees in its two establishments, has only one Committee.

The policy of the Histadrut in this regard is not very consistent, and the decision is usually left to the men on the spot. Even the Histadrut-owned establishments administered by *Koor*, more or less of the same size, have varying arrangements.

One general observation can be made about all these three Committees. The clerical or technical staff Committee has usually more restricted functions; its strength and status *vis-à-vis* the management is lower than that of the Workers' Committees; its officers are not on a full-time basis; it is usually also a less politically minded body, often completely non-party.

The Workers' Committee is usually about 5-7 men strong, but its membership can be as high as 19, as for instance in *Ata*. In large national and multi-unit firms like the Electric Corporation, *Hamāshbir*, or *Tnuva*, the Workers' or Employees' Committee has a two-storey structure: the National Council or Central Committee of the employees for all the units, and a local Committee for each separate unit.

The Committee meets once a week, as in *Ata*, or once a fortnight, or once a month, or according to need. The Committee works through its secretaries and a number of sub-committees.

Usually the Committee is elected for one or two years. When the term of office is only a year, this arrangement is regarded as unsatisfactory, as the new members are often unfamiliar with the work, and a certain tendency to demagoguery is likely to develop. A year is not a sufficient period to make for stability and orderly functioning of the Committee and its authority. Before the members get acquainted with the problems and the way of handling them, their time is up. Party squabbles are likely to develop in such a weak Committee.

The Committee has at least one secretary, but large-scale firms have often three to five, each covering a special field. For instance, *Shemen* has three secretaries, one for culture, one financial secretary, one for bargaining with the firm and for dealing with grievances, etc. *Ata* has as many as five secretaries.

The post of at least one secretary of the Workers' Committee in large-scale establishments is full time. He has his office in the establishment, often with a typist or an accountant, or other help. Sometimes a full-time accountant is employed; more often an accountant of the firm may serve part-time in the office of the Committee. The Employees' Committee in *Ata* has a permanent staff of four men in its office.

Office accommodation is usually offered free of charge by the firm, and the secretary is also often paid by the firm on the basis of his previous average wage as a worker. But often the Committee has its own funds, collecting a special due deducted by the firm from all workers. For instance, in *Shemen* men pay one half of one per cent. of their wage bill for the Committee. In *Ata* the one third of the costs of the Committee are covered by the firm, one third by the employees, and one third by the Sick Fund. The costs of the Committee in the Electric Corporation are covered by 1-1½ per cent. of gross wages deducted by the firm.

The elections to the Committee are arranged by the special election sub-committee of the outgoing Committee under the strict supervision of the local Labour Council. The right to vote is usually granted to every permanent worker in the establishment, irrespective of his union, and often even to unorganized workers, because even they pay a 2 or 2½ per cent. contribution (*Mass Irgun*). Persons and non-party lists are submitted to voters and those who receive 51 per cent. of the votes are elected. This is the only instance of a majority vote; in all other Histadrut institutions elections are based on party proportional representation. However, the lists are usually also on a party basis, and in most cases arranged in co-operation with the local Labour Council, but they need not necessarily be so. The voter can pick names from many lists if he chooses, but usually one list secures the majority. This is the reason why most Committees have a clear majority of one party. It often

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

happens that all members of the Workers' Committee belong to one party, as in many Histadrut establishments. When there is one Employees' Committee, special places are reserved for the clerical and technical staffs, and when separate plants are included in a firm, as in *Ata*, special places are reserved for each plant.

The most important function of the Committee is bargaining with the firm, first of all for the collective agreement, which is signed once a year or once in two years, and then on the interpretation of the collective agreement and its execution. Once a year the re-grading of workers and their promotion to higher grades takes place, and this is done by the management in co-operation with the Workers' Committee. The process of bargaining is actually a year-round business, and complaints and grievances are daily presented to and daily solved with the management.

The other field of action is frictions and small conflicts between the workers themselves. The Israeli worker is a very sensitive type of worker, very conscious of his dignity and jealous of his honour and principles. He will fight for his principles and what he regards as his rights. The workers, coming as they do from so many ethnic and cultural streams, often misjudge one another's intentions, not understanding one another's habits and way of life. Hence flow personal quarrels, often petty, which are all shifted on to the shoulders of the secretary or organizer. Every Committee has its Court of Honour as the final authority for internal quarrels and squabbles. But a quarrel rarely rises so high, the conflict usually being resolved at the level of the secretary's authority.

The Workers' Committee assumes very important functions in the field of culture and education. It arranges lectures, talks, discussion groups, training courses; it often keeps a reading-room and a lending library; it arranges for the collective buying of books and periodicals of a more serious character. The educational needs of the workers, especially among those coming from the Oriental population, are very great and pressing, and the Workers' Committee is the focus for most significant activities in this field. The workers get a thorough training in self-government, often for local government, and a thorough training in union matters and the value of workers' solidarity.

Where incentive schemes have been introduced (according to a national agreement of 1952) and a Joint Production Committee established, the Committee often sends its representatives to this body, and takes an active part in furthering its activities. Sometimes the Committee itself serves as a Joint Production Committee, as happens for instance in *Ata*, which is not a party to the agreement mentioned above. Where there are co-management schemes, as in the Electric Corporation, the Workers' Committee sends its representative to the Management Council.

In addition to these functions the Workers' Committee administers the many funds which are at its disposal, such as the Sick Benefit Fund (*Keren Machala*), the Holiday Fund, the Saving Fund, the Fund for Mutual Assistance, and the Loan Fund.

A secretary of the Committee is a workers' factotum. He deals with all sorts of personal problems. The men who used to turn to a rabbi for advice, guidance, or mediation, now turn to the secretary with all sorts of problems. The wife of a worker may come with a complaint that her husband does not give her enough money for housekeeping; or both man and wife may turn up for conciliation; or a son may be in trouble with the police or a daughter gets married and needs help; or a man is applying for a house; or he does not know where to go for a holiday; or he has trouble with income tax. With all these and many other problems the workers arrive for daily attention.

'They develop a habit,' said the secretary of a Workers' Committee, 'of coming to my office for everything they need: for guidance, conciliation, and mediation. This is especially true of the Oriental section of the population, and they accept my word as a piece of high authority. The Workers' Committee deals not only with work problems, but with problems of life, education, and citizenship.'

In the workplace the Workers' Secretary to some extent plays the role of a Personnel Officer. In some places he actually is the Personnel Officer, as in the case of the Middle East Tube Co., in Acre.

I have also seen many places where the foreman, superintendent, or departmental manager held the position of the secretary of the Workers' Committee. I was told: 'They have confidence in my impartiality and my capacity to get things done, so they put me there, although I explained to them the ambiguous position I am in; but they say they want it this way, as they get things done more quickly.' In many places there is no real conflict of interest, as the most controversial subjects are dealt with on the national or local plane.

Co-management in personnel matters is a fact in large-scale establishments with strong Workers' Committees. The secretary of the Committee may arrange or take part in arranging shifts; he is called upon to deal with absenteeism and lack of discipline. He takes part in promotion, dismissals, and transfers. Any list of those to be dismissed must be presented in good time to the Committee for approval.

Now the question arises whether the Committee is an autonomous agency or is itself under the control or supervision of the Histadrut authorities of higher order. It is actually subject to a double supervision: first from the craft or industrial union in a given branch, and second from the local Labour Council. However, the latter is incomparably stronger than the former. From the union it receives orders of a general kind, and it must abide by its rules, principles, and general policy. If there are national collective agreements signed by the

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

National Union for a given trade, it must abide by this agreement. However, it must be noted that branch unions are often weak and not well developed. An establishment often has workers belonging to many crafts and skills, and so to many unions. I have found that often in a small or medium sized factory the secretary of the Workers' Committee does not know to which union he actually belongs, as it does not matter very much to him, and his contact with the national union is only casual.

The main control of the Workers' Committee is in the hands of the local Labour Council, and the Committee cannot do much without approval of this Council. The secretary of the Labour Council or one of the secretaries appointed for a group of factories, visits the factory nearly once a week, dealing with the problems of the Workers' Committee in all more important matters. He supervises the elections to the Committee, and gives his final assent to its results. The Committee is legally constituted only if it has the local Labour Council's confirmation, and during my investigation I met cases of disagreement on this point. The Labour Council also has the right to dissolve the Committee, and I have seen such a case during my investigation.

The bargaining for a new collective agreement always takes place with the participation and approval of the Secretary of the local Labour Council, and it often happens that the Secretary does not approve of the claim of the Workers' Committee, stating that these claims are not in agreement with the general policy of the Histadrut, are against the national or local interests of Labour at large, are simply inopportune at a given moment, or are premature.

From time to time I heard these words from the secretaries of the Workers' Committee: 'We have to wage a two-front battle, one against the management, and the other against the Labour Council itself, and it is often more difficult to convince the secretary of the Council than our management.' That, strangely enough, I heard more often in the Histadrut establishments than in the private sector.

The strength and power of a nearly hundred per cent. unionism throughout industry is so great that a Workers' Committee could easily force its claims on the management, even if the claims were unreasonable. The Labour Council, therefore, represents the interests of other organized workers, the interests of the Histadrut at large, and the interests of the country, safeguarding avenues for further developments.

What are the employers' pronouncements on the Workers' Committees? Are they co-operative in the eyes of management? By and large the pronouncements of management were favourable. Most managers praised the orderly, self-controlled and reasonable attitude of the Workers' Committees, and more so just because the real centres of power and control lie in the hands of the Labour Council, which represents interests not directly concerned in the issue.

The strong development of the Workers' Committee with its integral structure and its large and important function is one of the most interesting features of the Israeli labour movement.

V. SOME BASIC DILEMMAS OF THE HISTADRUT MOVEMENT

As in trade union movements in other countries, so in the trade union movement of the Histadrut we see some basic dilemmas which are not yet solved and which are all the time very much in the minds of the policy-makers of the Histadrut.

One dilemma is that between a narrow professionalism and a broader social conception of a national working-class organization. For the time being the broader conception has the upper hand, and this seems to be fully justified in Israel's geo-political situation. The accent is not on narrow professional interests, but on the need for pioneering, on the development of rural and border settlements, on the absorption of the immigrants (a very big problem in itself), and on developing the country at large. However, no one can say that professional interests have been neglected. No one can deny that the Israeli worker has through the Histadrut achieved great things, in terms of wages, social conditions, and status.

And here we come to the second dilemma which is strongly linked with the first: the dilemma between politics and unionism. For the time being politics has the upper hand, and not only within the Histadrut but also within the unions themselves. As in the Histadrut as a whole, so also in the labour unions, the real decisions are taken in the party cells. Every single Histadrut institution is an arena for the activities of the main parties; it is in fact a political forum. Consequently, all issues become political issues, and all agitation or propaganda for or against any decision become party agitation or party propaganda. A certain political immaturity on the part of large groups of the Oriental population makes this aspect of Histadrut work even more difficult.

The third dilemma is that between bureaucracy and democracy. The degree of bureaucracy is always somewhat proportional to the distance between the centre of decision and the centre of execution. This distance grew to a very considerable magnitude by the expansion of the Histadrut. The machinery of the Histadrut by its very comprehensiveness, many-sidedness, and complexity became a powerful force in itself. The complaint is often heard that both the general Council of the Histadrut and the full local Councils are rarely summoned, in any case much more rarely than the by-laws require. By and large the by-laws are not always kept, even in regard to the time of the elections of the main authorities.

The administration is in the hands of professional officers appointed

THE JEWISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL

in a roundabout way by a system of indirect elections. They are in fact independent agents who are very little concerned with what their 'clients', who daily besiege their offices, think and feel about them. The distance between the union officer and the rank and file seems to grow, especially as the Oriental part of the population, to a large extent ignorant and even illiterate, becomes larger; the relationship becomes at times that of patronage more than of true representation.

This situation is again not new to union movements in other parts of the world with the growth of union structure and the ever-increasing complexity of union government.

The awareness of the need to deepen democratic participation in the Histadrut is well spread in the Histadrut top leadership, as the programmatic declaration of the General Secretary, Mr. Mordechai Namir, in the Eighth Convention (March 1956) proves convincingly. But the road from programmes to their execution is in practice often long, arduous, and beset with many pitfalls arising out of existing vested interests or out of the parallelogram of social forces operating in a given situation.

The fourth dilemma lies in the many-sidedness of Histadrut interests. It is being seriously asked: 'Can the Histadrut represent fairly (that is, to the satisfaction of those concerned) all these divergent interests: the interests of farmers and those of urban consumers; the interests of transport and bus companies and those of the public; the interests of manual workers and those of salary earners and professional workers as well?' The farmers, for instance, claim a rise in prices, and the urban working class opposes it, or the bus companies claim a rise in fares, and the general public turns against it; or the doctors and academic workers claim, as in the intelligentsia's revolt in 1955/6, higher salary differentials and a proper professional status, and the mass of workers does not support the claim. The Histadrut has to oppose one group within its own body against the other, at times turning heavily with all its power against the small recalcitrant minority, which comes out of the battle crushed and resentful.

But on the other hand, just because of its comprehensiveness and many-sidedness the Histadrut can preserve a fair balance in keeping with broader national interests, helping the State in solving its many serious and at times grave problems.

Weighing the pros and cons one can say, in fairness, that with all its problems, handicaps and weaknesses arising actually out of its strength, the Histadrut has proved, to judge by the fruits, a serviceable, helpful, and useful instrument in managing the social and economic affairs of the State, relieving it of many responsibilities and tasks which the young State would not have been able to perform. The Histadrut was the forerunner of the Jewish State, and is still its basic helpmate. In the future, as the State machinery grows stronger, more experienced,

FERDYNAND ZWEIG

and more confident, the Histadrut is bound to relinquish some of its functions and to surrender them to the State.

NOTES

¹The Histadrut also has an Arab section known as the Alliance of Israel workers (*Brit Poalei Israel*). Most Arab workers in Jewish establishments are members of the Histadrut, either in this section or as members of the Trade Unions operating within the Histadrut. Up to 1955 6,440 Arab workers had joined the Histadrut, paying the full membership fee (*Mass Achid*), and making use of all its services, including the health and insurance service. Arab workers are not full members of the Histadrut, because, as its name suggests, it is an organization of Jewish labour only. But in the purely Trade Union section Arabs have the same rights as Jewish members. There are at least 6 or 7 Trade

Unions in which Arab workers fully participate, such as the Civil Service Unions, the Clerical Union, the Union of Teachers, the Building Workers' Union, and the Union of Metallurgical Workers.

²The first local union was formed as far back as 1887 in Rishon-le-Zion, or 1890 in Rehovot.

³The citrus packers founded their national union in 1929; seamen in 1938; engineers and architects in 1945; building and textile workers in 1946; metal workers, printers and wood workers, workers in the food industry, agricultural wage earners, civil servants in 1948; taxi-drivers, civil employees in the Army in 1951; bakers in 1952, etc.

JEWS AS AN INDIAN CASTE¹

Schifra Strizower

ACCORDING to the 1951 census there are some 26,000 Jews in India. However, owing to emigration—chiefly to Israel—an estimate of 20,000 is much nearer the mark for today.

Indian Jewry is divided into three main groups. Some 14,000 Jews are known as Bene Israel—Children of Israel. Bene Israel maintain that their name suggests their origin, namely that they are descendants of members of the Ten Tribes of Israel who found their way into India in the second century B.C.E. Nowadays over two-thirds of the Bene Israel live in Bombay. Until very recently Bene Israel were divided into two endogamous units. To a large extent, Bene Israel resemble in physical features the people among whom they live, varying in skin colour from very light to dark brown. Their mother tongue is Marathi, one of the local languages; very many of them also speak English. The Jewish group on the south-west coast of India—reduced in numbers from 2,500 to 1,500 by emigration to Israel—is known as Cochin Jewry, although by no means all members of this group live in the town of Cochin. Cochin Jewry is divided into endogamous sub-groups: the White Jews, the Black Jews, and the Meshuararim. The latter are the underprivileged descendants of the manumitted offspring of unions between Cochin Jews and their slave concubines; they are also divided into two groups, one of which is attached to the White Jews and the other to the Black Jews, according to descent. In comparison with the Black Jews, who resemble in physical features the people among whom they have been living for over a millennium, the White Jews, who are for the most part fair-complexioned, are newcomers who migrated to India but a few centuries ago. Nevertheless, both White and Black Jews claim domicile in India for some two thousand years. Malayalam, the local language, is their mother tongue; but virtually all the White Jews and some of the Black Jews also speak English. Some 4,000 Jews from Baghdad, with small additions from Aden, Afghanistan, and Iran, are known as Baghdadi. The first of the Baghdadi arrived in India in the late eighteenth century. There are Baghdadi communities of some 2,000 each in Bombay and Calcutta; there is also a small group of Baghdadi in Poona. Baghdadi are on the whole fair-complexioned. They consistently use English.

A few hundred European Jews, mainly from Germany and Austria, came to India in the nineteen-thirties. They live in Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, and especially in Bombay. Though the European Jews in Bombay often stress their differences from the Baghdadi, they join in Baghdadi social and religious activities.

While the Baghdadi tend to imitate the Europeans, the social systems of the Bene Israel and Cochin Jewry show great resemblances to that of the Hindus. In this paper I propose to furnish evidence bearing on the assimilation of one Jewish group, the Bene Israel, to the Hindu caste system.

Caste membership is acquired at birth, determines marriage, prescribes ritual, and is associated with a traditional occupation. The castes are conceived of as existing in different degrees of spiritual dignity; those of high degree, barred from hundreds of lowly tasks which are yet necessary for their existence, need the services of those of low degree, while those of low degree need the ministrations of those of high degree for their spiritual salvation. Contact between those of different degrees of spiritual dignity produces pollution in those of high degree; hence the castes must be kept apart. Above all, castes are kept apart by the ban on intermarriage and the restrictions on commensality. The Hindu system, then, implies a mystically sanctioned, pre-ordained inter-dependence and at the same time it stresses the social separation of caste from caste.

But the caste system, Srinivas says, 'is far from a rigid system in which the position of each component caste is fixed for all time. Movement has always been possible. . . . A low caste was able, in a generation or two, to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy' by imitating the practices of the higher castes.²

Though the position of the Bene Israel within Indian society is not of the mystic and pre-ordained kind bound up with the religious conceptions of Hinduism, Bene Israel refer to themselves, and are referred to by their Indian neighbours, as a caste. Nor is this unusual. For caste, Srinivas writes,³

also provided the pattern for relations with non-Hindu groups. Christians and Muslims were regarded as castes, too, and they accepted such a status. Even revolutionary movements which had aimed at the overthrow of the caste system ended by either becoming castes themselves or reproduced the caste system within themselves. The main body of Hindus regarded these sects as castes and not as sects.

Again,

Even a change of religion [Hutton says]⁴ does not destroy the caste system, for Muslims, who do not recognize it as valid, are often found to observe it in practice, and there are many Muslim castes as well as Hindu; and when some reforming body breaks away from Hinduism and repudiates caste, it becomes something very like a new caste of its own. Jews and Christians also

JEWES AS AN INDIAN CASTE

in India often form castes or bodies analogous to castes . . . the caste system has afforded a place in society into which any community, be it racial, social, occupational or religious, can be fitted as a co-operating part of the social whole, while retaining its own distinctive character and its separate individual life.

Bene Israel told me that their ancestors 'belonged to those of the Ten Tribes which had escaped deportation after the fall of the Kingdom of Israel in the eighth century B.C.E. However, in order to avoid the persecutions which followed in the train of constant invasions by a host of conquerors', the ancestors of the Bene Israel left their home in 175 B.C.E. 'and proceeded by a route not unknown in those times to India. But although they went to a new country, they brought with them their old misfortunes.' For the ship in which the group travelled was wrecked off the Konkan on the west coast of India not far from Bombay. 'Almost all the people were lost with all their belongings, and only seven couples were saved. The bodies of the drowned were washed ashore in the very village where the survivors had taken refuge and buried there. . . . The survivors had lost everything they had brought with them from their homes in the shipwreck and were in consequence reduced to a miserable plight, more easy to be imagined than described. . . . The descendants of the seven couples were cut off from their co-religionists until recent times. As their numbers increased, they spread over the Konkan.'⁵

During their long isolation from their co-religionists, Bene Israel relate, they forgot Hebrew and a great part of Jewish ritual. However, they observed the Sabbath, some of the Holy-days, the dietary regulations and circumcision; they remembered the *Shema*, the confession of the Jewish faith, and repeated it on every occasion, such as that of circumcision, marriage, and death. Moreover, Bene Israel relate that 'unions with alien women were frowned at because the group wished to adhere to Jewish religious principles, and also because the Hindus, on account of their laws, were against marriage between Bene Israel and non-Bene Israel'. But Bene Israel acknowledge that 'while in ignorance of much of Jewish religion, the community adopted some of the local customs—foreign, it is true, to Judaism, but harmless and innocent, and not savouring in the smallest degree of an idolatrous tendency'.

Bene Israel maintain that some of the ritual which they observed during their long isolation from their co-religionists was very similar to that practised in Israel in 175 B.C.E.—internal evidence for their migration from Israel at that time. Moreover, Bene Israel point out that the festival of Hanukkah and the four fasts of national mourning, which were not observed by them during their long isolation, had not been introduced in 175 B.C.E.⁶

Obviously, it is not intended here to argue for or against the accuracy of Bene Israel historical memories. Nevertheless, it must be stated that

those who have interested themselves in the Bene Israel, hold that this group came to India from an Arabian country in the middle of the first millennium C.E.⁷ Moreover, the internal evidence adduced by the Bene Israel does not stand up to closer investigation. It may, of course, be possible to trace some similarity between the ritual observed by the Bene Israel during their long isolation from the main stream of Jewish life and that practised in Israel in 175 B.C.E. However, the question arises whether there is not a much greater similarity between the ritual observed by the Bene Israel and that practised in India. In other words, one wonders whether the ritual observed by the Bene Israel was not copied from Hindu example rather than adapted from the ritual of Israel in 175 B.C.E. Moreover, non-observance of the festival of Hanukkah and the four fasts of national mourning introduced after 175 B.C.E. cannot be accepted as evidence for the group's migration and isolation before their introduction, since Bene Israel did not observe some of the ritual which was certainly in use in Israel in 175 B.C.E.

Again, Godbey says:⁸ 'It is certain that any tradition of descent from ancient Israel . . . may have originated in some historic fact. This urges inquiry for the origin or meaning of . . . such tradition. . . . It should be recognized that all such peoples are the best judges' of whether they are descendants of the Ten Tribes of Israel or not. Nevertheless, it is possible that the Bene Israel tradition of descent from the Ten Tribes originated with travellers who encountered them and from whom the group adopted it. But whether or not the tradition of descent from the Ten Tribes is based on 'some historic fact', it is of functional significance. For the claim to such descent, often put forward by Jewish communities which have been isolated for centuries from their co-religionists and assimilated by social systems not usually associated with Judaism, correlates with the strong Jewish belief in the survival of the Ten Tribes and their eventual reintegration into the main stream of Jewish life, and hence provides a basis for renewal of relations between these 'peripheral' Jewish communities and the general body of their co-religionists.

Bene Israel tradition has it that their ancestors took to oil pressing soon after their arrival in India. Because they rested on the seventh day, Bene Israel were called 'Shanwar Teli'—Saturday oil-presser caste. Even today a few of the 460 Bene Israel who have remained in the Konkan follow this occupation.

One wonders whether Bene Israel were the oil-pressers *par excellence* in this area. For Mr. S. V. Avalaskar, the Konkan historian, in a personal communication, writes:

Practically every village (especially the bigger ones) had one or two families of the Bene Israel. The Bene Israel abstained from the work of oil pressing on Saturdays, and the Konkan village community did not buy oil on Saturdays. This custom is being observed even today. The social restric-

JEW AS AN INDIAN CASTE

tion not to buy oil on the day when the Bene Israel oil-pressers did not press oil, appears to me very significant. . . .⁹

It seems that Bene Israel stood low in the hierarchy of Konkan society. Indeed, a member of the Bene Israel who had spent his youth in a Konkan village told me: 'We Bene Israel get on well with the Hindus. Hindus are gentle people and kind, and they do not like strife. Yet twenty years ago the Hindus in the Konkan still thought that if Bene Israel touched the utensils which Hindus used for food the utensils became polluted. The Hindus thought of us as Teli caste, and oil pressing is humble, unclean work. But this has changed now.'¹⁰

Another member of the Bene Israel community, Professor M. Ezekiel, writes of the humiliation and irritation he felt at being called 'Teli':

. . . when we first arrived in Alibag, after the retirement of my father in 1905, we were shocked to be described as Teli, and my mother as Telin, the feminine of Teli. I knew for certain that not for three generations had we known anyone in our family who had done the Oil-man's trade. Even in the John Elphinstone High School, most boys took delight in calling us by that very irritating name 'Teli'. I found to my surprise that some boys in the School had Ghanis or Oil-presses in their houses and their main source of income was the Oil-press. They were real Teli, but we always protested that we were not, not for some generations back. It may be there were some very far behind, we did not know . . . We felt it very humiliating to be designated Teli . . . We have risen far above that level and are now Doctors, Professors and even Principals of University Institutions.¹¹

Like Hindu groups wishing to rise in public esteem, Bene Israel adopted some of the canons of behaviour of the higher castes.¹² For example, they refrained from eating beef and frowned at the re-marriage of all but the poorest of widows. Again, they were quick to point out that their dependence upon oil pressing was purely fortuitous, the result of their destitute position after the shipwreck, and not of a pre-ordained order of the universe which delegates this calling to those of spiritually low qualities.¹³ Moreover, a number of Bene Israel succeeded in giving up oil pressing for agriculture; a few Bene Israel rose to high positions in the army and fleet of the local rulers.¹⁴

Assimilation to their Hindu neighbours is also reflected in Bene Israel thinking: ' . . . the Hindu culture had sunk so deep into their bones', Ezekiel writes, 'that in fact until very recently they believed that beef was prohibited to them in the Old Testament'.¹⁵ A member of the Bene Israel community told me: 'I am an orthodox man, though I must admit that I have eaten beef once or twice.' A few Bene Israel asked me: 'Do the orthodox Jews in England eat beef?' Again, Bene Israel said: 'Is it necessary for a widow to re-marry? Of course, if she has not been provided for financially she may not be able to avoid it—but

even then it is not nice for a widow to re-marry.' A young woman of the Bene Israel community told me that her mother had been widowed very soon after marriage. Nevertheless, her mother's father would not consent to his widowed daughter's re-marriage: 'Nowadays there are some people in the community who do not worry about widow re-marriage. But we are one of the best families in our community, so my grandfather could not allow his daughter to re-marry.' The grandfather of this informant confirmed that he had persuaded his widowed daughter not to re-marry: 'You may think of our practice as assimilation to the Hindu system. But we know that widow re-marriage is not prohibited in the Bible! And we Bene Israel do not prohibit widow re-marriage; we merely frown at it. But don't you think that the Hindu attitude to widow re-marriage goes one better than the Bible? So Bene Israel attitude to widow re-marriage goes one better than the Bible! Is not this a good thing?' ¹⁶

It is not suggested here that Bene Israel, whose position in Konkan society was not of the mystic and pre-ordained kind, formed a caste proper. Nevertheless, it has been shown that features belonging to a true caste structure entered into the relations between Bene Israel and Hindus: like other groups, Bene Israel were associated with a traditional occupation; relations between Bene Israel and Hindus were governed by the concept of pollution; oriented in terms of the caste system, Bene Israel adopted some of the practices and values of those privileged and endowed with a higher dignity and, like other lowly placed groups, thereby attempted to raise their position in Konkan society. Indeed, even Kehimkar, who maintains that Bene Israel 'kept themselves aloof' and did not adopt Hindu values, on occasion reveals an orientation to the caste system: members of the Bene Israel family of Ashtamkar 'resemble very much the Konkanasth Brahmins . . .', he notes with great approval, and are 'well known for speaking pure Marathi . . . equally good as that used by Brahmins . . .' ¹⁷

Moreover, features belonging to a true caste structure also entered into the relations of Bene Israel with each other. Bene Israel were divided into two units, the Gora or White Bene Israel and the Kala or Black Bene Israel. The former are believed to be the pure descendants of the seven couples who landed in the Konkan, the latter are known to be the offspring of unions between Bene Israel men and non-Bene Israel women—though it is obvious from the skin colour of the Gora that some unions between their ancestors and non-Bene Israel must have taken place. ¹⁸ Indeed, there are Gora, White Bene Israel, who are darker than Kala, Black Bene Israel. It would seem therefore that Kala are the offspring of mixed unions which for some reason or other have been remembered, while unions between the ancestors of the Gora and non-Bene Israel have been forgotten—perhaps the ancestors of the Kala contracted unions with non-Bene Israel later than did those of the Gora.

JEW AS AN INDIAN CASTE

Kehimkar maintains that Kala are the offspring of 'illicit unions, either temporary or permanent', and not of intermarriages proper. He suggests, moreover, that although the very existence of Kala 'shows that the state of morality was once lower than it is now', illicit unions are less of an 'abomination' than intermarriages proper.¹⁹ Similarly, Hutton relates: 'It is not uncommon in some parts of India for a man of one caste to keep a concubine of a lower caste, or even a non-Hindu, and he is not outcasted by his caste fellows on that ground. . . .' But ' . . . a person marrying outside the caste is ex-communicated'.²⁰

Until some years ago, Gora and Kala neither intermarried nor inter-dined. A woman of the Bene Israel community told me: 'My mother used to get furious when Kala came near her cooking utensils, and would push them away. She would not allow Kala to touch any utensils which she used for food.' Gora and Kala worshipped in the same synagogue. But Kala were given the sanctified wine, distributed in the synagogue after the service on Sabbaths and Holy-days, only after Gora had been served.

It appears that Kala rank could not be mitigated. Kehimkar relates that in 1846 a wealthy man who exercised great influence over the community

attempted to introduce his own child born from an alien woman as a real Bene Israel by taking that child to a public feast to dine from the same dish with him and others; the Bene Israel strongly objected to it. As soon as the child sat at the table, the whole party present on the occasion dispersed, being greatly indignant at this attempt to remove the anciently recognized distinction between the real Israel and Black or Kala Israel.²¹

It is difficult to ascertain the correct number of Kala. Obviously, no one will admit to being Kala; and as a result of the diminishing discrimination against Kala in matters social and ritual it is difficult for the non-Bene Israel to identify them.²² But while Gora no longer discuss the subject openly a Gora may point out a Kala behind his back, especially if he is on bad terms with him. In this manner I came across some fourteen Kala elementary families. Gora are not certain about the number of Kala, though they hold that there are more than fourteen Kala elementary families. A Gora told me: 'Most people don't worry about Gora and Kala these days. After all, Gora and Kala observe the same religious practices. We are all equal! But when it comes to marriage, most Gora don't like their children to marry Kala. Yet there have been some marriages between Gora and Kala in recent years.²³ What to do?—But don't mention that I discussed the subject with you! Perhaps I should not have talked about it. Kala will be hurt. After all, now all are equal. I told you because you are interested in it from a sociological point of view. So it wasn't gossip!'

Gora and Kala were clearly not fully castes in the Hindu sense.

There was but a one-sided dependence: Kala worshipped in the synagogue of the Gora, but Gora did not need the services of Kala. There was no differentiation in religious observances. There was no differentiation in occupation. But like Hindu castes, Gora and Kala were conceived of as existing in different degrees of spiritual dignity. Gora, believed to be of pure blood, were exalted, while Kala bore the stigma of their descent.²⁴ Moreover, the restrictions on social relations between Gora and Kala resembled the restrictions on social relations between Hindu castes.

Like the Hindus, Bene Israel lived in joint families. Sons brought their wives to their father's home, and daughters left after marriage. Informants told me that at least one of a man's sons was expected to marry his father's sister's daughter. Descent was reckoned in the male line.

Three *Kajis*²⁵ acted as priests and judges of the Bene Israel. The *Kaji* office was hereditary; moreover, *Kaji* hereditary privileges were confirmed by the local rulers.

According to Bene Israel tradition, the *Kaji* office was introduced by David Rahabi, a co-religionist. He is supposed to have stumbled upon the Bene Israel by accident.

Bene Israel are uncertain about the date of Rahabi's coming. Some hold that he came about a thousand years ago, others say that he came some five hundred years ago, etc. Because the word 'Rahab' is occasionally used in the Bible to designate Egypt,²⁶ Bene Israel infer that Rahabi came from that country.

Although David Rahabi was convinced that the Bene Israel were the real descendants of the Hebrews [Kehimkar relates]²⁷ he still wanted to test them further. He therefore, it is said, gave their women clean and unclean fish to be cooked together; but they promptly singled out the clean fish from the unclean ones, saying that they never used fish that had neither fins nor scales.

Being thus satisfied that the Bene Israel were indeed Jews, Rahabi initiated their first religious revival. He is supposed to have instructed three young men—Jhiratkar, Shapurkar and Rajpurkar—and these, thus trained, assumed the *Kaji* office.

Olsvanger, who published Kehimkar's book in 1937, comments: 'What documents or references are there to prove the historicity of this David Rahabi?'²⁸ However, there is a document to prove the real existence of this man. For there is a Rahabi family in Cochin in whose unpublished family history, a manuscript written in Hebrew, I have read that a member of the family, David Ezekiel Rahabi, went to western India in the middle of the eighteenth century, in the course of his work for the Dutch East India Company, there encountered the Bene Israel, and reformed the Judaism that he found existent among

JEW AS AN INDIAN CASTE

them.²⁹ Kehimkar relates that a family with the surname Rahabi is found in Cochin;³⁰ nevertheless he maintains that David Rahabi did not come from Cochin. For such an admission would lead one to ask whether Rahabi was really the first Cochin Jew to come across Bene Israel and would thus undermine the Bene Israel tradition that their isolation from their co-religionists until recent times—an isolation which, Bene Israel assert, accounts for their past orientation to the Hindu social system—was interrupted but once.³¹

Some time during the eighteenth century Bene Israel began to settle in Bombay. Informants said: 'Employment and education could be found in Bombay, offering our people greater respectability and social advancement.' Nowadays some 12,000 Bene Israel live in Bombay.³²

The move to Bombay led to more than mere change of habitat and occupation. In the Konkan Bene Israel had been dispersed over many villages, forming part and parcel of the life in the village in which they found themselves. Spatial proximity and many common cultural forms made the Bene Israel as much members of their village community as of their caste group—perhaps more so, because their caste group happened to be a particularly dispersed one.³³ But the great possibilities of employment in the fast developing city encouraged the formation of a sizeable group, leading to more complex relations between co-members. Furthermore, the presence within the same locality of different groups, speaking different languages and having different cultural forms, encouraged intra-group cohesion. In Bombay Bene Israel emerged as a community, a strongly knit kind of group bound together by their common life.

Moreover, Bene Israel religious life flourished in Bombay: synagogues were built; periodicals devoted to instruction in the principles and practices of Judaism came into being; books of Jewish interest were translated into Marathi, the mother tongue of the Bene Israel; and so on. Furthermore, Bene Israel began to refer to themselves as 'Jew caste'.³⁴

The second religious revival of the Bene Israel was assisted by the arrival of a small group of Cochin Jews in the early nineteenth century who, like David Rahabi, devoted themselves to the teaching of Judaism, but this time in a professional capacity. Paradoxically, the religious revival was helped forward by the activities of the missionaries. Bene Israel told me: 'The translation of the Bible into Marathi by the missionaries was a great boon. For the first time the Bible reached the community in a language with which all were familiar, giving all an idea of Judaism, and greatly indebteding them to the translators. Christian missions with their schools and classes have been an important means of speeding the community on the way to religious reform.'

But the Baghdadi who came to Bombay in the late eighteenth century, Kehimkar relates, 'have never as a community done any thing

for the religious and educational welfare of the Bene Israel'.³⁵ Nevertheless, it is suggested here that the Baghdadi played an important part in the nineteenth-century religious revival of the Bene Israel—and not only because the former, familiar with Hebrew and the minutiae of Jewish religious practices, provided the Bene Israel with an example of Jewish orthodoxy. For the Baghdadi had outstripped the Bene Israel in a number of ways. The leaders of the Baghdadi community pioneered in industry, providing employment for many thousands of people. They built museums and public libraries. They subsidized the entire religious, educational and charitable services of their community. Moreover, Bene Israel relate, 'Baghdadi shared the privileges of the Europeans in India'. At that time, then, Baghdadi not only enjoyed religious superiority, but also wealth and prestige. Concerned to raise their status in the Bombay hierarchy Bene Israel claimed alignment with their highly placed co-religionists. No wonder then that Bene Israel religious life flourished in Bombay, emphasizing their oneness with the Baghdadi.

A closer examination of the veracity of some of the Bene Israel historical memories indicates that this is not an unfair interpretation of the group's orientation to Judaism and Jewry in the nineteenth century.

Bene Israel assert that they were completely isolated from their co-religionists for some two thousand years—an isolation which, Bene Israel assert, accounts for their past orientation to the Hindu social system. Nevertheless, there is evidence for the view that Bene Israel isolation from their co-religionists was much less complete than their historical memories suggest.

For example, Maimonides speaks of the Jews of India, and it is generally assumed that he is referring to the Bene Israel. Thus at least in the twelfth century the existence of the Bene Israel was not unknown to their co-religionists.³⁶

Again, it seems certain that Rahabi was not the only Cochin Jew to visit the Bene Israel before the nineteenth century. For Buchanan writes about his visit to Cochin:³⁷

The Black Jews communicated to me much interesting intelligence concerning their brethren the ancient Israelites in the East. . . . They recounted the names of many other small colonies resident in northern India, Tartary, and China, and gave me a written list of SIXTY-FIVE places. I conversed with those who had lately visited many of these stations, and were about to return again. The Jews have a never-ceasing communication with each other in the East. Their families indeed are generally stationary, being subject to despotic princes; but the men move much about in a commercial capacity; and the same individual will pass through many extensive countries. So that when any thing interesting to the nation of the Jews takes place, the rumour will pass rapidly throughout Asia.

As soon as Buchanan came to Bombay he was approached by the

JEWES AS AN INDIAN CASTE

Bene Israel who had heard of his talks with the Cochin Jews and wanted to discuss the prophecies of Isaiah with him.³⁸ It is true that Buchanan met both these Jewish communities in the early nineteenth century, at a time when contact with their Cochin co-religionists is admitted by the Bene Israel; however, Buchanan implies that contact between the Jewish groups in the East was of long standing, and moreover not infrequent. It would be difficult to believe that the Cochin Jews had much contact with many small, obscure Jewish communities in far-away places, but were not in contact with the Bene Israel who lived on the same coast line as themselves.

Again, there is evidence that the Bene Israel were not as ignorant of Hebrew as is generally assumed. For in an old Bene Israel cemetery in the Konkan I noticed a gravestone with a Hebrew inscription dated 1715—proof that Bene Israel were then not unfamiliar with at least the rudiments of that language. But if, as seems certain, Rahabi met and taught the Bene Israel in the middle of the eighteenth century, it seems difficult to account for the existence of a Hebrew inscription some decades before his arrival, except on the assumption that Bene Israel never entirely forgot Hebrew or that Rahabi was not the first didactically inclined Jew to visit them.³⁹

Closer examination of even the few data cited here thus strongly suggests that the Bene Israel were not as isolated from Jewry or as ignorant of Judaism as their historical memories imply. But before the move to Bombay the group's habitual relations had been with the Hindus. Bene Israel orientation to Judaism and their co-religionists took place at a time when the latter entered the social environment of the former as a highly placed group, an orientation which Bene Israel, not unnaturally, represent as a re-discovery.

It might be argued that all the data imply is that the Bene Israel change in orientation was facilitated by the entry of their co-religionists into the social environment; but that the data do not imply that the change in orientation was connected with the position of their co-religionists in the social environment. However, there was more to their co-religionists' entry into the social environment of the Bene Israel than mere orientation of the latter to the former. For Baghdadi argued that Bene Israel were more Indian than Jewish and refused to accord them 'pure' Jewish status. The attitude of the Baghdadi led to much strife between the two Jewish communities of Bombay.

The Bene Israel concern over the Baghdadi attitude justifies the interpretation put forward here of the Bene Israel nineteenth-century religious revival. For Jewish communities can exist side-by-side, in a repetitive fashion, and in any number. Moreover, from the point of view of Judaism differences between Jewish communities, as long as they are compatible with its Code, merely denote the different sections, of equal status, in the extensive religious group. Hence from the point

of view of Judaism Bene Israel had but little need to concern themselves with the Baghdadi who, as Dr. E. Moses, a leading member of the Bene Israel community, complained in a letter to the *Jewish Advocate*, an Indian-Jewish paper, in February 1945, 'are foremost in running down the Bene Israel', denying them 'pure' Jewish status. Bene Israel formed a viable Jewish community of their own. Why then the concern over the Baghdadi attitude?

It is suggested here that the Bene Israel concern over the Baghdadi attitude makes sense only when considered in relation to the damage in status within the local hierarchy which the former ascribed to the attitude of the latter. Such an interpretation is corroborated by the change which the relations between the two Jewish communities have undergone in recent years. Though virtually all Bene Israel informants in Bombay frequently complained about the Baghdadi attitude, many of them indicated that they could now afford to be less sensitive to Baghdadi criticism than before: 'In the new India all are equal. Now Baghdadi are no better than Bene Israel. Now all are equal. Now what does it matter?' Other informants referred to changes in the economic position of the Baghdadi community: 'Baghdadi could always get work in the Sassoon mills. But now the mills have been sold. Now all are equal.' Some informants stressed the rights and obligations which were now blurring the boundary between Bene Israel and Baghdadi. For example, some Bene Israel children are now being admitted to the Baghdadi communal school; some Bene Israel teachers are now being employed in the Baghdadi communal school; during the last war Baghdadi invited Bene Israel to co-operate in defence activities rendered necessary by German anti-Jewish propaganda in India. 'Baghdadi don't seem to claim an exclusive title to the true creed these days', an informant told me. 'But this is not because Bene Israel are now more orthodox. It is because it doesn't matter so much these days. It is because Baghdadi can no longer play the part of the higher Jew caste.' As elsewhere in India, where religious prestige is tied to secular power, loss of the latter tends to diminish the former.

The Bene Israel situation is, however, not unique within Jewry. For the world beyond the Jewish horizon—by no means as irrelevant as Judaism would make it appear to be—everywhere counteracts the circumscribing intentions of the Jewish Code and significantly affects the relations within Jewish communities and between them and their respective environments. Moreover, the world beyond the Jewish horizon interferes with the effectiveness of common religion as a principle of unity. The relations of Jewish communities with each other and between them and their respective societies thus provide material for the study of the basis and efficacy of various principles of social alignment.

NOTES

¹ This paper is based on a field study carried out in Bombay. The study was financed by the Department of Educational and Cultural Reconstruction of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

² M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India*, Oxford, 1952, p. 30. But mere imitation, L. Dumont and D. Pocock write in 'Village Studies', *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, No. 1, The Hague, 1957, p. 35, 'without some other economic or political factor brings about no change in the relative position of castes'.

³ Srinivas, *ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴ J. H. Hutton, *Caste in India*, 2nd ed., London, 1951, pp. 2, 115.

⁵ Whenever I asked my informants for the source of their historical memories, they replied: 'It's in Kehimkar's book.' H. S. Kehimkar, a member of the Bene Israel community, wrote *The History of the Bene Israel of India* in 1897. The book was published in Tel-Aviv in 1937 (some decades after the author's death) by the good offices of Dr. Immanuel Olsvanger. A copy of Kehimkar's book is found in most Bene Israel homes.

⁶ Allen H. Godbey, too, in his *The Lost Tribes: A Myth*, Duke University Press, 1930, p. 339, says that lack of knowledge of the festival of Hanukkah and the destruction of the temple by the Romans (which led to the re-introduction of the four fasts of national mourning) 'seems decisive evidence of settlement in India long ere the Christian era . . .' (I shall refer to this point again.)

⁷ For example, the *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*, Bombay, 1885, vol. xviii, Part 1, p. 506, suggests that the Bene Israel came to India from the Persian Gulf or Aden in the sixth century c.e. J. Wilson, in his *Appeal for the Christian Education of the Bene Israel*, Bombay, 1866, relinquishes his previous opinion (put forward in his *Lands of the Bible*, Bombay, 1847, Vol. 2, pp. 667-79) that the Bene Israel are the descendants of the Ten Tribes, and suggests instead that they are Jews, descendants of the Kingdom of Judah, who came to India from the Yemen in the sixth century c.e.

⁸ Godbey, *ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹ However, Professor G. S. Ghurye, who was good enough to discuss this point with me, suggested that if the Konkani village community abstained from oil buying on Saturdays, the abstention must be explained in terms of Konkani Hindu ritual and not in connexion with the Bene Israel oil-pressers. (But is it not possible that in course of time Konkani Hindus also came to connect abstention from oil buying on Saturdays with the Bene Israel oil-pressers who rested on that day? At any rate, Mr. Avalaskar seems to have done so.)

¹⁰ This informant said too: 'Perhaps I should not have told you this. Bombay Bene Israel would not have told you this. They don't want to remember about their status in the Konkani. But perhaps they don't remember. Bombay Bene Israel have been away from the Konkani for some generations. And they have risen. They are clerk caste in Bombay.' (Bene Israel first came to Bombay in the middle of the eighteenth century.) I asked this informant how he accounted for the change in the relations between Bene Israel and Hindus in the Konkani in the last twenty years. He replied: 'There has been much educational and also some economic improvement among Konkani Bene Israel. Besides Hindus are less orthodox now.' H. S. Kehimkar in *The History of the Bene Israel of India*, pp. 51, 56, too, speaks of the low status of the Bene Israel in Konkani society. Kehimkar, however, attributes this to their membership of a non-Hindu religious group. But then Kehimkar aimed at establishing that Bene Israel always regarded themselves and were regarded by their Indian neighbours as members of the Jewish religious group, and that Jewry must therefore accord the Bene Israel 'pure' Jewish status. (The significance which attached to the Bene Israel demand to be accorded 'pure' Jewish status will be discussed presently.) Though there are of course regional variations, it is worth while pointing out that M. N. Srinivas in 'The Social System of a Mysore Village', in *Village India, Studies in the Little Community*, American Anthropological Association, Memoir No. 83, 1955, pp. 2, 22, while including the

Muslims in his list of the castes of the village, does not suggest that their membership of a non-Hindu religious group automatically makes them as polluting as the lower castes. Srinivas acknowledges, however, that there are 'excessive uncertainties as to their hierarchical position'. Hutton, *ibid.*, p. 82, writes: 'Generally speaking, Muslims and Christians are regarded as inferior to Brahmans and Nayars in Malabar, but as less polluting than the lower castes . . .'

¹¹ M. Ezekiel, *The History and Culture of the Bene Israel in India* (a booklet), Bombay, 1948, pp. 26-7. Alibag is a Konkani township.

¹² It seems, however, that the attempts of the Bene Israel to raise their status in Konkani society by adopting canons of behaviour of the higher castes met with but limited success.

¹³ Ezekiel, *ibid.*, p. 8, writes: ' . . . there was a rich oil merchant. . . . It was he who took pity on these destitute people and gave them work. . . . It is thus that they learnt the oil pressing business. . . .' I am told, however, that it is not unusual for Hindu castes of low status to claim similarly that their position is purely empirical and fortuitous, the result of bad luck—in spite of the Hindu teaching that condition in this life is the result of conduct in the last incarnation.

¹⁴ In any case, occupational specialization 'has its limits', M. N. Srinivas writes in 'The Social System of a Mysore Village', *Village India, Studies in the Little Community*, p. 16, since no single village or group of a few neighbouring villages can support an indefinite number of non-agriculturists.

¹⁵ Ezekiel, *ibid.*, p. 64. It is by no means uncommon for Jewish groups to hold that practices and values adopted from the wider society are in line with practices and values enjoined by the Jewish Code. It must be admitted, however, that though a number of Bene Israel asked me whether orthodox Jews in England ate beef, virtually all Bene Israel now know that beef eating is not prohibited in the Old Testament. (Kehimkar, *ibid.*, p. 24, implies that prudence rather than past ignorance of Jewish dietary regulations encouraged the Bene Israel to abstain from eating beef.)

¹⁶ The ban on polygamy among Western Jews represents an example of

assimilation on lines similar to the dislike for widow re-marriage among the Bene Israel. (Western Jewry, however, only holds that the ban on polygamy is in line with the values of Judaism, and not that it 'goes one better than the Bible'.)

¹⁷ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, pp. 56, 61, 90.

¹⁸ Gora Bene Israel told me: 'It is not skin colour which tells us who is Kala. It is known in the community who is Kala. There are some Gora who are a little dark, but not because of mixed unions. Poverty and the excessive heat of India greatly affected the fair complexion of our ancestors.'

¹⁹ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, p. 51. Recently, however, some marriages proper between Bene Israel men and non-Bene Israel women have taken place. Bene Israel told me: 'Nowadays such a mixed union is preceded by the woman's conversion to Judaism.' They were uncertain as to whether the offspring of this type of union are Kala.

²⁰ Hutton, *ibid.*, pp. 71, 63-4.

²¹ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, p. 32. (Kehimkar was born in 1830, and it is possible that he witnessed this incident.)

²² Among Bene Israel as well as among other Bombay groups, the immense elaboration of economic, educational, and general social activities is in modern times creating class divisions between caste fellows. Caste and class, though theoretically antithetical, are accommodating themselves to each other. Among the Bene Israel, class divisions tend to replace the Gora and Kala groupings—hence the diminishing discrimination against Kala.

²³ During my stay in Bombay a marriage between Gora and Kala took place. An informant remarked: 'The girl's father was terribly upset. He tried to stop it. After all, in our community marriage is arranged by the parents. The girl's father is against love-marriage—especially against love-marriage between Gora and Kala. But the couple insisted. Nowadays some people do insist on love-marriage. So the father gave in. He did not like it! But what to do?'

²⁴ A similar mode of grouping exists among Cochin Jewry. Neither the White Jews nor the Black Jews need the services of their Meshuararim. But the latter worship in the synagogues of their respective communities, and, moreover, bear the stigma of their descent.

JEWS AS AN INDIAN CASTE

²⁵ *Kaji* is an Arabic term. It has been suggested that the Arabic terms in use among the Bene Israel support the view (referred to above) that this group came to India from an Arabian country. However, the Muslims in India, too, use the term *Kaji* for their priest and judge. Bene Israel insist that they learnt the Arabic terms in use among them from their Muslim neighbours in the Konkan.

²⁶ For example in Psalms lxxxvii. 4; lxxxix. 11.

²⁷ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, p. 41.

²⁸ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, p. 40, footnote by Dr. L. Olsvanger.

²⁹ The Rahabi family came to Cochin from Aleppo in the middle of the seventeenth century. The family soon played an important part in Cochin Jewry. (Pereyra de Paiva mentions the family in his *Noticias dos Judeos de Cochim*, 1686.) For many years the Rahabi acted as agents of the Dutch East India Company.

³⁰ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, p. 41.

³¹ Even the few Bene Israel who told me that they were inclined to doubt the accuracy of the group's historical memories and who, moreover, hold that Rahabi came from Cochin in the middle of the eighteenth century, nevertheless maintain that the group's isolation from Jewry until recent times was interrupted but once by the arrival of Rahabi.

³² The remainder of the 14,000 Bene Israel in India form small groups in various parts of the country. For example, there are some 400 Bene Israel in Poona; 460 Bene Israel are dispersed over 17 villages in the Konkan; about 40 live in Delhi. About 2,000 Bene Israel live outside India. For example, 900 Bene Israel have emigrated to Israel; a few live in England; there is a community of 400 in the capital of Pakistan.

³³ M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India*, pp. 31-2, describes the structural situation in India as subject to opposed types of solidarity. On the one hand, '... members of the same caste living in different villages have a great deal in common'. On the other hand, '... members of a

village community, whatever their caste, have certain interests in common'. Srinivas terms the solidarity common to the caste group 'horizontal solidarity', the solidarity common to sections of different castes occupying different positions in the hierarchy and living in one locality 'vertical solidarity'.

³⁴ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, pp. 256, 257, 261, etc., cites letters written by the Bombay Bene Israel in the nineteenth century to government officials in which the group refers to itself as 'Jew caste' or 'Jew caste or Israel caste'. In the census reports, too, Bene Israel referred to themselves as 'Jews'. It is not suggested here that the community dropped the name 'Bene Israel' entirely. But it is suggested that the term 'Jew caste' occurs often enough to be significant.

³⁵ Kehimkar, *ibid.*, p. 56. Kehimkar admits, however, that Solomon David Sassoon and his nephew Jacob E. D. Sassoon 'have of late years shown the nobleness of their family and the magnanimity of their mind in studying the welfare of the Bene Israel, and have thereby set an excellent example to their countrymen, who, we trust, will now take it to heart, and follow in their footsteps'.

³⁶ 'But the Jews of India', Maimonides wrote to the Jews of Lunel at the end of the twelfth century, 'do not know the Written Law. They have nothing of religion except that they rest on Saturday and perform circumcision on the eighth day.' As the Jews of Cochin are known to have been familiar with the Written Law (The Law of Moses), the prophets, and parts of the Talmud, it is assumed that Maimonides was referring to the Bene Israel.

³⁷ C. Buchanan, *Christian Researches in Asia*, 4th ed., London, 1811, p. 225.

³⁸ Buchanan, *ibid.*, p. 233.

³⁹ Rahabi was born in 1720. In any case, Bene Israel maintain that Rahabi did not teach them the meaning of Hebrew. Yet the composition of a Hebrew inscription obviously requires some knowledge of the meaning of Hebrew.

NORTH AFRICAN JEWRY TODAY

André Chouraqui

NORTH AFRICAN JEWRY exhibits to an intense degree the complexes which assure the dynamic permanence of the history of the Jews. As far back as we can go into the past we find in North Africa evidence of Jewish communities, from the distant time when the Phoenicians went to establish their settlements on the shores of the Magreb. The Phoenicians spoke a language very near to Hebrew. The ties which bound Phoenicians and Jews must have helped towards the setting up of a certain number of Jewish communities; but it must be pointed out that their existence at that time is witnessed only by tradition.

We need concern ourselves with the history of the Jews of North Africa only since the Second Temple; there has been no break in the continuity of this history up to the present day. The Jews of North Africa have known in turn the successive domination of the Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Moslems, Turks, Spaniards, and the French. In later years, continuing a progress of more than two thousand years, the half million Jews of North Africa have lived or are now living through the crises which inevitably accompany a new change of scene and the birth of new nations. The national independence of Morocco was declared on March 2, 1956, and that of Tunisia on March 26, 1956, while Algeria is witnessing a bloody and painful war against the sovereignty of France and seeks to create an independent Algerian Republic.

The difficulties accompanying and resulting from these political changes are all the more deeply felt by the Jews who are situated at the crossroads between the Moslem masses with whom they have strong historical links and the French minorities who have facilitated their emancipation. Thus, the history of the last decades has been for the North African Jews a history of painful disruption. This situation alone should sufficiently emphasize the urgency of studying carefully the questions which have arisen through the historical changes taking place in our generation; but there is more to it than that.

North African Jewry is not a perfectly homogeneous whole of which one can speak without first establishing some distinctions; the first obvious one is that of the division of North African Jews into Algerians,

NORTH AFRICAN JEWRY TODAY

Tunisians, and Moroccans. The circumstances of the past in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco have determined for the Jews of these countries completely different social, economic, and political conditions. Algeria was a colony subject to French domination from the year 1830. Today it is considered as a unit made up of French *départements*. The French authorities have complete responsibility, in practice as well as in law, for the direction of Algerian affairs. The Jewish minority was granted French citizenship in 1870. This has brought to the Algerian Jews full rights of citizenship, and has allowed them for the last three generations to become an integral part of the French nation, which in this way has given them the political means of emancipation. The public schools of the French Republic, the administration, the liberal professions, and economic activities were all opened to them, and in the space of a few decades the historian can study the extraordinary rise of these Jews from their lowly state. We shall refer to this matter again.

Tunisia, on the other hand, was a French protectorate from the year 1881. From 1921 the Jews were offered the possibility of choosing between the status of French citizen and that of Tunisian subject. As a result, two-thirds of the Jewish community of Tunisia is composed of Jews subject to Tunisian laws and to rabbinical courts which enforce Mosaic law in respect of personal status, and one-third of French Jews living in Tunisia and fully integrated into the institutions defined by French law.

The French protectorate in Morocco was established only in 1912, and the Jews of that country, with the exception of a very small minority of French citizens who came from Europe or Algeria, are considered as subjects of the Sultan, now called the King.

The three dates, 1830, 1881, 1912, mark three definite stages in the adaptation of North African Jewry to the way of life considered as normal in the West, and they define three clear steps along the road to emancipation. But in addition to this, the Jews of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco constitute communities inside these countries which are quite distinct and which have not attained a uniform degree of evolution. In Algeria the Saharan Jew has remained much nearer to his traditional origins and to his ancient way of life than has the doctor, lawyer, or industrialist of the coastal towns. In the Moroccan towns it is not easy to distinguish the intellectual or the bourgeois Jews from their Christian counterparts, while in the villages of South Morocco, accustomed as I am to these matters, I have always had difficulty in recognizing the Jewish pedlar or the Jewish peasant among his Moslem colleagues; while the *chleuh* Jew, for example, perpetuates in our century habits of thought and custom which are often relics of the pre-Islamic era. Thus it is rather unwise and even misleading to speak about North African Jewry without being wholly aware of the deep distinctions which characterize a complex and changing state of affairs.

Furthermore, in Tunisia and Morocco the Jewish community has retained a distinct social status which manifests itself in the existence of independent rabbinical courts which apply to their Jewish subjects the rabbinical laws of marriage, divorce, succession, and levirate. This status is to be seen also in the existence of Alliance Israélite Universelle schools which undertake the education of practically all the Jewish children in Morocco and a considerable proportion of the children in Tunisia. In the schools which the Alliance Israélite Universelle has set up in this praiseworthy way with the help of the local authorities and the French government, the Jewish children are brought up in an atmosphere which is completely homogeneous and in which they receive a French education as well as the rudiments of Jewish culture and the Hebrew language.

In Algeria, on the other hand, the Alliance Israélite Universelle has established only *Talmud Torah*, and the education of the children has taken place, especially since 1870, within the ordinary framework of the French schools; in these schools the Jewish child mixed with the Christian and Moslem children, lost the feeling of the inevitable nature of his special position, and was inclined to assimilate to his surroundings and to acquire a lay education which, in the majority of cases, cut him off from the main stream of Jewish life.

Years ago Daniel Halévy used to speak of the acceleration of history; in a few years we have been able to witness upheavals of which it is actually impossible to foresee all the consequences for the half million Jews whose circumstances we have just outlined. Let us say metaphorically that before the French intervention in North Africa the Jews were like iron filings on the border of the Moslem community. In 1830, 1881, and 1912 French intervention created a great pole of attraction (the pole of European influence which has destroyed a good number of ancient structures in countries where it was established), and by the power of its attraction it drew towards it these filings lurking on the border of ancient communities. And today French dominance has disappeared or is on the wane in Tunisia and Morocco, and now also in Algeria. New states have been created or strive to come into being; the attraction of the European pole loses its irresistible character and the filings which it had polarized detach themselves.

The North African Jews, in the period of crisis which they have lived or are now living through, contemplate the most urgent and complex problems in the new circumstances in which they will find themselves in the young kingdom or in the young republic which has just been born in Tunisia or in Morocco, and which seeks to come into being in Algeria.

I should like briefly to explain the drama taking place in the mind of the Jews during the two periods which marked the great revolutions of which we have just spoken: the period of the Moslem struggle

for autonomy and the period which began with the establishment of the new independent states. During the period of the conflict which opposed France to Tunisian, Moroccan, and now Algerian, nationalism, one can say that the Jews found themselves exactly between the hammer and the anvil. Their historical position is that of the crossroads: they are at the exact point where European society meets the Moslem society in whose midst it has established itself. This observation is valid at every level and in every sphere. The position of North African Jewry is everywhere and at all times at the point where France and Islam intersect, in social activities, in way of life, in demographic structure, in the geographical division between rural and urban population, and in the division into occupations. If one draws two lines, one representing the demographic data on the Moslem population, and the other those on the European population, one can be quite sure that the line which represents the demographic situation of the Jews—whether in regard to geographical divisions, social or occupational divisions, or divisions of sex and age—will always be mathematically mid-way between the Moslem and the Christian populations. This remarkable fact is clearly explained when one realizes that the Jewish minority has surpassed the great Moslem masses in its development without reaching the level of the European population.

In time of peace it is very agreeable to be the intermediary between two elements of a population which are seeking to come to terms on a friendly and creative basis. The Jew knew how to benefit from his position of natural intermediary between French and Moslems. For a very long time the Jew has contributed to the creation of commercial ties between Europe and the Magreb in order to justify his position on the border of the Moslem community. Ancient chronicles give proof of the existence of Jews who undertook long and perilous journeys to Europe in order to take back to Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria the products which were needed for their commerce. This position of intermediary was confirmed in modern times when Europe came to meet North African Islam, the Jew being used as a link, as interpreter, and as intermediary between populations differing in language, mentality, and social structure; these peoples had to live together within the same geographical boundaries and had to collaborate one way or another in carrying out the same tasks. But when the situation became worse, what for a long time had been an advantage in peace provoked a tragic conflict in time of war. The Jews had received irreplaceable benefits from France, immense advantages whose positive and creative aspects they had fully appreciated. At the same time it was difficult for them to dissociate themselves from their Moslem neighbours who never missed an opportunity of bringing pressure to bear on them to make them share their aspirations and hopes.

In Morocco just as in Tunisia some Jews publicly associated themselves

with the Moslem nationalists, whom they helped in their struggle. But the greater part of the Jewish population aspired to one hope only: that peace should return by no matter what means. In this hope the Jews have lived and are living in an often tragic anxiety; I am thinking of those isolated communities in some corner of the Sahara or the Atlas, hard hit by the economic situation resulting from the war, who asked and are still asking where this isolation provoked by what seems to them a fratricidal war will lead them.

If the first period of crisis and bloody conflict, of terrorism and repression, is painful, the second period, which accompanies and follows the setting up of the independent states, is marked by even greater upheavals. It must be said that the Tunisian and Moroccan states up to the present time have shown proof of making a great effort to understand the position of the Jews. These states have demonstrated their willingness to integrate the Jews on a basis of equality with the Moslems into the new community. They wish to grant them the full measure of their rights as citizens, and never cease, through the mouths of their official representatives, to multiply the declarations intended to calm their fears and open before them the hope of complete adoption. Both the King of Morocco and President Bourguiba of Tunisia have made efforts in this cause which we must acknowledge. At the same time one must stress the fact that the bitter conflict in Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria has never taken on an antisemitic nature in the true sense, and has claimed only very few victims among the Jews.

Nevertheless the historian and the sociologist are in duty bound to examine these revolutions at a deeper level, and must judge an economic situation neither by public declarations nor facts, even if they are as eloquent as those which I have just cited, nor on the other hand by a few restrictions which have been placed on the free emigration of the Jews. The historian must judge these situations according to their underlying tendencies. The setting up of the new Moslem states of Tunisia and Morocco brings with it for the Jews changes which must radically and inevitably modify the conditions in which they live. The first and the most fundamental change (which those who have had occasion to change their language will readily understand) is that the Jews of North Africa who until now used the French language as their own tongue will gradually change their language and their means of expression, and instead of being classed amongst the French-speaking peoples will become Arabic-speaking. Already in the schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Tunisia as well as in Morocco, the teaching of Arabic has been considerably increased and given more weight as a result of the new programmes; in consequence, Arabic will replace French in the more or less distant future as the language in which the children are taught.

NORTH AFRICAN JEWRY TODAY

In this way, half a million Jews will be grafted once more on to ancient Arab culture with all the consequences which this change of language implies. I must stress the advantages which this change will bring by reason of the traditional affinities between Arab and Hebrew culture and the unavoidable necessity by which Israel and the Arab states will one day find themselves drawn closer together. The Arabic speakers will have a special and constructive role in the historically inevitable *rapprochement* of Arab and Jew. But in changing one's language there is always a change of spirit, of heart, and of soul. Whatever remains of Jewry in North Africa will be deeply marked by the fact which I have just underlined.

To this spiritual, intellectual, and cultural factor, one must add another factor which is much more serious: the economic situation. During the period when French domination was undisputed, the North African economy was characterized by the symbiosis between the Moslem masses and the European minorities, the latter possessing the capital and modern techniques which they put to use to develop the country. The transfer of sovereignty, accompanied by serious political crises, has put a stop to foreign investments of men and capital which is reflected in an economic depression, whose effects are being felt in Morocco and in Tunisia; the Jews, primarily concentrated in trade, are among the first victims. It is very probable that the present economic depression which is sweeping the countries of North Africa is only temporary, and that the Moroccan and Tunisian governments will sooner or later manage to find the resources which will enable them to balance their national economies. In Tunisia, as in Morocco, the authorities are going to great lengths to find new resources of capital, techniques, and labour which will enable them to meet the needs of the young states and to assure the economic expansion of the Moslem masses. But if this favourable plan materializes, the Jews will have to face another and just as formidable situation. During the period of the French administration the Jews were, more often than not, certain of sympathetic reception by the authorities, and were, as we have already seen, natural intermediaries between the different elements of the population. In the future, it is easy to foresee that the predominant economic power will pass from the hands of the French to the Moslems, and as the development of the young states continues, the Jewish minority will have to cope with the competition of the Moslem masses who will have become an integral part of the national economy of the country. Will they be able in these circumstances to maintain the level necessary for survival? Will the half million Jews be able to find their economic balance in the face of competition from some twenty million Moslems who live in North Africa and whose demographic growth is moreover unbelievably rapid?

The problem is the same as that which would occur in South Africa,

for example, if racial segregation were abolished and if the non-Europeans were to hold power. The emancipation of the great mass of Africans would inevitably make for the eviction of the white minorities. It is known that in South Africa the 'poor whites' are so aware of this dilemma that they give their unconditional support to the political parties which champion 'apartheid'. Although the situation is not so clear cut in North Africa, it is not without some resemblance to the South African position. The anxieties of the Jews of North Africa are increased, more or less consciously, by something which could appear to be one of the fatalities of the economic future of the country and an almost inescapable consequence of the legitimate aspirations of the Moslem masses.

In the political field, the great upheavals which have taken place in the country have had repercussions of no lesser magnitude among the Jews. The Jews of North Africa have lived for twelve centuries under a Moslem law which considered them as *dhimmis*, protected persons. The Moslem community, essentially theocratic, did not in the past grant the full rights of citizenship to any except those who believed in the apostolate of the Prophet. The non-Moslems, Jews and Christians, were admitted within Islamic countries, but with a special status. The law of the *dhimmis*, contained in the apocryphal text of the ninth century, is known as the Charter of Omar. This document guarantees to the protégés of Islam the right of life and property, but it also imposes on them a certain number of limitations designed to assure the pre-eminence of Islam and which place protected persons in a position of discriminatory inferiority. The *dhimmis*, according to Al Mawardi, were to wear a distinctive costume, they were not to build either houses or synagogues which were higher than the dwellings or the mosques of the Moslems. They were subject to supplementary taxes, *djizya* and *kharaj*, by which they procured their rights of protection. Finally and most important, they could hold no position of authority in the Moslem community. If then Jews or Christians were admitted as protected persons within Moslem theocracies, their situation was essentially precarious and subject to revocation, and depended above all on the personality of the Prince. These principles by themselves explain the history of the Jewish communities in Islam.

France, as we have already said, overthrew this ancient system by creating conditions which tended to eliminate the social forms of isolation, and it substituted for them a social pattern fitted to modern life. This was why the colonizing enterprise of the French was a dynamic social enterprise which resulted, in fact, in the creation of independent states. The Jews, by reason of the fact that they were a religious and ethnic minority, were progressively absorbed in the new social structure. The young states are governed by leaders who were brought up in French schools and are devoted to the ideal of modern

democracy. Thus they have unanimously repudiated the theocratic principles of medieval Islam. They aim to create modern states with a democratic foundation, but in which the Moslem religion will be the state religion. They wish to show their goodwill by letting Jews take part in the government. The nomination of M. Albert Bessis in Tunisia and of Dr. Léon Benzaquen in Morocco to ministerial posts is an event which takes on historic significance when one considers the past of Islam and the practices usually current even today in the other Moslem countries: Irak, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt.

However, this desire for total integration will penetrate only very slowly among the masses. These masses, according to the avowed statements of the present rulers, will remain for a long time to come subject to the same traditional modes of thought which lead them to act as though the 'Yehudi' or the 'Rumi', the Jew or the Christian, could not fully attain the equality proclaimed in the legal codes; and in this context again a gnawing anxiety aggravates the cultural and economic problems of which we have already spoken.

Therefore it is not surprising to find that, faced with so complex and grave a situation which is revolutionizing the very conditions of life, a good number of Jews are leaving or thinking of leaving. The middle classes are in a state of indecision; they wonder anxiously about the outcome of the cultural, economic, and political difficulties which spring up before them. Those who were so poor that they had nothing to lose by leaving, or so rich that they could easily abandon their assets, which in any case are not realizable in present circumstances, seized the first opportunity they had to leave for Europe, for America, or for Israel.

France offers an ideal refuge to those Jews of North Africa who are of French culture and who are sufficiently emancipated. France is a country in full economic expansion, which can absorb as many North African Jews as would wish to be assimilated; political conditions and the French spirit of tolerance facilitate this assimilation. The Jews can easily find in France the conditions of life which assure them complete integration. But from the spiritual and religious point of view, and equally from the point of view of Zionist reconstruction, one must acknowledge that the great majority of these Jews are lost to the Jewish community, that they no longer associate themselves with our problems, and that they come to consider that they are not responsible for anything which concerns Israel.

But if the Jewish élite of North Africa go to settle in France, the masses, who remain faithful to the traditions of the *Mellah* or the *Harat el Yahud*, and who continue to pray in their humble synagogues in Hebrew, have no other choice and no other wish but to go to settle in Israel, which is becoming the country with the greatest number of North African Jews.

The situation of the North African Jews which I have tried to sketch poses to the state of Israel one of its gravest internal problems. In the course of numerous journeys which I have made in that country in the last few years, from Dan to Elath, in the towns, in the villages, and in the *kibbutzim*, I have been able to see for myself the problems which they present for the state as well as the progress of their integration and the extraordinary revolution which takes hold of those who have changed their language, their country, and their social conditions, and who participate with all their strength in the rebuilding of the state. In Israel the North African Jews also pose a very special problem which is without precedent, I believe, in the history of immigration to Israel. The Jews of North Africa in fact are the only group to have gone to Israel deprived of their élite. The early *aliyot* from Russia, Eastern Europe, or Germany were made up of élites fired by idealism and armed with techniques which they had studied in the West. It is these men who have formed the backbone of the state of Israel, and it is thanks to them that the state has been built. The immigrations from other Moslem countries are characterized by the fact that they have been transplantations of entire communities, from Irak, Libya, the Yemen, and elsewhere. Rich and poor, intellectuals, labourers, and small business men have been transplanted together from their country of origin to Israel. As a result of this they have been able to integrate more easily into the country, because the masses were accompanied by their normal complement of intellectuals, industrialists, business men, community leaders, and so on. Even if their standard of living at the start was lower than that of the immigrants from Europe, their integration into Israel was facilitated by the fact that they constituted a transfer of groups which remained sociologically intact. But the North African Jews are the only ones leaving a Moslem country who have an open choice before them. They can go to Israel, or to France, and ill-luck has it that the choice has had to be made in conditions which have led to a kind of skimming off of the élite. The élite, made up of a significant number of intellectuals, teachers, doctors, lawyers, journalists, senior civil servants, industrialists, middle class business men, and skilled craftsmen, remain in their native country or go to settle in France, while the masses, poor and often tragically destitute, have nothing to hope for in France. The state of Israel offers them well known advantages in their search for a new homeland.

But then, one may well ask, why does the élite desert and turn towards France instead of going to Israel? We come back to the drama which is summed up in the two words *emancipation* and *assimilation*.

When the French went in 1830 to Algeria, in 1881 to Tunisia, and in 1912 to Morocco, they were welcomed by the Jews with an enthusiasm which doubtless no other section of the Diaspora has ever manifested. The 'humiliated' who were living under régimes which bore down

heavily upon them, who were 'Jew dogs' in the eyes of the Moslem masses around them, suddenly saw horizons opening before them which they had never dared dream of; suddenly they saw a new people who came to speak to them of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity; and this new people had already living in their midst emancipated Jews who now came to help the North African Jews attain their own emancipation. Crémieux and his friends of the Alliance Israélite Universelle obtained for them the decree which was to make Algerian Jews French citizens, and built Alliance schools which gave them the means of emerging from their servile condition. Then all the psychological inhibitions weighing on the minds of the exiles were removed at a single stroke; all their fears about a delay in the process of emancipation were allayed. In one surge and as one man North African Jewry, moved by an irresistible thrust, launched itself into the sphere of Western dominance represented by France in the Magreb. Emancipation was achieved with an extraordinary speed. The road which humanity has taken several centuries to travel in order to attain the rights of modern times, the North African Jews have often travelled in two or three generations. The metamorphosis which transforms a Jew of the Moslem Middle Ages into a man of modern times has been brought about with a speed which, I believe, has no parallel elsewhere. In many North African Jewish families one can see around the same table the grandfather who speaks only Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic, who knows just enough Hebrew to say his prayers, who is dressed in old traditional dress with a skull cap on his head, and who knows nothing of modern life; the father dressed like a European and speaking French, although he is not ignorant of Arabic; and lastly the son who is an engineer, a lawyer, or a doctor, trained in French schools, who has become or hopes to become a French citizen, and is in fact removed from the milieu in which he was born. The very speed of this emancipation has led to a movement of extensive assimilation.

There is an expression which sums up this situation well enough: these emancipated people have become assimilated 'by throwing the baby out with the bath water'. The 'baby' is Israel with its irreplaceable treasures of historic and spiritual traditions, with its exemplary energy in its return to the Holy Land. The 'bath water' has hidden all its treasures because it was too dirty; it was the memory of past centuries, the curse of the *Galut*, the sufferings, the anxieties, the economic misery, the humiliation, and the contempt, a life without ideals crushed by fear and poverty. In their eyes emancipation had necessarily to go hand in hand with assimilation if the past was to be forgotten; this past of which they knew not the great riches and from which they wanted to dissociate themselves. They threw themselves desperately into the illusions of the modern world, without distinguishing either in themselves or in their past the essential from the non-essential. Thus it is that in

Algeria, for example, the abyss which divides the generations is very great, and that the process of assimilation has caused the greatest havoc.

The history of the North African Jews in the last ten years can be summed up by saying that the recognized social forms of the lands of their birth have burst open. This explosion once again throws the perspective of their future into confusion. Whether they remain in North Africa or emigrate to France or to Israel they will have to adapt themselves to new conditions of life, and in order to survive they will have once more to change their language or their occupation. But in this renunciation, of which Jewish history gives so many examples, the North African Jew, to be faithful to the continuity of his traditions, will have to resist the temptations of assimilation and to return to his origins, which bear within them the reasons for our long survival in the past and for our ability to contribute to Jewish and world history. In North Africa as in France or in Israel the North African Jew must assimilate himself to the state and the nation which he has chosen and which he means to serve with all the strength and with all the wild energy of which has given so much proof in the past. But this contribution will be fully genuine only if it remains true to its real vocation, true to its Hebraic past, true to all that it entails, and equally true to the great peoples and cultures which have nurtured the Jew in the course of his history, both ancient or modern. I refer to the people and the culture of the Islamic Magreb as well as to the France of Pascal and of 1791, a France which has been twice a liberator of the Jews.

There are in this meeting of Israel, Islam, and France many conflicts and contradictions which often catch at the heart of the North African Jew. We must underline these conflicts and contradictions instead of obscuring them, so that everyone may the better understand the price which our generation must pay for the establishment of a true peace which can come about in this century only by the triumph of true unity through the length and breadth of the world.

OBSERVATIONS ON CHURCH-STATE PROBLEMS IN AMERICA AND THE INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

Shad Polier

INTRODUCTION

THE NEWLY APPROVED Constitution of the Fifth French Republic declares, as its predecessor, that France is a laic or secular state. The American Constitution makes no similar declaration but achieves the same result by withholding from the central government any power to deal with religious affairs. This withholding, which is paralleled in the constitutions of all the individual states is, in any event, binding on the individual states under the Federal Constitution as interpreted by the Federal Supreme Court. For in the United States the ultimate determination of such political issues as the relationship of the individual states to the central government and the relationship of both the central government and the state governments to the citizens of the nation is a judicial matter for the courts generally and for the Federal Supreme Court in particular.

The framers of the Federal Constitution in 1787 contemplated that the general government would be secular. They manifested this, however, more by what they did not say than what they did. They simply refrained from conferring upon that government any power to deal with religious affairs. Indeed, they carefully refrained from even mentioning God in the Constitution. The only express reference to religion included in the text was a mandate that no religious tests should ever be required for service in the government, a prohibition which meant that not merely Roman Catholics or Jews but even atheists could legally be elected to the presidency of this overwhelmingly Protestant nation.

This negative inference was made express some four years after the Constitution was adopted. In 1791 a Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution. Its opening words were: 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise

thereof.' This provision was really little more than a formal statement of what the great pamphleteer and fighter for liberty, Tom Paine, had said in *Common Sense* some fifteen years earlier: 'As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of government to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do therewith.'

In 1947 and again in 1948 the Supreme Court spelled out in some detail what the Constitutional provision meant. This is the most authoritative exposition which we have and therefore merits quotation in full. The Court said:

The 'establishment of religion' clause of the First Amendment means at least this: Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. Neither can force nor influence a person to go to or remain away from church against his will or force him to profess a disbelief or disbelief in any religion. No person can be punished for entertaining or professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs, for church attendance or non-attendance. No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion. Neither a state nor the Federal Government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and *vice versa*. In the words of Jefferson, 'the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect a wall of separation between church and State' (Mr. Justice Black, *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S.1, 15-16).

In short, the United States Constitution imposes upon our governments, Federal and state, an obligation of neutrality—not merely neutrality as among competing faiths and sects, but also a neutrality as between religion and non-religion.

How has this legal 'wall of separation' affected the Jewish community and Jewish rights in the United States? Before I offer an overall general answer to the question, I think it advisable to consider the operation of the principle of separation of church and state in six specific areas which particularly concern the Jewish community. These are: (1) the role of religion in public education; (2) governmental financial support of private religious education; (3) governmental supervision and control of private religious education; (4) the exclusion of religious schools and houses of worship from particular communities or particular districts within a community; (5) compulsory Sunday observance laws; (6) humane slaughtering legislation.

RELIGION IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Religious instruction in state schools is found in the overwhelming majority of countries throughout the world. Indeed, it is found even

CHURCH-STATE PROBLEMS IN AMERICA AND THE JEWS

in some Communist countries—such as Poland and Hungary—notwithstanding the orthodox Marxist doctrine that looks at religion as an evil to be eradicated.

In the United States the state schools—known as public schools—originally developed out of Protestant religious schools. Even when they were taken over by the state and local civil authorities shortly after the founding of the Republic towards the end of the eighteenth century, they still retained their Protestant orientation. However, during the second quarter of the nineteenth century they began to be transformed into secular schools. This came about as a result of a number of factors, the two most important being the general secularization of American society on the one hand, and on the other the increasing influx of Roman Catholics, particularly from Ireland. Both groups, the secularists and the Roman Catholics, fought against Protestant teachings in the public schools.

Surprisingly, the struggle was a comparatively short one. In less than a score of years after it was launched it achieved success with the general acceptance of the principle that the public schools should be non-sectarian. By the end of the third quarter of the nineteenth century there was hardly a state which did not by its laws or constitutional provisions require that the public schools be completely non-sectarian.

Nevertheless, religious instruction did continue in some public schools. In some communities the continuance was justified on the ground that since the instruction was not compulsory, and Catholic and Jewish children could be excused from participating if their parents requested it, the non-sectarianism of the school was not violated. In others, an effort at fairness was made by opening the schools to Catholic and Jewish teaching as well; by permitting each of the three major faiths to conduct classes for their children in the public schools, it was felt that there could be no legitimate complaint.

In 1948 the legality of the latter system was presented to the United States Supreme Court for consideration. A community in the mid-west had inaugurated a programme under which one day each week the children in the public schools were divided into three groups, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish, and each group was taught its respective religion by a minister, priest, or rabbi. (After the programme had been in effect for a short time, the local Jewish community decided to give it up, so that thereafter only Protestant and Catholic instruction was given.) Technically, attendance was not compulsory and if a parent wished his child to have no religious education, he could so indicate to the authorities and the child would be excused from attending. However, as a matter of fact, very few parents exercised this option.

The Supreme Court in 1948 declared the programme unconstitutional. In effect, the Court held that it is not enough for the public schools to be multi-sectarian; they must be non-sectarian, or, perhaps

more accurately, they must be secular. And it makes no difference whether the religious instruction is compulsory or voluntary; it may not be conducted within the public schools under the auspices of the school authorities.

This decision was hailed by the entire Jewish community. Indeed, when the case was before the Court, all the leading American Jewish organizations, religious and secular, presented a brief to the Court urging it to declare the programme unconstitutional. On the other hand, the Catholic Church and perhaps the majority of the Protestant denominations attacked the decision, declaring that its effect was anti-religious. For the past decade most of the Christian religious organizations in the United States have been waging a campaign to bring religion back to the public schools. Opposing them are most of the secular organizations concerned with public education or with civil liberties and practically the whole of the Jewish community. (It should not, however, be supposed that the Christian community is united on the question; there is a significant number of Protestant—though no Catholic—organizations that strongly believe in the continued secularity of public education.)

It would be hardly accurate to suggest that American public schools are completely devoid of religious content or atmosphere. Notwithstanding the Supreme Court's decision, one can find some religious practices in most public schools. There are thousands of public schools throughout the nation, and there is no practicable way to police them all so as to assure their abiding by the Court's decision. Hence, while out and out religious instruction in public schools is rare, lesser religious observances are by no means uncommon. For example, recitation of a prayer is a frequent practice. In schools where there are a substantial number of Jewish children, non-Christological prayers are chosen; but even here, the 'Lord's Prayer', taken from the New Testament, is often included on the assumption that it is non-sectarian since it does not mention Jesus. So too, it is a common practice in many communities to read several verses from the Bible daily. Here too, in schools where there is a substantial number of Jewish children, it is the usual practice to select verses from the Old Testament—generally Psalms. The singing of hymns, particularly during the Christmas season, is likewise a widespread practice. All in all, however, it may fairly be said that the American public school is a secular school, at least in comparison with state schools in most other parts of the world.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF PRIVATE RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

The United States, too, is one of the few nations where tax-raised funds are not used in direct support of religious practices or worship. Even in Hungary and other East European Communist countries

priests and religious teachers receive salaries from the state. Except in the case of chaplains in governmental institutions—such as the army, governmental hospitals, and prisons—this practice is unknown in the United States. There can be no doubt that any Federal or state law appropriating a sum of money for payment of the salaries of clergymen or religious teachers or for the general maintenance of religious schools would be held unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court. Actually, the constitution or laws of every one of the 48 states expressly prohibit the direct appropriation of tax-raised funds for religion or religious schools.

This situation came about as part of the development which led to the secularization of the American public educational system. The primary purpose of Roman Catholic opposition to sectarian Protestantism in the public schools was not the removal of that Protestantism, but the removal of Catholic children. Their goal was the erection of a parallel Catholic parochial school system for all Catholic children. This could be effected only if schools in which Catholicism was taught would share in governmental funds with schools in which Protestantism was taught. The Catholic Church therefore demanded not that Protestantism be eliminated from the public schools, but that Catholic schools too receive public funds and thus become part of the general public school system.

To this the Protestants and secularists refused to agree. The alliance of secularism and Catholicism was sufficiently strong to require modification of the existing system towards the middle of the nineteenth century. But the secularists then shifted to form an alliance with Protestantism so that the modification should not be in the form so ardently desired by the Catholic Church. Instead, Protestantism accepted the secularization of the public school system in return for the adoption in the states of constitutional provisions and laws prohibiting appropriation of public funds for religious schools.

As a result of these laws and of the decision of the United States Supreme Court quoted above, we have not had in this country the situation that prevails in Quebec, where there are no secular schools but only Protestant and Catholic schools with Jewish children attending the Protestant schools. Nor have we had the experience of the Netherlands where the opening of the public treasury to confessional schools led to the situation prevailing today in which there are more confessional schools than public schools. Nor have we had the experience of Belgium where governments stand and fall on the acrimoniously contested issue of whether they have been niggardly or over-generous in the amounts appropriated to confessional schools.

In recent years, however, we have begun to encounter this acrimony and bitterness, and this bringing of religion into the public arena. The Catholic Church has never conceded the justice of the compromise

under which neither public schools nor public funds could be used for religious education. It is at present engaged in a tremendous school building expansion programme, and it is highly doubtful that its goal of enrolling all Catholic children in Catholic schools can be achieved without public funds. It is accordingly exerting increasing pressure for the adoption of laws, both Federal and state, under which public funds would be appropriated to finance those aspects of parochial school education that do not appear to be specifically religious—e.g. the transport of the children to the schools, or the purchase of secular text-books and school equipment and supplies.

The Jewish community, too, is rapidly expanding its religious school system, in respect to both after-hour schools (a system which in the United States seems to be unique to the Jewish community) and all day schools or *yeshivoth*. The Jewish community, however, appears willing to carry by itself the financial burden of its religious school system. There is no significant voice within the Jewish community calling for the use of governmental funds to finance Jewish education or Jewish schools. Indeed, all Jewish organizations in the United States—secular or religious—that have spoken on the issue have unanimously and unqualifiedly expressed their opposition to the appropriation of tax-raised funds for religion or religious education.

STATE CONTROL OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

An act of Congress or of a state legislature appropriating public funds for religious schools would be an unconstitutional law respecting an establishment of religion. An act of Congress or of a state legislature prohibiting or unreasonably restricting religious schools would be equally unconstitutional as a law prohibiting the free exercise of religion. The same Constitution that forbids the government to aid religion forbids it to hamper it. The Constitution requires neutrality on the part of the government with respect to religion.

This was made clear in an historic decision of the United States Supreme Court handed down in 1925. During and shortly after the First World War, our country experienced a wave of extreme nationalism and xenophobia. It was during this period that Congress enacted the restrictive immigration law which effectively halted the flow of immigration to this country. And it was during this period that a number of states sought by law to abolish the various foreign language and private parochial schools and to require all children to receive their education exclusively in state schools. Such a law was enacted in Oregon.

The Supreme Court handed down a decision that may properly be called the Magna Carta of the parochial school system, just as the 1948 decision outlawing religious instruction in the public schools may

properly be called the Magna Carta of the secular school system. Parents, said the Court, cannot be compelled to send their children only to state schools, particularly where (as in the case of Catholic parents) their religious convictions prohibit the children from receiving their secular education independently of religious education. States may provide public schools where children can receive a secular education free of cost—if their parents so desire it; but the children cannot be forced to receive that education in public schools, and the parents cannot be compelled to send them to the public schools.

But, while the state cannot compel children to receive a secular education exclusively in state schools, it can require them to receive a secular education either under public or private auspices. This was decided by the Supreme Court a few years ago. A small but extremely religious chasidic group established a *yeshivah* in Brooklyn in a section reminiscent of the Polish ghetto. In this *yeshivah* the children learned only Torah and Talmudic subjects. No secular subjects were taught; and indeed, no English was spoken, the languages of instruction being exclusively Yiddish and Hebrew. The children attended no other schools, but studied at the *yeshivah* daily from morning to evening.

The parents of the children were prosecuted for violating the law requiring all children to receive a minimum secular education. They claimed that the law was unconstitutional in that it violated their religious freedom, because under their interpretation of the Jewish religion it was forbidden to study secular subjects. All the courts that considered the case—from the lowest children's court to the United States Supreme Court—overruled their contention. They all held that the religious freedom of the parents must yield to the paramount needs of the general community, which include a citizenry that has received at least a minimum secular education.

The effect of this decision is to empower government officials to supervise the operation of Catholic parochial and Jewish day schools, where both secular and religious education are given to the extent necessary to insure that the children receive the required secular education. Since education in the United States is primarily a matter of state rather than national concern, the amount of such government supervision varies from state to state. In no state, however, has this been a matter of serious concern to the Jewish community. With the exception of such rare and atypical instances as the Brooklyn *yeshivah* referred to above, the standards of instruction in Jewish day schools compare favourably with those prevailing in public schools, and the state's power of supervision has not to any noticeable extent interfered with the operation of Jewish day schools.

ZONING RESTRICTIONS ON RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

The power of a state to regulate and supervise education in religious schools is limited to the secular education given there. But the overwhelming majority of Jewish religious schools in the United States do not give any secular education. The children attending them receive their secular education in public schools and attend the Jewish schools after public school hours and on Sunday. The religious education given in these schools is completely exempt from state supervision or control.

But the buildings in which this education is given are not exempt from state supervision and control. The state has the power—and indeed the duty—to require that the buildings shall be safe for the children attending them; that the buildings shall be fireproof, shall have a sufficient number of exits, shall be well-constructed, shall be free of rodents and vermin and otherwise sanitary, etc.

However, here too state regulation and control has been no problem to the Jewish community. The physical aspects of Jewish schools are almost universally far above the minimum standards required by law. The Jewish community has been more than willing to expend the funds required to protect the safety and health of their children in religious schools.

The Jewish community has also been quite willing to comply with the aesthetic views of the community in which its religious schools are established. It has been willing to erect religious school buildings and synagogues that conform to the general architectural pattern of the community, and to make sure that there is adequate room to park cars and thus avoid congesting the surrounding streets.

In most places this willingness of the Jewish community to comply with local building standards has proved sufficient and the Jewish community has experienced no difficulty in erecting new synagogues and religious school buildings. In some towns and villages, however, this has not been the case. Zoning ordinances have been adopted with the view of excluding houses of worship and religious schools entirely from the community, or relegating them to the industrial and less desirable sections of the town. The present trend of Jews away from the cities into neighbouring suburbs—thus requiring the erection of new synagogues and religious schools—has made this an increasingly serious problem.

It must be noted that rarely are these exclusionary ordinances motivated by anti-Semitism. Rarely are they discriminatory against Jews; almost invariably they apply equally to new Christian churches and religious schools. They are enacted simply because the local residents wish to preserve the exclusively residential character of the district or town and object to additional communal buildings.

The constitutionality of these exclusionary zoning ordinances has

CHURCH-STATE PROBLEMS IN AMERICA AND THE JEWS

never been the subject of a definitive decision by the United States Supreme Court. It has been considered by many state courts. Most of these have held such laws to be unconstitutional infringements on religious freedom and have declared them void. A minority of state courts has upheld them. Ultimately, the final word will be given by the Supreme Court.

SUNDAY LAWS AND SABBATH OBSERVERS

Exclusionary zoning ordinances operate most seriously against Orthodox Jews. Reform and most Conservative Jews use automobiles on the Sabbath, and therefore an ordinance which puts a considerable distance between their homes and their synagogues is mainly an inconvenience. To the Orthodox Jew who must walk to his synagogue on the Sabbath and holy days, such an ordinance is a serious restriction upon his freedom of religion.

Sunday laws, too, operate principally against Orthodox Jews. With the exception of a few states on the West Coast, all American states have laws prohibiting or restricting business and trade on Sunday, the Christian Sabbath. In a number, persons observing a day other than Sunday as their religious day of rest—primarily Jews, but also Seventh Day Adventists—are exempt from these laws, and may conduct their business on Sundays, provided they refrain from engaging in business on Saturdays. Most states, however, do not have such exemptions or have severely limited exemptions. In these states, Orthodox Jews suffer a serious economic handicap. Their religion requires them to keep their stores and shops closed on Saturdays; the state law requires them to keep them closed also on Sundays.

A few years ago the constitutionality of these Sunday laws was attacked by two Orthodox Jews who operated small kosher butcher shops in the predominantly Jewish section of New York City. They claimed that the laws violated their religious freedom by imposing an economic hardship upon their conforming to their religious conscience. The New York courts refused to accept their contention and the United States Supreme Court refused to upset the state courts' decision.

After this decision was announced, the Jewish community of New York—more than half of the Jews in the United States live in New York State—launched a concerted drive to have the state's Sunday law amended so as to exempt persons observing a day other than Sunday as their religious day of rest. Unfortunately, this campaign has so far proved unsuccessful. The reason has been the unyielding opposition of the Catholic Church. The Protestant Church groups have recognized the justice of the Jews' complaint and have endorsed the proposed amendment. But the Catholic Church has been uncompromising in its opposition, and it exerts considerable political power in

SHAD POLIER

New York, with the result that it has succeeded in defeating all attempts to provide relief for Sabbath-observing Orthodox Jews.

HUMANE SLAUGHTERING LEGISLATION

Another law which the Orthodox deem a threat to their religious freedom was recently enacted by Congress. European Jewish communities have had long experience with laws requiring the humane slaughter of animals for food. The first such law in the United States was enacted by Congress a few months ago.

When the measure was first introduced a few years ago, most of the Jewish community, Orthodox as well as Conservative and Reform, and Jewish secular organizations, felt that the measure should not be opposed. Their view was that all that rightfully could be asked was that the measure contain adequate protection for *shechitah*, the Jewish ritual method of slaughtering animals. The sponsors of the measure were quite willing to write into it all necessary provisions to protect *shechitah*. One small element of Orthodox Judaism, however, urged opposition to the measure in its entirety. It argued on the basis of European experience that if the measure were adopted it would be an opening wedge and that in time efforts would be made to eliminate the exemption. This wing of Orthodoxy—consisting of the older Yiddish-speaking, European-trained rabbinate—succeeded in converting the other Orthodox groups to its position. The result was a split in the Jewish community; the Orthodox urged opposition to all humane slaughtering legislation; the Conservative and Reform argued for the safeguarding of *shechitah* by an adequately drafted exemption in the measure.

Despite the strenuous opposition of the Orthodox community, the measure was enacted by Congress and approved by the President. The measure as enacted identifies *shechitah* as humane and contains an exemption which even the Orthodox agree adequately protects *shechitah*. There remains, however, their fear that in time the forces behind the humane slaughtering amendment will initiate a campaign to repeal the exemption and thus outlaw *shechitah* in the United States.

CONCLUSION

These, then, have been the experiences of the Jewish community in six specific areas of the relationship of religion and government in the United States. There are many other arenas of conflict, competition, misunderstanding and of co-operation. Some impinge directly on the nerve of Jewish sensibility; others seem peripheral only because they affect the status of the Jew as an American citizen vitally concerned with the doctrine of separation and all that it implies.

It would be untrue to contend that the Jewish community has a

CHURCH-STATE PROBLEMS IN AMERICA AND THE JEWS

unanimous view on all issues. There are disagreements as to policy and more frequently there are disagreements as to strategy. Some Jewish organizations emphasize principle, others emphasize public relations. Each issue in and of itself reveals variations in the tactics and position of the organized spokesmen for the Jewish community. There is extensive machinery for co-ordination and for the exchange of views in an effort to arrive at common positions. There is co-operation between the secular organizations, the synagogues, and the rabbinic groups. The co-operation could be more intensive and more effective, but it is not altogether absent.

How have the activities of the Jewish community affected its relationship with the Christian community? The principle of separation of church and state is essentially the Protestant contribution to American political thinking. It is too early to tell whether the changing demographic picture of America and the profound influence of religious conformism will alter the alliance of forces for or against the maintenance of this principle. The relationship between the Jewish community and the Protestant community is by and large a healthy one, and even where differences occur these are the subject of civil debate. Where differences occur with the Catholic community, they do not find only the Jew and the Catholic in contention. The overwhelming portion of the Protestant community finds itself in intellectual agreement with the Jewish position. Here and there Protestantism and its myriad sects are ambivalent, but the central position of the Protestant Church finds itself allied with the Jewish position. While 'the competition of creeds' may yet produce hostility and acrimony, it is fair to say that it is a subject debated in the market place of free ideas.

How does the Jewish community view the experiment of separation of church and state and religious freedom that has evolved in the United States? There can hardly be any doubt as to the answer. Despite the comparatively minor hardships and inconveniences indicated above, the American experiment has proved to be a tremendous benefit to the American Jewish community. Perhaps more than any other group in the United States—certainly more than any other religious group—American Judaism is committed to the principle of separation of church and state and religious freedom as written into our Constitution and declared by our Supreme Court.

SYNAGOGAL ORGANIZATION IN ANGLO-JEWRY

V. D. Lipman

THIS PAPER deals with two aspects of synagogal organization in Anglo-Jewry, especially London Jewry: the change from oligarchy to democracy in synagogal constitutions and the movement for the union of congregations. In both these fields, the crucial steps in the process of development took place in the middle of the last century—that period between 1845 and 1890 which saw the creation or consolidation of the great majority of Anglo-Jewish institutions.

Today, virtually all synagogal congregations have a common pattern. Three features are familiar. First, all members, or at least all male members, enjoy a common status and rights. Second, the members elect a council or committee charged with the general administration of the affairs of the congregation. Third, a small group of honorary officers responsible for the leadership or direction of the congregation's business is elected either by the membership directly or by a committee elected by them. This form of constitution can properly be called democratic, inasmuch as the executive is responsible, either directly or indirectly, to the general body of the membership. In all three respects, however, this modern form of constitution differs radically from that of the historic congregations of Anglo-Jewry up to about a century ago. The nature of these constitutions, which bear a remarkable similarity to each other, can be studied in the *Takkanoth* of the Great Synagogue (1722, 1791, 1827), the Hambro' Synagogue (1789, 1797, 1845), the New Synagogue (1801, 1824, 1851) and the Western Synagogue (1799, 1801, 1809, 1832) and also in the *Ascamot* of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation (1664, 1785, 1831, 1850, 1872, 1906). There are similar provisions in the *Takkanoth* of provincial congregations (such as Brighton, 1825; Cheltenham, 1840), although because of the smaller size of the congregations these last tend to be considerably simpler in character.

To take first the status of members, all congregations make a clear distinction between full members—*Ba'ale Batim* or those enjoying *Hezkath HaKehilla* or privileged members (*Yehidim* among the Sephardim)—and the renters of seats—*Toshavim* or seatholders (*congregantes* among

the Sephardim). Outside these classes, all others were regarded merely as *Orahim*, guests or strangers; except that the New Synagogue also had a class of *Aniyim d' Kehilla*: 'Persons who were married in the congregation or whose parents were members, and do not occupy a seat nor are capable of paying a rate towards the support of the synagogue.'

The rights of privileged members were clearly defined both in this world, where they enjoyed priority or monopoly in the award of synagogal honours, and in the next, since a special portion of the *Beth Haim* (burial ground) was reserved for them.

An applicant for privileged membership had to be admitted by vote of the honorary officers and governing body of the congregation and to pay a substantial entrance fee. At the Great Synagogue it was originally three guineas according to the *Takkanoth* of 1722, raised to five in 1736 and ten in 1740, at which sum it remained until the middle of the nineteenth century. The Hambro' scale was the same, that of the Western less (five guineas plus half a guinea admission to the *Hebra Kadisha*) and that of the New Synagogue rather cheaper. The sons and sons-in-law of privileged members could secure admission at reduced rates and the appropriate privileges were transmissible to widows and unmarried daughters. Among what may be termed the ritual privileges of the privileged members were those of serving as *Hatan Torah* and *Bereshit*; of standing *Segan* on the occasion of a son's *Barmitzvah*; or the marriage of a son or daughter, but as the New Synagogue *Takkanoth* of 1824 put it, 'they must be of irreproachable character and must not be clothed in an unbecoming manner'; and of reading part of the service on a weekday on the occasion of *Yahrzeit*. There were, of course, variations between congregations and at different dates. In some cases, the son of a privileged member might be *Hatan Torah* or *Bereshit*; conversely in the earlier *Takkanoth* of the Great and Hambro' Synagogues an unmarried privileged member is denied certain rights, for example, the right to an *Aliyah* on the High Holydays and *Shabbat Shuva*, for which privileged members had priority.

In the constitutional sphere, election to honorary office, which was the gateway to the governing body of the congregation, was also generally reserved for the privileged members, again with discrimination in the earlier *Takkanoth* against bachelors. The New Synagogue and Western Synagogue, however, permitted sons of privileged members, or other non-members who were seatholders, to be elected as honorary officers and thus acquire privileged membership.

The honorary offices in the Ashkenazi congregations were very similar and formed a regular *cursus honorum*, the lower offices having to be served first before election could be secured to the higher offices. At the head were the *Parnassim* or wardens—originally two at the Great Synagogue but increased to three in 1791. The other Ashkenazi congregations all had two *Parnassim*. The *Parnassim* generally served by

turns as *Parnas* of the month or each served for several months as *Parnas President*. At the Western Synagogue, however, there was a *Rosh haKahal* (head of the congregation) in the person of Myer Solomon of Pall Mall, who sat in the box between the wardens in the early years of the St. Alban's Place Synagogue and was possibly the most versatile Honorary Officer of any London congregation.¹

The *Parnassim* had, in the words of the 1827 Laws of the Great Synagogue, 'the general superintendence of all the affairs of the congregation, whether in relation to the state of the community in general or the synagogue in particular, according to the laws, resolutions and regulations established to such purpose'. This office could be obtained only by privileged members who had served, or paid fines for not serving, the lesser honorary offices of Treasurer (*Goveh*) or Charity Overseer (*Gabbai Tsedakah*). These offices may have originally been those of two *Gabbaim*—the two *Gabbaim* of the *Hebra* or religious association which was common in Central and Eastern Europe. At any rate, the Great Synagogue had originally two *Gabbaim* according to the 1722 *Takkanoth* and so had the *Hebra shel Gemiloth Hasadim* from which the Western Synagogue developed. The next stage was to replace the two *Gabbaim* with a *Gabbai Tsedakah* or charity overseer, who also acted as Treasurer of the congregation. This office was later subdivided into two: *Goveh* (treasurer) and *Gabbai Tsedakah* at the Great Synagogue in 1787, and also at an early stage in the other congregations, except the Hambro', where the *Gabbai Tsedakah* continued to act as Treasurer, and there was no separate office of Treasurer. In the other congregations the office of Treasurer could normally only be held by someone who had served the most junior office of *Gabbai Tsedakah*. This office, the precursor of that of Overseer of the Poor of the United Synagogue, now styled Treasurer of Bequests and Trusts, was evidently the most arduous and least pleasant. It had generally to be served before the senior and more honourable offices and the conditions of eligibility were usually less exacting. For instance, at the Hambro' Synagogue, the minimum age for election was 25, compared with 30 for the office of *Parnas*, and there was a similar provision at the Western Synagogue.

The *Gabbai Tsedakah* had to distribute the weekly dole to the poor and also pay out money in exceptional cases. He was, however, limited to 5s. a head without reference to the Presiding Warden. In the Great Synagogue *Takkanoth* of 1791 the Presiding Warden could authorize up to 2 guineas; up to 5 guineas required the assent of both wardens.

Beside these honorary officers (two or three wardens, a treasurer and/or overseer) there was always a committee of seven, styled in Hebrew the *Shiva Tuve Ha'ir* (the 'seven good citizens' of the Talmud and Responsa). These seven were called in English 'Elders' at the Great Synagogue or Directors at the New Synagogue, and formed an advisory body whom the wardens were obliged to consult on various

SYNAGOGAL ORGANIZATION IN ANGLO-JEWRY

matters stipulated in the *Takkanoth*. The number seven appears in all the Ashkenazi synagogal constitutions, and the committee of seven was generally recruited from persons who had been elected to at least the junior honorary offices. In addition, at the New and Western Synagogues there was also a body of five (*Hamisha Anashim* in Hebrew; 'governors' at the Western or 'directors' at the New Synagogue) who were apparently the immediate past honorary officers. These also formed part of the inner committee; the number five also seems to have had a special significance, since the seven Elders of the Great Synagogue were originally five, forming with the two *Parnassim* the *Shiva Tuve Ha'ir*. The Honorary Officers and the 7 or 12 were together generally styled in Hebrew the *Kahal*, or *Nesie Ha'Edah* (in English, the Committee). There was, in addition, a body comprising all those who had served as honorary officers, or paid fines for not serving. This body of ex-honorary officers—generally the Vestry or *Pekude Ha'Edah* or *Kahalsleit*—was in reality the sovereign body of the congregation. Except at the Hambro', where all privileged members paying £6 or upwards had a vote, the honorary officers were elected by the vestry of ex-honorary officers; and the list of candidates was prepared by the retiring honorary officers and committee. For some purposes, such as approving new *Takkanoth* or voting extraordinarily large sums of money, some or even all the privileged members might be summoned to vote at a general meeting with the vestry; but normally this self-recruiting oligarchy of present and ex-honorary officers was supreme. The vestry included at the Great Synagogue co-opted honorary members (Joshua van Oven was so co-opted) but, in general, the only members who had not served as honorary officers were those who had paid fines for not doing so. These fines must have provided a considerable addition to the synagogal income, since the tariff was a high one, especially when the contemporary value of money is taken into account. It varied according to the relative size and importance of the congregation. To compare rates taken from *Takkanoth* of the same decade (1824–32), the fine for not serving as warden was £40 at the Great, £30 at the New and £15 at the Western Synagogue; for treasurer at the Great £30, for overseer at the Great £25, for treasurer or overseer £15 at the New and £10 at the Western Synagogue. In 1825 the fines at Brighton were only one guinea for warden and 10s. 6d. for overseer.

In the provincial congregations the same constitutional situation obtained, allowing for a simpler organization because of the much smaller size of the community. For instance, the Brighton *Takkanoth* of 1825, which closely resemble those of the New Synagogue of the previous year (for example, in dividing the congregation not only into *Ba'ale Batim* and seatholders, but also into 'poor of the congregation'—*Aniyim d'Kehilla*), provide for only two honorary officers—a *Parnas* and *Gabbai*: but these are appointed by the *Kahal*, which had the

'direction, care and management' of the affairs of the congregation; the *Kahal* consisted of seven named persons, 'the *Parnas* and *Gabbai* for the time being and all such persons who shall have served either of these honorary offices or paid for non-acceptance of either on being duly elected'. The *Kahal* had the right to co-opt other members, but, unless so co-opted, the ordinary members—even the *Ba'ale Batim*—had no right to attend meetings or participate in the control of the congregation. Because it was a small congregation, there was no committee or body of seven men, the two honorary officers being known as the Elders.

The description so far of this oligarchic system has been based on the constitutions of the Ashkenazi congregations in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But the constitution of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation was of a very similar pattern. The original *Mahamad* or executive body of honorary officers, as appointed in 1663, consisted of two *Parnassim* and a *Gabay*. These officers, according to the first *Ascamot*, were to be chosen by the retiring *Mahamad* and two Elders nominated by them. In 1699/1700 (5460) the number of *Parnassim* was increased to four, two of them with the *Gabay* being appointed at New Year and two six months later, thus securing an overlap; all served for one year, and this body of five corresponded to the three to five honorary officers of the Ashkenazi congregations, the *Gabay* in each case being the junior member on whom most of the work fell and whose office was regarded as the stepping-stone to the others.

The Elders (*Velhos*) among the *Sephardim* corresponded to the Vestry or *Pekude Ha'Edah* among the Ashkenazim. Beginning originally perhaps as a consultative committee of the most influential privileged members (*Yehidim*), the Elders developed into a body of the ex-members of the *Mahamad*, and became the real seat of power, the *Mahamad* acting as the executive body of the Elders. The incoming members of the *Mahamad* were selected in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries by the existing *Mahamad*, with the co-operation of nominated assessors (*Adjuntos*) from among the Elders, who were generally the most recently retired members of the *Mahamad*. General meetings of all the privileged members (*Yehidim*) were not normally summoned until the early years of the nineteenth century and then only to hear reports from the *Mahamad*.

Taking all these oligarchic constitutions together, one can generalize on their functioning as follows. The ultimate power resided in a relatively small group of ex-honorary officers, perhaps twenty or thirty in number. They elected the new honorary officers from a list prepared by the serving honorary officers and sometimes the committee; and the list could comprise generally only the privileged members, who had to buy their privileged membership and be admitted by vote of the governing body. A young man would serve first in the junior office of charity

SYNAGOGAL ORGANIZATION IN ANGLO-JEWRY

overseer, perhaps for two terms, and thus win the right to membership of the governing body and also of election to the higher offices. Those who wished to belong to the governing body, but did not wish to serve in office, could pay a substantial fine and thus secure membership as though they had actually served. The oligarchy, however, in so far as it comprised those who had actually served in office, was composed of those with all the experience of communal administration; it was also, because of the control exercised over election to honorary office, self-recruiting and self-perpetuating. It is not easy to find Continental precedents for this type of constitution. The nomination of new officers by the outgoing officers, fines for non-acceptance, and the division of the membership into classes (but according to the communal taxes paid) are found in Continental *Takkanoth*, but not, so far as I can at present ascertain, the vesting of authority in a body of ex-honorary officers.

But this constitutional pattern of the London synagogues was of course the general one of the closed municipal corporations of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England, with the status of privileged membership (*Hezkath HaKehilla*) corresponding to that of the freedom of a corporation, which was capable of purchase and inheritance in a similar way. An even nearer parallel is found in the close vestries of the parishes, especially in the City of London, Westminster and East London, where there was even identity of nomenclature. In these parishes, a relatively small group of substantial householders had—either by long-established custom, bishop's faculty or Local Act of Parliament—assumed the powers of all the parishioners and formed a select or close vestry, in place of the open vestry to which all rate-paying inhabitants might come and vote. These close vestries might initially have comprised certain persons named in the Act or faculty; but, once begun, they were generally composed of those who had served (or paid fines for not serving) the parish offices; and the selection of the parish officers was by the close vestry of ex-officers. The junior office was that of overseer of the poor, which had to be served before that of churchwarden could be obtained. For instance, in the parish of Holy Trinity, Minorities, where there was a considerable Jewish population and Jews filled parish offices, there was a body of 'ancients', who alone were summoned for important parish business; and these 'ancients' were those who had filled the higher parish offices. This sort of parochial constitution was found commonly in the City parishes, in the parishes of Whitechapel and Spitalfields and in St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the areas in or near which the eighteenth-century synagogues were situated. The parallels with the synagogal constitutions—the governing body of self-recruiting ex-honorary officers; the system of fines; and the similarities of nomenclature, vestry, overseers and wardens—are too close and obvious to be ignored.

The process of opening the close vestries in the London parishes

began in the late 1820's and made considerable headway in the 1830's (the age of reform in national and local government), with a number of local Acts and the adoption by London parishes of Hobhouse's Act of 1831 enabling all ratepayers to elect a vestry on a high property qualification. The 1855 Metropolis Management Act provided for elected vestries in all the parishes of what is now the County of London (and these are the predecessors of the Metropolitan Borough Councils). The opening of the close vestries in the London synagogues followed close behind the opening of the parish or local government vestries.

The process of democratization in the Great Synagogue was gradual. The first step was taken in 1847 when a conjoint meeting was summoned to enact certain new laws implementing the Chief Rabbi's 'Laws and Regulations' relating to the conduct of the service. The conjoint meeting consisted of the vestry and 36 privileged members summoned by the committee. After the new laws about the conduct of services had been enacted, a resolution was moved and carried recommending to the vestry that the *Ba'ale Batim* or privileged members should be entitled biennially to elect ten of their number as additional members of the vestry and that, as vacancies occurred in the number of co-opted life members of the vestry, elected members should replace them up to a maximum of 20. In 1847 in addition to the ex-honorary officers there were ten of these members co-opted for life and, the vestry accepting the resolution, and a new law being enacted, the privileged members elected another ten to serve for two years. These biennial elections continued and, as the number of co-opted life members was reduced, by 1861 there were 15 elected members. But the vestry, not the privileged members, continued to elect the honorary officers; and, as these still became automatically members of the vestry on or after election, the elected element remained in a minority on the vestry. When the scheme for the United Synagogue was drafted, it originally provided for 20 elected members of the vestry, as the Council of the United Synagogue was then called; but, as all honorary officers of the United Synagogue were to become members of the vestry for life once elected as honorary officers, and all life members of the governing bodies of the constituent synagogues were to be members of the vestry of the United Synagogue, the 20 elected representatives would probably still have been in a minority. However, pressure at the general meetings by which the draft scheme had to be approved resulted in the number of elected members being raised to one per 50 seat-holders. With the rapid expansion of the United Synagogue and the dwindling away of the life members of the governing bodies of the constituent synagogues, the elected members soon dominated the new Council of the United Synagogue.

The opinion of the general meetings of the synagogues, to which the draft scheme for the United Synagogue had to be submitted,

SYNAGOGAL ORGANIZATION IN ANGLO-JEWRY

was responsible for another notable advance. So far any step towards democratization had given rights from the vestry to the general body of privileged members. But the ordinary seatholders of the Great Synagogue had by the 1860's gained only the right to vote for the synagogal representatives on the Board of Deputies and to serve as *Hatan Torah* or *Bereshit*. But they managed, when the scheme for the United Synagogue was adopted, to secure an amendment giving all seatholders of twelve months' tenure the right to vote for the elected members of the Council; the latter, however, still had to be privileged members.

Between 1870 and 1880 the maintenance of privileged membership itself was attacked at several meetings of some of the constituent synagogues, and the Council eventually decided to submit the question of abolishing privileged membership to a meeting of delegates from the synagogues in conference with the Council. As a result, in 1880, the United Synagogue Act was amended enabling any seatholder to be elected to any office previously reserved for privileged members, and providing that no further privileged members should be made, although preserving the existing rights of privileged members (especially their preferential participation in the special Benevolent Fund which existed for their benefit).

Democratization took place in the provincial communities also in the middle of the nineteenth century. For instance at Canterbury, as the honorary secretary, Jacob Jacobs, wrote in his manuscript account of the Congregation's development, 'no one could become a member unless he was the son of a member or had married a member's daughter, unless he got a majority of votes permitting him to purchase the privilege at a certain sum; and the law up to this time (1846) had been somewhat jealously adhered to, so that several persons, who were only seatholders and not free members, complained that they were called on to contribute to the exigencies of the Congregation but had no vote in any of its affairs'. But in 1846 the congregation were compelled to raise a substantial sum to provide a new synagogue and the first step taken in the campaign was to abolish the distinction between privileged members and seatholders, so as to 'lay the foundation for the future unanimity and undivided exertions of every Hebrew resident of Canterbury to carry out the important work about to be commenced'. Henceforward, full membership could be obtained by any person of the Jewish faith who had resided twelve months in Canterbury and had paid a subscription of not less than one guinea for a year.²

The first move among the Sephardim was in 1845, when a meeting of the *Yehidim* asked for a joint committee of Elders and *Yehidim* (5 of each) to consider changes in the *Ascamos* to render them 'more in unison with the feelings and wishes of the *Yehidim* at large'. Although this resolution was confirmed by a subsequent meeting of *Yehidim* (by 17 votes to 10), it was rejected by the Elders (by 9 to 8). A committee

did, however, report in the following year, 1846, in favour of a 'limited, periodical, and responsible' board of legislation to be elected by the *Yehidim*; all the *Yehidim* should elect a board of 21 Elders, one third of whom would retire annually (the normal local government practice introduced in the nineteenth century); the *Mahamad* would be chosen by this elected Board of Elders from their own number. This proposal was too revolutionary, however, even for the general body of the *Yehidim*, and the matter was dropped until 1848, when the *Yehidim* resolved in favour of the election of elders in principle; but this resolution failed to secure confirmation, and the 1850 *Ascamot* retained the method of choosing the *Mahamad* by the retiring *Mahamad* and certain Elders, and preserving the Elders as a body of all persons who had been elected members of the *Mahamad*.

In 1851 another attempt by the *Yehidim* at reform failed but in 1858—a year in which the Jews secured a decisive step in political emancipation—the *Yehidim* of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation also obtained a marked advance. The Elders agreed that henceforward the *Mahamad* were to be elected by the *Yehidim*, and not by the Elders; any *Yahid* of two years' standing who had paid for that period £6 per annum in *fnuta* and offerings was eligible for election. In 1860 the *Yehidim* received the right to elect the paid officers of the Congregation, who had formerly been chosen by the Elders.³ With the election of the *Mahamad* by the *Yehidim*, it remained only to provide for the election of the Elders as well. But this proved a lengthy process. An attempt in 1884 to provide for elected elders failed but in 1893 a new scheme was adopted, providing for the existing Elders to remain for life, for ex-members of the *Mahamad* in future to serve for three years as Elders but be eligible for re-election as Elders by the *Yehidim*. In 1905, the Elders were empowered to co-opt 3 *Yehidim* to serve as Elders for three years; in 1922 this number was raised to 4, to serve for two years, and the *Yehidim* were given the right to elect 2 Elders for two years.⁴

Reference has been made to the parallel with the English environment in the internal constitutions of the congregations. There was an even more important influence of the environment on the external relations of the congregations, both with each other and with the State. Continental Jewish communities in the middle ages and down to the nineteenth or twentieth centuries followed one of two patterns. In the medieval society, the Jewish community would form an autonomous unit, responsible collectively to the state for certain obligations such as taxation, but enjoying considerable powers of discipline over its own members; and the fundamental unit of organization was the community, not the individual synagogue congregation. Such were the *aljamas* of medieval Spain, the *Kehilloth* of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Poland-Lithuania, and indeed the Jewries of medieval England. The second pattern was that of the state-regulated confession, typified

by the Napoleonic *consistoires* and the elaborate confessional organizations of nineteenth-century Germany. The state, now equipped with its own fiscal organization, taxed Jews, like other subjects, individually not collectively; but it sought to regulate religious matters, including ecclesiastical appointments, in various ways; it compelled all those who declared themselves Jews to become members of the community; and it gave the communal authorities certain powers of taxation over their members. Here again, the community, rather than the synagogue congregation, tended to be the unit of organization.

In England, the situation was entirely different: in a society based on voluntary associations, each synagogue was merely a voluntary association, on the pattern adopted by certain of the dissenting churches, notably the Independents or Congregationalists; and this pattern of voluntary association became characteristic among the Jewish communities of the English-speaking world. Apart from the proposals of Colquhoun and Van Oven for the use of poor rates paid by Jews and communal taxation for the relief of the Jewish poor, there was never any question of state control or intervention in the organization of the community. As a corollary, the basis of organization was the voluntary association forming the individual synagogue congregation, not the community as such. It is true that the Spanish and Portuguese congregation sought by its first *Ascama*, banning other synagogues in the Metropolis, to make the congregation and the community or *Kahal Kadosh* identical; and they succeeded, so far as the Sephardim were concerned. But the Ashkenazim could not keep their fast-growing community within the organizational structure of the original Great Synagogue; the eighteenth century saw the formation of three other substantial Ashkenazi synagogues and at least three smaller prayer-groups. Yet in the nineteenth century a considerable degree of communal unity or co-operation was built up, from below, by combination of these independent voluntary associations; a development not equalled by the independent congregations in other countries in that period. How and why was this achieved?

In reviewing the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries we can see three factors which brought about some manner of unity in the London Ashkenazi congregations. The first factor was the influence of the Chief Rabbinate. Developing from the Rabbinate of the Great Synagogue, its recognition by the other City Synagogues and by the Western Synagogue was a potent force for unification.

The second factor was the need to provide certain communal services which could be more economically provided on a joint basis or in which it was essential to secure co-ordination. An early example was the formation in 1804 of the London Board of Shechita, in which the Sephardim, as well as the Ashkenazi Congregations, joined. Similarly, disputes over the maintenance of the 'foreign poor' (that is, those not

attached to any congregation), their provision with *Matzoth*, and the cost of their burial were the subject of a succession of agreements in 1794, 1804 and 1815—the last two formally denominated ‘treaties’. In 1834, a new ‘Treaty’ established a permanent working arrangement between the three City Ashkenazi Synagogues, henceforward known as ‘Conjoint Synagogues’. It provided for the cost of burying strangers, purchasing flour for *Matzoth* and medical attention for the poor, and the maintenance of a Beth Din to be shared in a fixed ratio by the three congregations; for their overseers of the poor to act each in turn for all three in relieving the casual poor; and for a Conjoint Board to supervise the working of the arrangements. The establishment of the Board of Guardians in 1859 marked not only an improvement in the methods of relieving the poor but also a further development in organization: the establishment on a permanent basis of an *ad hoc* functional body for carrying out a communal service.

The third factor making for integration was the need to sort out the conflicting proprietary rights which the Congregations claimed over their members and their members’ families. The relationship between the City Synagogues and the Westminster Congregation was regulated by a Treaty in 1808; that between the City Synagogues themselves was formalized in the New Treaty of 1834. Under this each synagogue could claim as its own all persons married in it, with their wives and unmarried sons under the age of 21; and a synagogue was not to let a seat to a member of another synagogue, his wife, widow, or child. There were detailed provisions to regulate the position of a member of one congregation marrying the daughter of a member of another. The situation was complicated when the Great Synagogue opened its Portland Street branch in 1855 and the Bayswater Synagogue was opened in 1863 as a joint venture of the Great and New Synagogues. Members of a City Synagogue living in the West End could not normally join a branch synagogue near their homes, if it was not connected with their City congregation; nor could they, even if permitted to join, exercise any share in the government of the branch congregation. Disputes arose because one congregation was accused of ‘poaching’ members from another. All these problems made some union to overcome them almost inevitable, and it was also encouraged by the unfavourable financial position of the Hambro’ Synagogue in the 1860’s, which felt it could hardly continue unaided much longer.

These were the three main factors, operating in the first half of the nineteenth century and culminating in the 1860’s. They gave rise to the protracted negotiations that ended in the formation of the United Synagogue in 1870. It is unnecessary here to detail the course of these negotiations, the references back to the congregational meetings to secure confirmation, and the ultimate discussions with the Charity Commission on the form of the Scheme. It is sufficient to emphasize its

SYNAGOGAL ORGANIZATION IN ANGLO-JEWRY

unitary character, the pooling of assets, and the use of the surpluses of the stronger congregations to help the weaker; and the power to admit existing new congregations and to use the resources of the Union to help the foundation of new congregations which would join the Union. Although the name of the Act is the 'Jewish United Synagogues Act'; the term United Synagogue, which gained immediate acceptance, more correctly expresses the unitary character of the institution.

In accounting for the creation of the United Synagogue, three factors were adduced: the institution of the Chief Rabbinate, the trend towards the provision of common services, and the need to sort out the tangle of conflicting claims of the synagogues to property in their members. But there was another factor at least as potent: the personalities of the men who worked for synagogal union. To mention only three names in describing this human factor: the Chief Rabbi himself was a persistent advocate of congregational union and the idea of the United Synagogue is said to have been first proposed by him to the wardens of the City Synagogues assembled in his *Succah* in September 1860. Lionel Louis Cohen was Chairman of the delegates who framed the scheme for submission to the Charity Commission and conducted the negotiations; evidence of his indefatigable concern for detail and his diplomatic skill remains in the innumerable letters, many in his own hand, which can be seen in the minute book of the delegates. And he was ably assisted by the versatile and scholarly Asher Asher, M.D., Secretary of the Great Synagogue, of the Delegates framing the scheme, and then of the United Synagogue.

The personal factor was even more important—indeed it may be regarded as dominant—in the formation of the other great synagogal union of Victorian London: the Federation of Synagogues. This was due almost entirely to the vision and leadership of Samuel Montagu. As he said in 1903, 'I found there were different isolated minor synagogues in the East End of London which were disposed rather to quarrel among themselves and I formed the idea of amalgamating them together—quite a voluntary association for their general benefit. The chief object was to get rid of the insanitary places of worship and to amalgamate two or three small ones together and have a suitable building. We have succeeded very well in that respect. . . . We cater, if I may call it, for the working classes among Jews.'

The Federation of Synagogues, as formed in 1887, differed from the United Synagogue in two marked respects: the history and character of the individual congregations, and the principles on which their federation itself was based. The congregations themselves were all small, though they were not all of recent origin. They included congregations tracing their descent from the three *Hebroth* of eighteenth-century foundation: Prescott Street from the Rosemary Lane congregation; Cutler Street; and Scarborough Street, formerly the Gun Yard

congregation. Among them also were several congregations of twenty or thirty years' standing: Spital Square (which began as the German Synagogue in Old Broad Street), Fashion Street, and Princes (later Princelet) Street. The principle which many of these congregations had introduced was the combination of synagogue with benefit or friendly society and the formation of the congregation on a *Landsmannschaft* basis, grouping immigrants from a particular town or district in Eastern Europe. Neither of these features was entirely novel in Anglo-Jewry. There had been *Hebroth* associated with the main City synagogues in the eighteenth century, for visiting the sick, for comforting the mourners, and for study; the Western Synagogue at least had developed from a *Hebra Shel Gemiloth Hasadim* of this kind. But, apart from one or two instances, they do not seem to have provided financial benefits on a friendly society basis; from the close of the eighteenth century there were some independent friendly societies for this purpose. A *Landsmannschaft* flavour can also be seen in the fact that the two small congregations founded in the 1790's in Cutler Street and Gun Yard were known specifically as 'Polish Synagogues'. But the real prototype of the Synagogue-cum-friendly society, recruiting its members mainly among immigrants from a particular area, was the Sandys Row Congregation—'Society Kindness and Truth' (*Hebrath Menahem Abelim Hesev V'Emeth*)—founded in 1853 by a group of Dutch Jewish workers as a friendly society to provide a *Shiva* (mourning) benefit of 10s. a week, *minyán* during the *Shiva*, and the services of a Rabbi to preach at the mourner's house. The synagogue which soon was provided to accommodate this group was followed in the next fifteen or twenty years by about a score of similar congregations, which in 1870 served the 10,000 Jews in a comparatively small area in Spitalfields, along the Whitechapel Road, and in Goodman's Fields. Between 1870 and 1880 their number steadily increased and, after the mass immigration began in 1881, the formation of *Hebroth* of this kind naturally proceeded with much greater speed.

Attempts to force the members of the small congregations either into one of the larger City Synagogues or into a new large East End Synagogue, provided especially for them, failed, although as time went on many of their members voluntarily joined the larger congregations. The small congregations had several champions among the established leaders of the community, who prized them as 'hotbeds of Judaism'. These were the 'small men of great faith' whom Samuel Montagu felt could best preserve the traditions of their Judaism in the small *Hebroth* to which they were accustomed. But some form of co-operation would be advantageous even for them. First, it was essential to see that the buildings were of a suitable standard, even if this included some amalgamation of small congregations. Second, they needed burial arrangements. Previously individual congregations had made arrange-

SYNAGOGAL ORGANIZATION IN ANGLO-JEWRY

ments with the City Synagogues for burial; the Cutler Street Synagogue had done so with the Great Synagogue and the Gun Yard Synagogue had done so with the New Synagogue. It was hoped that the Federation, by collective action, could secure favourable arrangements for burial with the United Synagogue, but, this failing, the Federation formed its own burial society in 1889. Third, the small congregations individually were too small to participate in the work of the communal services run by specialist agencies, or to bear a part of the common responsibilities of the London community as a whole. Through the Federation, they were enabled to be represented on the Board of Guardians, the Board of Shechita and, after it was formed in 1894, the Jewish Religious Education Board.

Yet this co-operation in the Federation was for certain limited objectives. As the inaugural meeting in 1887 resolved, 'it is desirable for the Chevras to become federated for clearly defined objectives'. The Federation was conceived as a loose federation of synagogues, each retaining the maximum of autonomy, as distinct from the unitary principle of the United Synagogue.

With the history of synagogal organization after the foundation of these two bodies this paper is not concerned. Its object has been to show how the two unions of synagogues came into existence and the differences of history and principle between them; to show how different was the original constitution of congregations from what it is today, how it resembled in its essential features the contemporary English institutions, and how, at the same period as these institutions were reformed and democratized, a similar development occurred in the government of the synagogue. Finally, it should be remarked that these two great changes—the transition from oligarchy to democracy and from isolation to union in synagogal government—occurred within a comparatively short period in the middle of the last century: a period which was the most important for the formation of Anglo-Jewish institutions and in which Anglo-Jewry prepared its organizational framework to receive the great immigration which began over seventy years ago.

NOTES

¹ Myer Solomon, who died in 1840, was a pupil of the Rabbi H. Kalisch who was the familiar of the Baal Shem of London. As a young man he acted as *Hazan* at the New Synagogue; he had a *Kabbalah* as *Shohet* from Moses Myers and R. Tevele Schiff; he acted as *Mohel* on 1568 occasions; a *Sepher Torah* and other manuscripts show his capacity as a *Sopher* and he preached in English on

several occasions at the Western Synagogue (see C. Roth, *Records of the Western Synagogue*, especially p. 191).

² MS. account of erection of New Synagogue at Canterbury, 1851 (Jewish Museum, London, Collection, No. 80).

³ A. M. Hyamson, *The Sephardim of England*, London, 1952, pp. 333-5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY¹

Howard Brotz

I. THE CIVIL STATUS OF ENGLISH JEWS

THE CIVIL STATUS of the Jews in England, both in theory and in practice, is similar to, if not identical with, that of the Jews in the United States. There are no important sore spots as far as civil rights are concerned. The Jewish community, when it was re-established in England in the seventeenth century, was a tightly-knit, enclosed society which exerted a great deal of control over its members, not only in religion but also with respect to those things done by Jews which might provoke anti-Jewish feeling and action. The community was not, however, a ghetto on the model of those existing in the continental absolute monarchies of the time, that is, involved in a net of legal and customary arrangements that would require a major political upheaval to undo. Its status, by contrast, was vague, an ambiguous mixture of medieval and modern practice. This made it possible for the Jews to acquire civic equality through *ad hoc* judicial decisions or acts of legislation.² Still, this process, which was by no means a continuous and even development, took about two hundred years. Full civic emancipation was preceded by the gradual rise of modern political philosophy, a change in the aspirations of the Jews themselves (which, of course, was largely a result of the former), and the development of social relationships between Jews and Gentiles in high places. What is crucial in all this is that once the goal was attained, the opposition surrendered completely. There has never been since then a responsible proposal to deprive the Jews of their civic rights.³

From the point of view of personal security there is the same legal protection as in the United States and a similar quality of enforcement of the law. Illegal or extra-legal violence or defamation, particularly from hooligans, may, in fact, be somewhat greater in the United States. (For example, there is probably more desecration of Jewish graveyards in America than in England.) In any event, this is under control in

[This paper is the first of a series in which national Jewries will be commented on by writers who are not members of them.—EDITOR]

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

England.⁴ The British police act with dispatch and efficiency in such cases.

Further, there is no danger from organized political groups with anti-Jewish views. Before the war the government, by a single act of legislation, effectively prevented the transformation of the British fascists into the kind of private army which wrecked the Weimar Republic in Germany. The Public Order Act of 1936 forbade the carrying of offensive weapons and empowered the Home Secretary to forbid political processions and to close provocative meetings. When, shortly after the war, the British fascists had a brief resurgence and began a series of processions into the heart of Jewish districts in London, with considerable disorder, the Home Secretary revoked their permit to march.⁵ Thus, in England, which is by no means an unfree society, the concern for civil liberties has never become the doctrinaire obsession which has been so paralysing to some modern democracies. The Jewish community, for its part, enjoys excellent relations with the police in the surveillance and control of fascism. Partly because of the support which it gets from the society at large, partly because of relative freedom from the 'it can't happen here' delusion, the Jewish community has never been frightened into abject cowardice. In short, the security of Jews, individually and as a community, is in no danger.⁶

What is more, Anglo-Jewish society maintains itself in a benign and altogether decent atmosphere. The Jewish community, as an organized entity, is treated with respect; and the non-Jewish society is prepared to accommodate itself in a variety of ways to the requirements of religious practice where careless collision might otherwise take place. During the war, for example, Jews who desired to observe kashruth were given special ration arrangements. (So were vegetarians.) At a few of the public schools there are provisions for kosher food. And, in general, blatant anti-Jewishness would not be regarded as 'good form'. Further, yet, the entry into leading political and social positions of Jews who are identified as Jews and who are under no pressure to convert is relatively greater and altogether a much more normal phenomenon than in the United States. The proportion of Jewish Members of Parliament is more than five times as high as the proportion of Jews in the population. And, it must be borne in mind, there is no Jewish vote.⁷ Since 1886, when Rothschild was created the first Jewish peer, Jews have been regularly elevated to the House of Lords; and for some time before that they had already been granted the distinctions of baronet and knight. A Jew, Lord Samuel, is the leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords; there are Jews who are heads of Oxford and Cambridge colleges; a Jew has been elected to the board of governors of Eton; Jews, though in small number, are present at all the great public schools, which are crucial institutions in the social class system of England; Jews are members of leading London clubs.

HOWARD BROTZ

In fact, though discrimination exists, the attitude of 'no Jews admitted' is more characteristic of the middle class (such as in the suburban golf and tennis clubs) than of the upper class. Their entry into the upper stratum of English social life, small though it may be, is still significant enough to make the situation of English Jews considerably different from that of American Jews.

II. THE NATURE OF ENGLISH SOCIETY AND CULTURE

England is a country which combines the spirit of aristocracy with the political forms of democracy.⁸ Besides such visible marks of aristocracy as the cult of the horse, aristocratic conceptions pervade the heart of the educational system. These embrace not only a belief in unequal capacities but also a respect for standards of excellence which extends throughout the entire nation. A rigorous classical education and the apprentice system fit together in the same society. But what is most significant in this discussion is that the aristocracy in England is still, to a great extent, a ruling class. Not only does politics have great dignity and importance for the members of the titled and landed classes themselves. Aristocracy, in addition, has provided a model for the whole of the civil service and, in general, for the democratic elements in English political life. In fact, if one examines the direction of the egalitarian changes which have been taking place in England in recent times, one finds that the attack upon the position of the landed classes, in so far as it has been these and not the capitalist system as such that have come under attack, has been aimed less against aristocracy as such than against caste—to use Tocqueville's distinction—and against those gross forms of privilege that derive from inordinate wealth.⁹ The gentleman, which is the aristocratic conception separable from caste, is still regarded as the ideal type of man in this society. He is expected to, and does, find the natural outlet for his leadership in holding political office.

The United States presents a wholly different set of facts. The absence of a powerful landed gentry, particularly in the new areas opened up by pioneers, enabled the triumph of democracy to be much more complete than in England and to penetrate far beyond mere outward forms. Aristocracy, which increasingly came to mean plutocracy in America, was eclipsed in politics, which it subsequently came to despise and seek to control only from behind the scenes. Authority, in other words, split into its two components of power and honour, which then became separate elements in the society. Deprived of the natural outlet for leadership, namely, the open exercise of political authority, the vanity of those who consider themselves to be the leading men is by this very fact inflamed. In so far as they resign themselves to the political situation, their vanity is thus led to find a refuge in social things—for example, an obsession with ancestry or social

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

exclusiveness. In America it is in this social sphere that the aristocracy has taken its revenge upon the democracy. Having been forced to retreat to a sector which by its very nature can only be peripheral to the centre of gravity of the political community, they have invested it with an importance out of all proportion to good taste, let alone political reality. In England, by contrast, the question of dignities and honours is settled. The regulation of ranks and distinctions by the monarchy assures widespread respect for them (though it is of course possible for a monarch deliberately to cheapen the value of a title by distributing it almost *en masse*). Thus, in England, the desire for recognition and status does not have to create its own, essentially private symbols of distinction, but can aim at honours that are universally acknowledged.¹⁰

It is no accident that in a democracy snobbishness can be far more vicious than in an aristocracy. Lacking that natural confirmation of superiority which political authority alone can give, the rich, and particularly the new rich, feel threatened by mere contact with their inferiors.¹¹ This tendency perhaps reached its apogee in the late nineteenth century in Tuxedo Park, a select residential community composed of wealthy New York businessmen, which, not content merely to surround itself with a wire fence, posted a sentry at the gate to keep non-members out.¹² Nothing could be more fantastic than this to an English lord living in the country in the midst, not of other peers, but of his tenants. His position is such that he is at ease in the presence of members of lower classes and in associating with them in recreation. It is this 'democratic' attitude which, in the first instance, makes for an openness to social relations with Jews. One cannot be declassed, so to speak, by play activities.

Furthermore, the English aristocracy, having never been displaced from power by a violent revolution, and having thus had a long experience of responsible administration, have all the characteristics of political maturity: reasonableness, good sense, and freedom from romantic reaction. Prepared to bow gracefully to their gradual eclipse, and themselves in large measure the very agents of the alteration of the class structure, they neither feel threatened by democratization nor would be predisposed to react to these changes by harbouring desires and plans for revenge. Hence they are not the logical carriers of an anti-Jewish political programme. (This freedom from reaction is, one might add, a distinguishing feature of British politics in general.)

But what is perhaps the most important fact about the stratification of English society is that its upper class is a stratum of gentlemen. Now in speaking of a gentleman, one must consider the natural marks as well as those conventional marks of social status, such as accent, which vary from one society to another. The first would include such things as pride and a sense of dignity, freedom from pettiness, courteousness towards inferiors, a responsible concern for the public life, etc. Though by no

means every member of the English upper class is a gentleman in this precise sense—one has only to think of the international set—such qualities are sufficiently present in this class to distinguish it from almost all continental aristocracies. These qualities are, of course, developed by a specific type of training and education—non-technical and non-co-educational—such as the public and the grammar schools provide. To be sure, these schools are intertwined with the conventional usages of the upper class. These are, of course, if not indispensable, at least convenient places for learning the style of life, the cultural habits, and what Hobbes called the ‘small morals’ of the peculiarly English gentleman. But what is in fact more important to emphasize is that these schools, and the wider social fabric of which they are a natural part, have a great deal to do with the formation of those qualities that compose a gentlemanly character. They do not always succeed; but this is, by and large, their explicit goal.

As I have said above, the gentleman is a conception that is separable from caste. What relationship is there, then, between family background and this ideal and the class structure in general? This is the age-old question of birth versus breeding that has occupied the writers of manuals on the gentleman at least since the Renaissance. Observation shows that wise men can beget fools, which is enough to dispel the absolute pretensions of heredity. But awareness of great descent can act upon one as an obligatory standard, just as awareness of inferior descent can make one ashamed, nervous, and too anxious to impress. In so far as it affects one’s pride and ease, not to mention the chances for education and leisure, family background evidently limits the individuality of the gentlemanly ideal. Then, also, it would be beyond reason to expect that in a society with a family system, caste-like snobbery would be altogether abolished. None the less, the English upper class is the most open aristocracy in the world, free of that obsession with blood and quarterings which marks the continental aristocracies (with whom, to be fair, the English could hardly compete in this respect).

These characteristics of the English aristocracy taken together—their established position, their adherence to the gentlemanly ideal, and their political maturity as peers amongst a free tenantry who are not peasants, let alone serfs—explain a number of facts, including the ease, in contradistinction to all European aristocracies, with which the English aristocracy has been able to assimilate the bourgeoisie in general. On the one hand it has been prepared to trade social acceptance for the right to govern and mould a society whose wealth is, in fact, commercial.¹³ On the other hand it has had the good sense to be willing to form family alliances with the business class to replenish fortunes and even to send its younger sons into commerce.¹⁴ The aristocracy has never had that thoroughgoing contempt for commerce which might have permanently sundered aristocracy and bourgeoisie. Unthreatened, pro-

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

vided the bourgeoisie were willing to surrender themselves at least potentially to the aristocratic ideal, the aristocracy have not only looked with amusement upon the ambitions of those who would buy social position but have also openly engaged in the selling of the prerequisites.¹⁵ It has been much easier to buy one's way into society (including titles) in England than in the United States.¹⁶ If 'first-generation peer' is a term of derision, it at least suggests future possibilities.

All this was true in the heyday of the aristocracy. Today members of the gentry enter business (though typically managerial positions in large corporations) as a matter of course. And even though the security that great wealth could confer is rapidly disappearing with the attrition of inherited fortunes, one thing remains to fix the social pre-eminence of the aristocracy: the monarchy and the activities of the court around it.

Respect for the rights of the Jewish community as a corporate entity and fair treatment for Jews by government officials are logical consequences of rule by gentlemen. The malice of the German and Austrian civil servants, who gave the Jews absurd surnames, is lacking in their English counterparts. Even where a civil servant might privately have anti-Jewish sentiments, he would not allow these so to obtrude upon the conduct of his administration as to make him deviate from the impartiality required of his office.

Finally, the position and outlook of the aristocracy explain their willingness to associate as social equals with Jews who have acquired the specific cultural traits of the gentry. These are signs by which one gentleman recognizes another.

Altogether one may say that in a society like the English, with a relatively firm aristocratic structure, it is paradoxically easier to move up the social ladder than in a democracy like the American. In the United States there has been no lack of opportunity to get rich, as the achievements of poor immigrants have impressively shown. But is this not as much a testimony to the wealth of the country as it is to political and social equality? In England, at any rate, provided one has brains, one can be *selected*, by virtue of the scholarship system at both public schools and the ancient universities, for admission to those institutions. And with the fixed place that they occupy in English society, anyone who has attended them is at once granted the standing of a gentleman as well as endowed with a skein of connexions—for jobs, clubs, political life, social life, etc.—that serve to solidify his social position for the rest of his life. Furthermore, once one has this standing it is not easily lost, as it does not depend exclusively on wealth. Thus, where there is a fixed class structure, provided it does not freeze altogether into a caste system, there can be great opportunity for personal talent.

Thus a Jew who goes to one of the leading public schools has a wide entry into high places in English society. This entry may also be won, but with less certainty, through attendance at one of the ancient universities, Oxford and Cambridge. These are larger and socially more heterogeneous than the public schools; and associations formed there are obviously not of the same character as those that develop between adolescents. It is the extraordinary durability of the relationships between boys away from their families which makes the public school such an important social institution in English life. But it is well to recall that the gentry, by the most mannered application of class distinctions, can appear extremely cruel to 'pushers' lacking in the subtle qualifications of the class to which they aspire.¹⁷

The Jews on the whole did not play a direct part in the classic industrial revolution. Wealthy Jews before this century were merchants, brokers or bankers. They were thus outside the strife which emerged, for example, between miner and mine-owner in times of depression. The trade unions, for their part, have been motivated in their demands less by ideological considerations (such as characterized, for example, Nazism or Marxism) than by a haunting fear of unemployment. Their objectives have been concerned with matters like wages, hours, and production quotas. Their conservatism in this respect, one might add, is a serious problem for the efficiency of British technology.

In so far as Jews became manufacturers in the textile and furniture trades, they were until this century owners of small-scale shops, whose workmen, besides, were overwhelmingly Jewish. It is only recently that Jewish ownership—for example, in industry and department stores—has faced a really sizeable body of non-Jewish employees. There is no problem of anti-Jewish feeling in this sphere. In fact, a firm which has perhaps the most benign policy of labour relations in England is not merely Jewish but is distinctively known as such.

What about the business class itself? The Jews had the good fortune to be supported in England by political men like Cromwell who, themselves not businessmen, regarded commercial activity as a source of national strength. It was they who not only were in favour of the resettlement of a Jewish community of traders but also were prepared to grant them increasing freedom from civil disabilities. From the beginning, however, these political men had to cope with and placate the intransigent anti-Jewish opinion of the Corporation of the City of London, who feared the Jews as competitors. Until 1831 the City, which jealously guarded its prerogatives, excluded Jews from the right to engage in retail trade within its boundaries and opposed every effort to grant the Jews full civic rights.¹⁸ It seems reasonable to conclude that if the City had dominated the government, the Jews would not have been readmitted to England as early as they were.

Whatever light this throws upon the mentality of the business class,

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

it must be borne in mind that the guild organization of the City merchants, with their ability to speak politically as a corporate group, was distinctive in the modern commercial scene. (Perhaps the nearest equivalent is the trade union, the voice of which has been effective in influencing immigration policy.) Nowhere else, including the area adjacent to the City walls, did the Jews encounter effective opposition to the right to do business. It is also true that after 1831 the City's opposition to further Jewish emancipation dwindled quickly; the first Jewish M.P., Baron Lionel de Rothschild, was in fact elected from the City of London. And the acquisition of civic rights gave the Jews the means for protecting themselves against a resurgence of the selfishness of the City or any other special-interest group.

The Jews won all their civil rights during a period when British power and prestige were reaching their zenith. What would happen if Britain were to experience a profound collapse would be difficult to predict. The one blot on an exemplary record in the treatment of Jews occurred during the early part of the last war, when the German Jewish refugees, who by and large had not yet acquired British citizenship, were interned as enemy aliens. In Australia, where many of them were transported, it is said that they would have been interned in the same cantonment with German non-Jews if native-born Australian Jews had not protested vigorously. But this blemish in the English record may have been a result of momentary panic; it does not indicate how the government would behave with people who felt themselves fully possessed of the rights of Englishmen.

In summary, English society is marked by the absence of any powerful group that either is actually threatened by Jewish success or would be predisposed to use Jews as a scapegoat. There is a remarkable wholeness to the fabric of the society, which has its most visible manifestation in the public order which prevails. The police, as everyone knows, are unarmed in the ordinary course of their duties. Underlying this fact is the great public trust which exists. There is no general fear of internal subversion, and this in turn rests upon the high level of public life and upon an absence of deep class conflicts, or of narrow and rigid selfishness, or of corruption generally. It is therefore readily understandable why the elements with anti-Jewish propensities are politically a fringe group.

III. MANNERS AND TRADITIONS: THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE

Religion.—The outstanding fact about Christianity in England is that it is weakest in the decisive respect, belief, and strongest and most attractive essentially in its ceremonial. To exaggerate only somewhat for purposes of clarification, one may say that throughout the whole

range of English society religion is for marriages, funerals, and coronations. Anglicanism, more nearly than any other modern branch of Christianity, would seem to approximate the status which paganism had for the educated classes in antiquity. The upper classes are simply bored by doctrinal controversy, and the workers' abandonment of the church is the obverse side of Orwell's observation that a key change in the England of this century is the passing of the general belief in immortality. Hence the possibilities of an anti-Jewish outlook or programme grounded on Christian doctrine are limited to tiny coteries of intellectuals amongst converted Catholics and Anglo-Catholics. The anti-Jewishness of such people is probably greater than that of any other group in England. Although they seem to take religion seriously, no one, of course, can tell exactly in what way. It is plausible, however, and even suggested by their own statements, that their attraction to a hierarchical and ritually elaborate religion rests upon an ultimately utilitarian consideration: religion is a prop for a romantic conservative outlook hostile to commerce and democracy. The Jews, from this point of view, are not so much the enemies of Christ as the purveyors of mass-produced vulgarity. This, of course, is hardly the stuff out of which a mass movement is made. Nor would these individuals (at least in the Anglo-Saxon world) lend their support to palpable enemies of civilization.

In so far as Christian belief was a living force in the English past, as for example during the seventeenth century, it was imbued with a Puritanism based on the Old Testament that made for a strange kind of philo-Hebraism.¹⁹ (To this day Hebraic scholarship is highly esteemed in English academic life and is of a high calibre.) The same philo-Hebraism was true of Presbyterianism, the established religion in Scotland, and of all the Non-conformist sects. The resettlement of the modern Jewish community under Cromwell was made possible in part by the sympathy which the Puritans of the time gave to Menasseh ben Israel's religious petition. From that time to this many Englishmen have seen the Jews as the wondrous people of the Biblical drama.²⁰ This may still be so in Scotland.²¹ There has also been an interesting kinship between Unitarianism and Reform Judaism.

Politeness and Fairness.—Throughout the whole of English society there is a diffusion of the gentlemanly ideal and the political habits it embraces. As Max Weber noted, the gentleman, amongst the variety of types of men which societies regard as ideal, and in sharp contrast to the standards of the Prussian Junker, is intrinsically capable of being imitated.²² This must be slightly qualified. The gentleman is essentially an aristocratic, unegalitarian conception which embraces a sense of pride and dignity that is in practice incompatible with the performance of many degrading activities that have to be performed in every society. If there is, however, this natural limit to *successful* imitation of the

gentlemanly ideal, the things that are ordinarily understood today by the terms politeness and courtesy are capable of vast democratization.²³ It is with respect to these that the essentially *civil* ideal of the gentleman has so widely penetrated the manners of the English.

Then too, like those of the Dutch, English manners have been sweetened by several centuries of commerce. The English lack great warmth and are rather distant from one another, but they are polite. In fact, below the upper class and particularly in the lower middle class, it is very common to see an almost servile sort of over-politeness: what the upper class derides as 'refaynment'. The crucial precipitate of all this, in more specifically political terms than the word polite nowadays connotes, is reasonableness. In this the English have attained a style. One can explain one's point of view to an Englishman. One does not have to cringe before a civil servant.

This reasonableness coalesces, furthermore, with the ideal of fair play, that canon of a liberal society, which is buttressed by the English passion for sports. It is extraordinarily easy for anyone to assert and obtain his rights under this code. I have seen this countless times in such public situation as queues, where someone—probably inadvertently—got ahead of his proper place, was asked to 'play the game, old boy', and became terribly embarrassed and conceded without further ado.

Individualism.—English liberty, with its emphasis on rights, has produced a heightened sense of what is one's own private business. The respect for privacy is further buttressed by the Englishman's attitude towards his home. To invade this improperly is very offensive indeed. In addition, the English conduct themselves with fantastic restraint and reserve; and it would be as much a violation of the standards which this imposes to do things which are casually done in the public square in Latin countries—one hardly ever, for example, sees a child slapped in public—as it would be to stare. Altogether, as a German Jewish refugee put it, 'The English are a decent people. They leave you alone.'

In the upper classes in particular the eccentric is not merely tolerated, he is admired. When John Stuart Mill wrote his famous essay *On Liberty*, he feared that social pressure emanating from the rising middle classes would extinguish the open display of any deviation from prevailing custom. Though there is pressure towards conformity in England as in America, the full measure of Mill's fear has not been realized. Either he underestimated the number of cranks which English life produces so prolifically, or else he failed to see the possibilities of protection for individuality which an admirable sense of humour confers. If the British perceive something as 'dotty', it is safe.

When the Jews first began holding public services in the seventeenth century, the synagogue was frequented by visitors.²⁴ It is my impression

that Judaism in England to this day derives protection from being viewed in the light of something exotically interesting.

Humanitarianism.—The humanitarianism of Victorian England seems to have been a blend of political ideas and a religious impulse. Into the democratic theory and ideology of the Enlightenment was infused the enthusiasm of the Non-conformist sects, in particular, for salvation. Tempered by all the virtues of English politics, humanitarianism never seriously approached revolutionary dimensions. The result was the spirit of reform: a sense of sympathy for oppression and suffering, and a determination to correct abuse by public action.

Much must be made of the part that women began to play in this society, for it was in essence a woman's conscience that attacked the slave trade and the brutal criminal code. This spirit gradually prevailed to such a degree that agitation about impersonal causes and voluntary organization in their behalf became a normal political phenomenon. It can, of course, reach cranky proportions. There have probably been more bequests to cats in England than in any other civilized society and there was an organization of ladies called the M.A.B.Y.S.—the Metropolitan Association for the Betterment of Young Servant Girls. A most solid achievement, however, lay in the quality to which the standards of public life were raised. This was the period that witnessed the formation of the most humane and efficient civil service in the world, the disappearance of corruption from English politics, and the transformation of the raw oligarch of the eighteenth century into an educated, public-spirited gentleman.

The abolition of all civil disabilities for Jews, Dissenters, and Catholics, which occurred long after the real religious issues had been settled and which was spearheaded by the Liberals, drew for its success upon the support of this educated, humanitarian opinion. Sir Moses Montefiore's personal action in alleviating the distress of foreign Jewries had not only the sympathy but also the semi-official support of the British Government.²⁵

Untheoretical Inconsistency.—The English are a curious blend of gentleness and toughness. On the one hand, the anti-vivisection society is strong enough to be a perpetual nuisance to biologists; on the other hand, corporal punishment is more prevalent in English schools than anywhere else. One aspect of this toughness is a kind of bluntness in the very way in which Englishmen speak of Jews, and of other minorities as well. The 'dumb' Englishman does not have any of the restraint his American equivalent might have in publicly referring to a Jew as a Jew, a restraint imposed in America by the necessity felt in a democratic and ethnically heterogeneous environment to play down minority labels. This bluntness, even where it reaches vulgar forms, must not be uncritically identified as Jew-hatred. (A Jewish army officer overheard one of his men saying to another, 'The b—— Jew is all right.') Blunt-

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

ness of this kind is not seated in deep emotional involvements. Nor, what is more important, is it part of a theoretical stance that seeks perfect consistency.

The English, who pride themselves on their practical wisdom and good sense, properly despise the intrusion of theory into the domain of politics; they boast about the fact that their constitution is unwritten and have a low opinion of intellectuals altogether. As practical men their main concern, in resolving political differences, is to find an area of agreement in which compromise is possible, and they would be reluctant to press discussion to those intellectually clear-cut extremes where irreconcilable conflict is explicitly spelled out and from which retreat is difficult. They would therefore hardly be disturbed by the inconsistencies to which we are necessarily impelled by genuine political life. Though this practical, gentlemanly point of view has grave consequences for the quality of theoretical reflection, it protects them within the sphere of practice from the disastrous effects of ideology.

The intellectual anti-Semite is not at home in this milieu. Jewish 'theoreticians', for example, have only just ceased worrying about the accusation of 'dual loyalty' which, they felt, unqualified support of Israel must necessarily bring about, taking pains to define Jewry, as a 'religious, not national' group. Their fears were simply beside the point. Most Englishmen would be amazed (as well as amused) to learn of their very existence.

A corollary of this attitude is the absence of ideological support for Jewish-Gentile harmony or good relations. Groups working for these ends exist. But the English, in general, regard such talk as cant; and, as in America, it has little effect on actual social relations.

IV. THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Anglo-Jewry altogether is relatively smaller than American Jewry. To take London alone, which is roughly equal to New York in population, the 250,000 Jews of London are only one-eighth as many as the Jews of New York. Though there are large enough concentrations to give a Jewish cast to certain districts of London (as well as to one or two resort cities and districts of some provincial cities), Jews do not make a visible impact at the centre of things. Then, too, because of both the small size of the Jewish community and the more restrictive, 'party manners' atmosphere of England, English Jews, even among intellectuals, would not, for example, feel as free to use Yiddish expressions in the presence of non-Jews as American Jews would in comparable circles here. The degree to which comedians in America freely use occasional Yiddish words, which surely must account in great measure for the penetration of several such words into the general vocabulary, is not equalled in England. (English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish dialects,

of course, are very much a part of the British comedian's stock in trade.) Absent from the English radio are those minority-group family serials, such as the 'Rise of the Goldbergs', which make their appearance on the American radio and television partly as a matter of right.

This is related to certain underlying political facts. Jews are neither a political bloc nor one of a number of minority blocs with whom they are roughly equated in the public eye. Minority-group politics does not exist in England. Though Jewish M.P.s may speak in behalf of Jewish interests, they do not control a Jewish vote. Both the small size of the community and the centralized party structure make it impossible for Jews to control strategic levers in the electoral machine. The government is therefore not responsive to Jewish opinion or interests as a force that must be placated. The recent shift in British policy towards Israel was wholly independent of calculation about Jewish interests in these terms.

Thus Jews entering politics are more or less forced to transcend the boundaries not only of the Jewish community but also of the minority group as such. In fact, the significant aspect under which the Jewish community is treated as a corporate entity is in its character of a religious group—for the most part on ceremonial occasions. The Chief Rabbi from time to time is commanded to have an audience of the sovereign and would be invited to coronations.

All this very much suited the old Anglo-Jewish leadership, who deliberately avoided the publicity of parliamentary procedures. Following in the path of the traditional *shtadlan*, they preferred to act quietly, out of the public eye, in their dealings with government officials with whom they had patiently established personal connexions of long standing.²⁶ In the split which occurred within the Jewish community over Zionism, the Zionist mass came to depreciate this preference as cowardly and wrested control of the chief representative institution, the Board of Deputies, away from the old leadership. The public resolution then began to be an instrument of the Board's activities. In part the disdain for the old quietness had a demagogic character, heightened by the first flush of a great enthusiasm, but more fundamentally a difference about aims rather than method caused the breach. With the establishment of the State of Israel this whole issue has expired; and in any case personal relations between *shtadlanim* (who are coming more and more to be salaried officials of the Jewish community) and governmental officials have remained and will remain a characteristic feature of minority life.

In general, English Jews in high places, throughout the history of the modern settlement, have avoided becoming controversial public figures. There is no English equivalent of the hatred which Léon Blum aroused in certain French quarters.

All this points to what cannot be a too flattering observation. This is

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

that Anglo-Jewry has slumbered beneath the visible surface of English life. With the one exception of Disraeli, who is altogether atypical, the Anglo-Jewish community has not dazzled, to cause either admiration or resentment in the non-Jewish world. It has not made a mark upon this world. Its inner life, too, exhibits a similar lack of brilliance. What accounts for this?

First and foremost, there is the character of the leadership of Anglo-Jewry, the men who set the tone of the community's outlook and way of life.²⁷ From the days of the resettlement (and earlier in Holland, as well), there was a marked change from the standards of what we may loosely call the traditional Jewish community. Authority passed from the learned rabbi to the businessman. Early in their history the London Jews had acquired the reputation of being interested only in business.²⁸ This is not quite correct. They also wanted to be gentlemen. It is the hybrid ideal of the gentleman and the businessman that defined the spirit of the Anglo-Jewish community and which can be summed up in one word: respectability.

Absorbed in commerce, which was just beginning to enjoy the prestige it has in the modern world, English Jews could in full propriety look down not merely upon heroism (as did their non-Jewish counterparts) but also upon the impractical matter of Jewish scholarship as well. As gentlemen, too, they disdained the passionate immersion in study that constituted the way of the Jewish scholar. The sphere of religion proper thus became restricted to the practice of formal, un-fanatical piety. As gentlemen, they had to take themselves seriously; the gentleman does not mock the conventions of his society. And so they lost that Jewish sense of comedy which is derived from a transcendence, if not of all conventions, at least of those concerned with pomp and circumstance.

Their sphere of public life was the Jewish community, in the administration of which they conducted themselves like gentlemen. Though later accused by immigrants from the Russian ghetto of being cold and of looking at matters from a businessman's point of view, they were, none the less, charitable, humane, efficient, loyal. Son followed father in a family tradition of voluntary communal work. In their business activities and in their conduct generally they sought to comply with a high standard of integrity to protect the good name of Anglo-Jewry. This led to inevitable collision with Jews coming from Eastern Europe, whose outlook was in many ways wholly at variance with that of the long-established English Jews. But if as a result community leaders indulged themselves in the snobbery of Anglo-Jewish ancestor worship, they never developed the kind of contempt which the German Jews had for the East European Jews. Apart from the charity they extended to the immigrant Jewish poor, their reaction to these aliens in their midst was to help them become 'anglicized' or 'established'. The Jews'

Free School and the many youth clubs in East London, which were founded and directed by individuals from old Anglo-Jewish families, owe their origin to this beneficent impulse.²⁹

Besides the character of the leadership, other factors influenced the nature of the minority life. Chief among these is that the English Jews were never under the despotic control of a master. To be sure, the Jews before full civil emancipation had to seek protection in high places—both from Cromwell and from Charles II³⁰—but they were far removed from the *servi camerae* of the Middle Ages. Brought over to increase the wealth of the nation by trade,³¹ they did not achieve a degree of economic power that would make a monarch dependent upon them, and, because gratitude can be painful, dangerous to them. They were thus not attached to the society in one singular respect as were the medieval moneylenders, who were displaced when Christians developed their skills.

Then, the English Jews, modelling themselves on their hosts, were not intellectuals but businessmen, bent on living well, who avoided coming into open collision with prevailing opinion. It is also plausible that a high rate of intermarriage can provoke the enmity of non-Jews when, from the point of view of the non-Jews, it may appear that the Jews are marrying the most desirable spouses. In this respect the situation in England has never been comparable to that in Germany or urban Hungary, where the rate of intermarriage was very high. Nor has Jewish criminality in England ever exceeded those limits within which it could be successfully repudiated and even suppressed by the responsible members of the community. Perhaps the one occupational sore spot was the moneylender; aristocrats who gambled and borrowed were said to be 'in the hands of the Jews'. But this hardly had serious effects.

All told, the Anglo-Jewish community has been obscure and dull, but, in a manner of speaking, it saved itself by this very obscurity and dullness. Its historians have noted with evident pride how, in contrast to the situation on the continent, its most assimilated (or anglicized) members did not desert the community.³² Although the Reform movement in English Judaism was begun and led by individuals from old Anglo-Jewish families (for example, Claude Montefiore), it is a striking fact that the community is at its heart Orthodox in religious practice and is led by families which are both anglicized *and* Orthodox.

But if the more benign atmosphere of England has permitted them to combine both worlds, to combine in other words the gentleman and the Jew, this has not been possible without some restriction of what are, perhaps, the highest human potentialities. It has not been an atmosphere to sustain the pinnacle of Jewish life, namely great Jewish scholarship. Nor has English Jewry lived in an atmosphere like that which prevailed in Catholic and aristocratic Vienna before the First

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

World War, where the educated, assimilated middle-class Jew, having deserted the synagogue but not being accepted socially by the non-Jews, lived in a kind of *demi-monde* with other Jews of his type. Living in this *demi-monde* may not have permitted them to go unnoticed as Jews, but the compensation was that their thought was uncontrolled, particularly by such social demands as a gentlemanly code. They were free to develop not only psychoanalysis but other lines of thought and art as well.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Anglo-Jewry is a minority and is thus, in some more or less tangible respects, a separate group within English society.³³ There are no barriers to assimilation; and if the members of the community had wished to do so they could have gradually fused with the general population, like the Huguenots. That they wished to remain distinct, which means not only for the practice of Judaism but also for the maintenance of a somewhat autonomous communal life, is manifest by the very survival of the community to this date. That they wish to do so in the future accords with the sentiments not only of the mass of Jews, who lead a highly enclosed social life, but also of those anglicized Jews who enjoy a much greater degree of intimacy with non-Jewish society but who remain linked with the Jewish community, and are in this fundamental respect honest with themselves.

To compare briefly the position of Catholics and Jews, the former may almost be said to have something of the status of political traitors, people who have lapsed. If one looks at the extreme expression of this attitude, as it exists in Ulster, Catholics are regarded with a mistrust and even hatred far beyond anything that Jews normally would experience. Upper-class Englishmen have recalled that in their school days what seemed to matter was not whether a person was a Jew but whether he was a Catholic.

This relative blindness permits the Jew a great deal of freedom pleasantly to penetrate English social life and to feel accepted as an individual. But the fact cannot be gainsaid that the Jew as such is something of a stranger. The non-Jew will take note of this fact, if only to avoid the very use of the word Jew in the presence of Jews in that casual way which connotes distance or difference—e.g. the term 'Jew-tailor'. This distance, which is the result of group consciousness, must be distinguished from two things which may be included in it but which are not intrinsic to it. The first is Jew-hatred, which is to be encountered in England, but which is not so great or so organized as to be a danger to the community; the Jewish community, as Mr. Salomon has noted, is properly vigilant about the growth of anti-Jewish sentiment but would agree with the contention made here. The

second thing is the distance which is the result of different tastes. There are some Jews who would never be at home in certain non-Jewish environments, and *vice versa*.

But wholly apart from the last two phenomena, so long as Jews are a separated group there will be a limitation upon the degree to which Jews will be accepted in a society. This limitation is quantitative rather than qualitative. As Lessing indicated in *Nathan the Wise*, love and friendship, let alone the idea of humanity, freely cross religious lines. Furthermore, there is no discernible limit upon the height to which a Jew, openly professing Judaism, could rise, short of the monarchy itself, the subordinate world of the Court, and, obviously, the leadership of the Church. If the fact that Disraeli was baptized is cited against this contention, it can be replied that there have been few of his calibre, Jew or Gentile, since his time.

The quantitative restriction is another matter. This refers to a numerical preponderance of Jews in *leading* positions of a society: politics, the professions and social life. Psychoanalysis in England is crowded not merely with Jews but with German Jewish refugees, who are objects of the not inconsiderable xenophobia that exists in England above and beyond anti-Jewish sentiment; but because psychoanalysis does not have high standing in England, the concentration of Jews does not cause resentment. The same can be said for trade generally and for those particular lines of business which Jews dominate. They are below the pinnacle of the society and therefore do not enter into conflict with any powerful interest. Placed against this fact, the significance of propaganda attacking the Jews for being in trade is small.

For the leading positions, however, it is fair to say that by and large a tacit *numerus clausus* exists in England. But because, with certain exceptions, its limits have not been approached, it has never become explicit; and this makes for a genuinely pleasant atmosphere. There are four reasons for this state of affairs: first, the relatively small size of the Jewish community; second, the tenacity of English life and social institutions, particularly amongst the upper class, which makes it possible for one to accept a Jew without even conceiving of the possibility of being 'invaded' by the Jewish community; third, the stratification of English society, which overlaps with that within the Jewish community, and which makes possible the development of genuine bonds between all who have had a gentlemanly education; and fourth, the proclivities and preferences of the Jews themselves, most of whom do not regard a separate Jewish social life as any kind of hardship.

Certainly, the situation of the Jews in England is desirable in many ways. A number of the minor irritations that befall an American Jew—as, for example, in taking a vacation—are absent in England. Denied in many typical instances the possibility of anonymity by the larger society, an American Jew sometimes finds it hard to avoid having to

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

associate with people not congenial to him—vulgar people, for instance—merely because they too are Jews. It is possible but he must check beforehand. Though vulgarity of the *nouveau riche* sort—an almost complete renunciation of the traditional Jewish virtues—exists within Anglo-Jewry, yet the few older Anglo-Jewish families, who have had several generations of inherited wealth and English manners, are still a force in setting a tone of propriety for the community. Just as vulgarity is less dominant and brash in England than in America altogether, so does Anglo-Jewry have more polish than American Jewry.

But what choice is available to those English Jews to whom the life of the spirit is almost life itself? It seems to be, mainly, a choice between vulgarity or pedestrian decency, wrapped up in the administration of communal affairs which, though necessary, are nonetheless pedestrian and dull. It is no wonder that such people have few to talk to. The really vulgar can evoke nothing but distaste (or, perhaps, a benign amusement); and in so far as the Anglo-Jewish upper class are interested in intellectual activities, it is typically in Anglo-Jewish history, the gentleman's hobby, and without passion.

The American community, by contrast, has much more intellectual vigour. In part this difference is due to the greater size of American Jewish communities. But of greater importance is the fact that American Jewry can turn more freely and naturally within itself, into its own intellectual tradition, without a concern that by so doing it is violating the canons of good taste.

What is at issue here is the age-old question of assimilation. Certainly the Anglo-Jewish leadership were not crude assimilationists and prided themselves precisely on the fact that while achieving a balance between the two worlds, they remained fully loyal Jews. It is the quality of this balance, which rested essentially upon an opposition of the gentleman ideal to the ghetto, that one must question. In so far as they set themselves against the narrowness of the ghetto—uncritical contempt or fear of the non-Jewish world and an illiberality of spirit in relations even with other Jews—they were only opposing the best of one mode of life to the worst of another. But to go further and to deride the very fullness of what it means to be a Jew as the narrowness of the ghetto is a mistake, for this fullness is not narrowness. Every people, to have pride, dignity, inner freedom and, hence, contentment, must have an attachment to a tradition that is something of its own. And is the Jewish tradition, with its answer to the question of how man should live, merely just another tradition? The alternative is an obsessional concern with the approval of the non-Jewish world, with all the emptiness of life in a glasshouse.

In this respect immersion in communal work and even piety itself are only parts. In attachment to the gentleman ideal they have been capable—though not necessarily—of precluding that genuine respect

for, not to say devotion to, the Jewish intellectual tradition which is the source of the fullness I have mentioned. This may have flourished in the ghetto, but to regard it as something that could be produced only there is to commit a grave historical error.

Perhaps those Jews of England who wished to be Jewish gentlemen went further than they had to even to capture the virtues of the gentlemen, let alone to save the community.

NOTES

¹ This study is part of a longer report prepared for the Library of Jewish Information (American Jewish Committee). I should like to thank the Library for its generous support. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Milton Himmelfarb for his able assistance in planning the inquiry.

² Native-born Jews, for example, were not assured of their right to own land until 1718, when this was settled by a decision of the Attorney General: Albert Hyamson, *A History of the Jews in England*, London, 1908, p. 262.

³ For further details of the history of the community from the Resettlement to the Emancipation period see Hyamson, *op. cit.*, Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England*, Oxford, 1949, and James Parkes, 'History of the Anglo-Jewish Community', in M. Freedman, ed., *A Minority in Britain*, London, 1955.

⁴ A few years back there was a sign in the London buses which was chronically written over by hooligans so as to become offensive to Jews. Complaints to the London Transport brought about a change in wording which eliminated this provocation.

⁵ This was done, in fact, by a ban on all processions. Mr. Sidney Salomon in his pamphlet *Anti-Semitism and Fascism in Post-War Britain*, London, 1950, is of the opinion that the Act could be so interpreted as to be restricted to a provocative type of procession.

⁶ Cf. Salomon, *op. cit.*, which sums up the security situation very well.

⁷ The significance of this observation must be slightly qualified. In England Jews are proportionally more numerous in national politics than in the United States; but American Jews would appear to be more active in local political affairs, which are much more important in the United States than in England.

⁸ A. de Staël-Holstein, *Letters on England*, 2nd ed., London, 1830, pp. 115-39.

⁹ A. de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime*, tr. M. W. Patterson, Oxford, 1947, p. 88: 'Wherever the feudal system established itself on the continent of Europe it ended in caste; in England alone it returned to aristocracy.'

¹⁰ H. L. Mencken has an interesting description of the misuse of English honours and titles in the United States during the nineteenth century in his *American Language*, 4th ed., New York, 1946, pp. 271-84.

¹¹ A historical account of social pretension in the United States is to be found in Dixon Wecter, *The Saga of American Society*, London, 1937. See also Cleveland Amory, *The Proper Bostonians*, New York, 1947, and *The Last Resorts*, New York, 1952.

¹² Amory, *Last Resorts*, pp. 98-9.

¹³ Tocqueville, *op. cit.*, p. 91: 'The English aristocracy . . . was prepared to stoop to conquer.'

¹⁴ Staël-Holstein, *op. cit.*, p. 125: 'The younger sons of peers daily engage in trade without any idea of derogation entering into their minds.'

¹⁵ This deference to the aristocracy has sometimes been regarded as a source of weakness for English capitalism (as compared with the United States). There is at least one enclave, the City of London banking families, which has not been willing to surrender and which is disliked by the aristocracy.

¹⁶ James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, London, 1889, vol. ii, p. 620: 'In England great wealth can, by using the appropriate methods, practically buy rank from those who bestow it: or by obliging persons whose position enables them to command fashionable society, can induce them to stand sponsors for

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN ENGLISH SOCIETY

the upstart, and force him into society, a thing which no person in America has the power of doing.'

¹⁷ Compare the stories and novels of Saki.

¹⁸ Hyamson, op. cit., pp. 259 f., 274.

¹⁹ Hyamson, op. cit., pp. 164-6. Fantastic Judaizing proposals emanated from such Puritanism, e.g. a suggestion to adopt Hebrew as the national language.

²⁰ Cecil Roth, *Anglo-Jewish Letters*, London, 1938, pp. 49-51, Letter of Henry Oldenburgh to Menasseh ben Israel.

²¹ David Daiches has a vivid account in *Two Worlds: An Edinburgh Jewish Childhood*, New York, 1956, of what it was like to grow up as a Jew in Edinburgh. When he was absent for Jewish holidays, the Christian schoolchildren would ask him whether it was 'a feast or a fast'.

²² Max Weber, 'National Character and the Junkers', in Gerth and Mills, eds., *Essays from Max Weber*, New York, 1946, p. 391. Tocqueville also, op. cit., p. 90, discusses the democratization of the word gentleman, but shows that in the process it changes its meaning.

²³ It is in this somewhat vulgarized sense that the term gentleman is ordinarily understood in the United States outside of the South.

²⁴ Roth, op. cit., p. 55: John Greenhalgh, curious about all the sects of the time, approached a Jew in the street, who arranged for him to visit a service. This he describes in his letter.

²⁵ For details about the Damascus affair, see Hyamson, op. cit., pp. 335-6.

²⁶ This was particularly true in foreign affairs. There has been no lack of out-spokenness in openly combating domestic fascism.

²⁷ I have dealt with this in further detail in 'The Outlines of Jewish Society in London', in Freedman, ed., *A Minority in Britain*, pp. 153-9.

²⁸ Roth, op. cit., p. 180. In a letter to his brother in Frankfort, the eighteenth-century Chief Rabbi Tevele Schiff complains: 'I have no colleagues nor pupils to study with, and no one even to whom I can talk on these [learned] matters. . . .'

²⁹ V. D. Lipman, *Social History of the Jews in England, 1850-1950*, London, 1954, pp. 30-1.

³⁰ Hyamson, op. cit., p. 218.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 176. The part which Marrano merchants were playing in the commercial rise of Holland was very much in the forefront of Cromwell's mind.

³² Cecil Roth, 'The Collapse of Anglo-Jewry', *Jewish Monthly*, July 1947.

³³ See Brotz, op. cit., pp. 165-97.

ON PREJUDICE¹

Morris Ginsberg

THE WORD PREJUDICE is derived from the Latin *Prae-judicium* signifying a legal decision based on previous judgements or precedents. The etymology, however, is not very helpful in defining the present meaning. The term now has a derogatory implication, which obviously the legal term did not have, suggesting that there is something wrong or false about the judgement, and in any case, prejudgement is not sufficient to define prejudice. Many prejudices are not based on previous judgements and not all judgements so based are prejudices.

An examination of the ways in which the term prejudice is now commonly employed suggests that it may be provisionally defined to include (a) prejudgements (*Vorurteile*) or opinions and beliefs formed without examination or consideration and accepted uncritically when doubt or criticism might reasonably be expected; (b) beliefs or opinions influenced by logically irrelevant impulses, feelings, emotions, sentiments or complexes; (c) attitudes favourable or unfavourable towards persons or things formed prior to or not based on experience or knowledge of their qualities. Generally prejudice has a negative implication, being employed more frequently to describe unfavourable than favourable attitudes. 'Prepossession', on the other hand, which has a somewhat similar meaning, is used more positively to describe a favourable impression. It remains to be added that prejudice covers not only beliefs and attitudes but also the behaviour influenced by beliefs and attitudes.

In order to understand the nature of prejudice it is helpful to consider first the psychology of 'certitude', that is, the state of feeling certain. This is a psychological term indicating a state of mind and is to be distinguished from 'certainty' which is best used as a logical term indicating that the grounds for a belief or judgement are logically adequate. We may feel certain of something which logically is false or at any rate without sufficient grounds. In current language we use several words to indicate degrees of certitude. We distinguish, for example, between knowledge, belief and opinion. I should not say that I believe, but that I know that I had porridge this morning or that two and two make four. 'Opinion', again, is used in reference to assertions

ON PREJUDICE

which fall short of the assurance we have in knowledge or belief. 'It is my opinion that so and so is the case' means that I have some but not very full grounds for thinking that so and so is the case. The assent we give to opinions is milder, more open to doubt than that which we give to our beliefs. Opinion thus seems to be intermediate between knowing and doubting.

What then is this state of feeling certain and what are its conditions? The older psychologists, dominated by associationist theories, tended to explain certitude as the result of indissoluble associations. We believe two ideas to be necessarily linked if in the past they have occurred in contiguity or in immediate succession. Modern psychologists, though agreeing that invariable association is one ground of certitude, argue that it will account neither for the certitude of simple perceptions nor for the confidence we feel about axioms.

If dazzled by the sun I say 'It is light' the psychological necessity accompanying this assertion, though it is confined to a single instance is more absolute and immediate than that which is present when I say 'Unsupported bodies fall', a proposition which I and my ancestors before me have verified innumerable times and never known to fail.²

Similarly the degree of conviction with which I believe that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other is far greater than that which accompanies my belief that unsupported bodies will fall, despite the fact that the number of times in which I have actually experienced the connexion is far greater in the latter than in the former case. In both simple perception and the apprehension of objects or relations of a higher order, the conviction of certainty is immediate or intuitive and, as it would seem, psychologically irreducible.

Perhaps the most general thing we can say about the state of certitude is that in some sense our mental processes are constrained or restricted. When we are convinced we are, so to say, overcome, compelled. I am convinced means I am forced to assent. This is most obvious in direct perception. If in broad daylight I open my eyes it is not in my power to decide whether I shall see or not. I am bound to see. Similarly we have only limited command over our organic sensations. I cannot get rid of a toothache by not attending to it. The certitude thus arising is of a primitive kind. We hardly ever think of questioning it.

Apart from direct perception, I may be equally certain about recent memory. I have no doubt at all about what I had for breakfast this morning; though if asked to give proof of the accuracy of my recollection I might be involved in difficulties because memory is notoriously fallible. Nevertheless, psychologically, immediate or recent memory has the directness of perception. In both cases the flow of my activity is restricted, my mental processes are determined for me. Wherever there is a similar restriction there is belief. In imaginative work, in writing

a novel for example, you might think that you can shape what happens as you choose. But in so far as you do this you have no belief in the reality of the characters. If you believe in their reality you cannot make them do things which are not in keeping with their nature.

Following this line of thought, we may draw up a scale beginning with free fantasy such as you have in day dreaming, when the flow of your ideas is unrestricted and anything may come into your head, to imaginative construction where you have a good deal of freedom, but are still limited by the nature of your characters as you have conceived them, to the definite constraint which you experience in direct perception, in recent memory, in logical thought or in practical activity when the means chosen must be such as are in fact likely to achieve the ends desired. We can in this way classify mental processes according to the degree or kind of restrictions imposed on the mind. It will be noticed that dreaming differs from free fantasy in this respect. In the latter objects can be moulded by your desires. In dreaming, on the other hand, the objects will resist your efforts and you may even struggle against them. This is why you believe in the reality of the objects while you are dreaming.

We must distinguish between implicit and explicit certitude. Normally when we take the trouble to say 'we are certain' we refer to statements which we might have doubted or which we had previously to ascertain or verify. In such cases the certainty is explicit. A great many of our beliefs are implicitly certain. We had no reason for doubting them. In fact what we call common sense or common knowledge consists of such implicit beliefs and they mostly remain unchallenged. Doubt arises when the conditions leave us freedom of choice, and we make some effort to find something which will help us to decide in favour of one of the alternatives. There is no virtue in doubting for doubting sake. 'The ignorant man', Renouvier tells us, 'doubts little and the fool does not doubt at all.'³

The opposite to the tendency to doubt is credulity, that is readiness to believe without sufficient reasons. Of this, as we all know, there is any amount. For suspension of judgement a good deal of self-control is needed and active doubt requires sustained effort. It is easier to escape from the discomfort of uncertainty by stifling doubt and turning attention away from anything that might encourage it. Credulity is obviously an important factor in prejudice, as it is also of superstition. Superstition is a word difficult to define. In common use it means false beliefs concerning supernatural powers. There is often an implication that these beliefs are not only false but socially injurious, encouraging obscurantism and leading to cruelty. But this is disputed and what is injurious in certain circumstances may not be so in others.⁴

Another concept which has here to be considered is faith.⁵ This is also difficult to define. It is commonly distinguished alike from know-

ON PREJUDICE

ledge and belief. In knowledge and belief we are constrained in varying degree by what is directly before us in perception or memory or the force of logical proof. In faith we venture beyond what is thus known to what is ideally possible. The stimulus to faith is often dissatisfaction with the world as we know it. But it is not mere dissatisfaction. At its best it is an adventure into the unknown and, though not knowledge, it is often a forerunner of knowledge and sometimes of knowledge otherwise unattainable. The relation between reasoned knowledge and faith is a well worn theme and this is not the place for a detailed discussion. The rationalist will not close his mind to the suggestions of faith. He will realize that in the sense of anticipation of and experimentation with what is ideally possible faith is an element not only in religion and morality, but also in theoretical and practical knowledge. But he will be on his guard against giving assent to conclusions to which we are prompted by feeling or desire alone, and against the dogmatic spirit which, not satisfied with believing, cannot rest until others believe as well.

Closely linked with the dogmatic spirit is fanaticism. Considering the havoc worked by fanaticism it is odd that psychologists have paid so little attention to it. It has generally been treated in connexion with the psychology of religion but, of course, fanaticism is by no means confined to religion. From the point of view of our present discussion it may be defined as an intensified form of the feeling of certitude. We can, I think, distinguish various types of fanatics. There is first the assertive or aggressive type. He is the sort of person who, filled with the sense of his mission, broods ascetically over his ideas and so establishes habits which make it impossible for him to consider or tolerate any beliefs that would tend to shake them. Such a person is often paranoid and feeling himself to be persecuted, persecutes others. He is the persecuted persecutor. Obsessed by his ideas normal standards of conduct fail, and in support of his intense convictions he can indulge in the most terrible cruelties.

There is a second type into which the first passes by gradations. This is the type of person who is at bottom weak and unstable and not at all really certain. He has doubts which he dare not face. He will not admit that he is doubtful and to see others doubting infuriates him. He thus hunts his own doubts in others. He cannot believe so long as others doubt. Fearful and over-anxious he seeks reassurance in exaggerated self-assertion. His weakness issues in destructive and cruel acts as terrible as those of the first type.

There is a third type which originates in excessive loyalty. Fanatics of this sort are people in whom loyalty is carried to an extreme. They tend to glorify their hero and their cause and to idealize their own devotion. They show their sensitiveness by intense jealousy for the honour of the object of their devotion. They will go to any length to

avenge any doubt, slight or affront to their god, hero or cause. 'Crusades have been preached and massacres instigated for no other reason than a fancied slight upon the God.'⁶

The fanatic generally is jealous of his own importance, the dupe of his excited vanity, though often the intensity of his certitude is an exaggerated defence against his own doubt and anxiety. I have distinguished different types, but they have much in common and in their outward behaviour they may be very similar.

We must now try to define a little more precisely what is to be included under prejudice. In so far as the word relates to opinions and beliefs, it will be seen that not all wrong opinions and beliefs are prejudices. Errors arising through ignorance of relevant facts or through fallacious methods of reasoning are not necessarily due to prejudice. In so far as the term is applied to attitudes again, it is easily seen that liking or disliking by itself does not amount to prejudice. If I like sugar and you do not I should not think of describing the fact by saying that I have a prejudice for, and you a prejudice against, sugar.

It would seem that what distinguishes prejudice is either the influence on our thinking of preformed judgements and the readiness to apply them to new cases without examination, when such examination might reasonably be expected; or else the influence on our thinking of logically irrelevant impulses, sentiments and complexes. The two modes of influence are closely connected. For feelings or desires may lead us to accept preformed judgements which in a cool hour we might be ready to doubt or at any rate hesitate to act upon. On the other hand, preformed judgements may induce feelings in us which otherwise we should not have experienced, as for example when we are unfavourably disposed towards individuals in advance of any experience of them merely because we know they are Negroes, Jews, Turks.

In analysing the conditions of certitude, it will be recalled, I have adopted the view that certitude involves the restriction or control of our thinking by conditions which are, so to say, forced upon us. This is most easily seen in the case of direct perception or in logical thought when we are carried away by the force of the evidence. Control of this sort may be called objective. But there is also control or restriction by subjective factors, as when our thinking is affected by our desires, passions or complexes. In the theoretical analysis of prejudice, we are concerned mainly with the way in which these subjective factors operate in generating prejudices and in making them readily acceptable once formed.

We may consider first the influence of preformed judgements. It is clear that prejudgement is normal and inevitable. We cannot be expected to start *de novo* every time we form a judgement. Indeed we could not do so, for we cannot proceed at all without the stock of ideas, categories, classifications, which we inherit in the very language we

ON PREJUDICE

use. In what way then do preformed judgements encourage prejudice? I think the answer is to be found in two directions. In the first place, accepted beliefs and attitudes harden into habits and ingrained predilections and offer strong and often bitter resistance to change or the challenge of new experiences. This resistance is due partly to sheer inertia, partly to fear of the new, partly to vested interests and partly to group loyalty. It is only too easy to give examples. Some of the greatest discoveries, of the utmost importance to mankind, were denounced and opposed by contemporary authorities. Examples from the history of biology and medicine are Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood, the germ theory of disease, and more recently the teaching of psycho-analysis. Theological predilections have often hindered men otherwise open-minded and impartial from appreciating new advances in science. Legal reforms have rarely been initiated by lawyers and generally have had to overcome their apathy or active opposition.

In the second place, accepted beliefs contain not only the truths of experience systematized in common sense and science, but also the errors of misinterpreted experience, untested generalizations, and corrupted testimony and traditions. In so far as these erroneous beliefs were originally due to prejudgements and the influence of emotions they may be considered as causes of present prejudices. A great many prejudices are rooted in past prejudices. This is especially marked in the case of race prejudice, in which traditionally transmitted antipathies often provide the central core round which there gather other supporting antipathies constituting together an emotional system difficult to eradicate.

I come next to the influence of desires, feelings, and the systems formed of them. It is often said that we believe what we want to believe. This is true only in a certain sense. We cannot believe anything just by willing it. What happens is that when we want anything with a certain intensity our attention tends to be concentrated on those things which fit in with our desires and away from anything that does not: In this way every desire gathers around it beliefs favourable to it and diverts attention from conflicting beliefs. The strength of desires may easily blind us to the fact that they cannot all be realized, or that they are incompatible with each other. The range of knowledge at our command is here of great importance. A wide knowledge of the possibilities that are open and of the probable consequences of action may awaken conflicting desires and so make for hesitation or deliberation. In estimating consequences the strength of our regard for others may play a part. The weaker our interest in them the less is desire likely to be inhibited by its consequences to them and the less check on our beliefs tending to strengthen our desire.

Perhaps a more important factor in the formation of prejudices than specific desires are the more general dispositions described as 'interests'.

Desires change with changes in the situation, but behind them are larger and more enduring needs seeking satisfaction in comprehensive ends such as health, home, family life, profession, etc., and forming the basis of the temporary purposes in the pursuit of which we are engaged from day to day. These 'interests' gather around them systems of beliefs congruent with them and repel beliefs not favouring them. As a source of prejudice group interests are specially important. For groups have common interests which may be opposed, or appear to be opposed, to the interests of other groups. These interests affect the beliefs and opinions of the members of the group and colour their general outlook. Irrational factors here come into play. When group interests clash there is a strong tendency for beliefs to arise in each group attributing qualities to the other justifying the conflict. This is most obvious in war, but is easily discerned everywhere when groups of any size come into contact. Prejudices thus arising may be slight, fluid and transferable. But if they are sanctioned by social usages they may strike deep roots and issue in discriminatory treatment or even segregation, which then in turn strengthen the prejudices. Racial and ethnic prejudices afford numerous examples.

Passing now from the emotional background of prejudice to the cognitive structure of prejudiced beliefs, we may without any pretence to completeness enumerate the following features. These can be seen most easily perhaps in the case of racial or ethnic prejudice. Firstly, there is uncritical *generalization*. This results in the attribution to all members of a group qualities in fact only observed in a few. Secondly, there is *specification*, or selective emphasis, that is the tendency to consider certain qualities as specially characteristic of a group which are in fact to be found equally commonly in other groups, e.g. when Jews are said to be ostentatious or pushful. Thirdly, there is *omission* that is the tendency to overlook desirable qualities in the group which is disliked, or when they are too obvious to be denied to dismiss them as 'untypical'. Fourthly, there is *discrimination*, that is the tendency to condemn acts of one group which would be condoned or not noticed or even praised when committed by others, for example, when similar acts are considered as sharp practice in one case but regarded as showing business acumen in the other; or when Jews are condemned as 'money-minded' in a country where competition and the striving for money are considered proper and normal for everybody.

Other factors of importance are reliance on hear-say, suggestibility, self-deception, conscious and unconscious, sophistication and rationalization. Once the prejudiced beliefs are built up they tend to arouse emotions or passions similar to those which originally gave rise to them and thus to sustain or intensify them. They then impose themselves on the individual and become coercive and intolerant. The mass of beliefs thus engendered tends to be supported by other beliefs; for people like

ON PREJUDICE

to think they have reasons for what they believe. In this way systems of belief are built up which are highly resistant and blind to doubt or criticism. The strength of prejudices like that of dogmas lies not in the reasoning on which they are based but in the mass of feelings behind them. Hence they do not yield easily to reasoning or even to persuasion.

To test this general analysis I propose to consider the case of racial or ethnic prejudice. This has been extensively studied by sociologists and psychologists and some general conclusions are beginning to emerge.

Prejudice, as we have seen, is ultimately to be traced to the influence on our beliefs of impulses or feelings. In the case of inter-group prejudices the central element seems to be the very deeply rooted and probably very ancient fear or dislike of the stranger. This fear normally leads to avoidance tempered by curiosity, but when groups of any size are thrown together the dislike does not disappear but tends to generate beliefs in justification and to be embodied in customs or modes of behaviour keeping the groups at a distance. Comparative study shows that the intensity of intergroup prejudice varies with the strength and persistence of this feeling of strangeness. Hence the importance of 'visible' criteria demarcating the groups and making them readily identifiable. The distinguishing marks may be physical, as in the case of the Negro in American society, or mainly cultural, for example, persistent patterns of behaviour or outward appearance, as in the case of the Jews in eastern Europe. The fundamental problem is to find out under what conditions the feeling of 'strangeness' or 'alienage' persists and under what conditions it yields to the forces making for social assimilation.

Given the element of alienage other sources of rivalry or conflict tend to take a group alignment. Thus, for example, economic rivalry between Jews and non-Jews would cause no more bitterness than normal business competition between individuals, if the Jew were not regarded as a stranger. The study of antisemitism thus centres largely round the problem why the Jew has in the eyes of many remained a stranger even in countries where he has been settled for a thousand years. In the case of the American Negro the question is why it is that despite the adoption of typically American behaviour patterns and the fact that they have been longer resident in America than most white groups the barriers that perpetuate the minority status of Negroes persist. It would seem that the answer to such questions has to be sought in the history of the relations between the groups involved.

Closely associated with economic interests is the sense of social status and prestige. In many cases it becomes difficult to distinguish between race prejudice and class prejudice. The distinction between class and caste is of great importance in this connexion. Where caste-like distinctions prevail improvement in social standing or differentiation based on skill or training does not take an individual out of his group. On the other hand, in class societies vertical mobility is possible and individuals

can rise in the social scale. This distinction has important consequences. In 'caste' societies group consciousness may be normally passive or quiescent, but in certain circumstances it may be intensified as, for example, when improvement in general standing can only be achieved through raising the status of the group as a whole. In class societies, on the other hand, there may be no need for united group action and consequently no intense group consciousness. This may account to some extent for the difference in the intensity of race consciousness as such in the United States of America, where caste distinctions survive, and, for example, Brazil which has a class society. In Brazil class distinctions are closely associated with colour, but do not completely determine them. Wealth and education count. There is a Brazilian proverb, we are told, which says that a rich Negro is a white man and a poor white a Negro. No one would say this in the United States.⁷ The influence of changing class relations on antisemitism has not, as far as I know, been studied adequately. The rise of Jews in the social scale, especially when they move from country to country, tends to disturb class alignments. Hence the frequent charges of vulgarity, social climbing and the like, and the tendency in some countries to exclude Jews from the social amenities of the 'upper middle class', e.g. clubs or residential areas, and to set obstacles to the admission of Jews to occupations in which social status is a dominating factor. That there is a connexion between ethnic prejudice and class prejudice is strongly suggested by various studies of antisemitism in America and elsewhere.⁸

In an earlier discussion of antisemitism⁹ I suggested that it was necessary to distinguish different degrees of intensity in the feeling of antagonism or hostility and that the difference of degree may almost amount to a difference of kind. Studies of other ethnic antagonisms show, I think, that this distinction is of more general applicability. Group prejudices may be relatively mild, not founded in personal experience, but reflecting rather the attitude widely prevalent in a particular circle or group against other groups. The more intense kind of prejudice, on the other hand, depends more on the character structure of the individual. In this connexion psychoanalytic theories have made important contributions to the study of prejudice. They have shown that group prejudice may provide an outlet for inner tensions and anxieties and an object for displaced aggression, and they have accordingly given us various pictures of the types of person likely to be prejudiced. Theories of this sort may help to account for the peculiar intensity of group prejudice in particular individuals, but are of lesser importance in dealing with group prejudice in general or with the various forms in which it occurs among different peoples or at different periods.¹⁰

There can be no doubt that ethnic prejudices differ greatly in range and intensity. The relations between White, Negro and Indian in the United States differ from those prevailing in Brazil. Inside the United

ON PREJUDICE

States students of race relations distinguish various lines of demarcation. There is, first, the caste line proper which relegates all 'coloured' peoples including Negroes, Chinese, Hindus, Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, American Indians, Mexicans and some other Latin Americans to a lower caste. There is, next, what is described as a deep fissure line separating the Jews from the rest of the people. There are, thirdly, minor fissure lines detaching various other foreign born, e.g. Poles, Czechs, Greeks, various Slavs, Italians and some others. In respect of all these there are variations in the intensity of discrimination and presumably in the underlying attitudes for different parts of the country and no doubt for different periods of time. From the sociological point of view the important problem is to disentangle the conditions with which these variations are associated. A number of factors suggest themselves as *prima facie* likely to play a part. There is, firstly, the size of the groups in contact. 'Lest they multiply' is the cry already raised against the Israelites in ancient Egypt.¹¹ Where the dominant group is in a minority, as are now the Whites in South Africa, they are likely to fear submergence. Next, the sex ratio, especially in the early stages of settlement, may seriously affect subsequent attitudes. For example, in Brazil the Portuguese colonists did not at first bring their women with them (unlike the Anglo-Saxon migrants who emigrated with their families), and this favoured miscegenation. Thirdly, differences of attitude are affected by the extent of local concentration. Where migrants are concentrated in particular areas they tend to maintain their traditional patterns of living and thus to keep alive the sense of their difference from others. Where migrants are widely dispersed they are likely to come to terms more easily with the native population. This may act in different ways. When they are a conquering or in other ways a dominant group conscious of their superiority dispersal will incline them to seek for a certain solidarity, even though it may be of the condescending or paternalistic type. On the other hand, if the incoming groups feel weak they will tend, if widely dispersed, to abandon the struggle to survive as a distinct entity and to succumb to the forces of assimilation. Fourthly, occupational differentiation and the skill shown by the incoming groups to adapt themselves to new economic conditions strongly affect the attitude of the population to the minorities in their midst. Group prejudice seems to vary directly with the extent of competition for economic advantage or advance in social status. The operation of all these and other factors depends largely on the initial difference in cultural level, patterns of living and other factors giving rise to a sense of difference or strangeness. Given this strangeness, the forces making for conflict come to be associated with groups as such and to generate group prejudices, needed to rationalize discrimination and perhaps, on the other side, to provide energy in the fight against discrimination.

It remains to be added that the factors making for group prejudice often operate in a circular manner. Thus in the case of the Jews the inner tendency towards isolation encouraged a policy of discrimination and discrimination in turn made for further isolation. Similarly, as has been argued at length by Myrdal in the U.S.A. White prejudice causes discrimination against Negroes and keeps down their standard of living, and the low standards in turn stimulate antipathy and further discrimination.¹² Professor MacIver has described in more detail how the conditions produced by discrimination tend to sustain it. The group with greater power deprives the other group of the opportunities to social and economic advance. The upper group is thus strengthened in the sense of its own superiority. This in turn is reinforced by the factual evidence of inferiority that accompanies the lack of opportunity and the habits of subservience resulting from a policy of discrimination. In this way self-perpetuating complexes of conditions making for prejudice are created and sustained.¹³

Comparative study strongly confirms the view indicated above that although inter-group prejudice is found in one form or another in all societies of any size it is highly changeable in intensity and direction. This has been brought out very clearly by the highly detailed and elaborate studies that American investigators have devoted to the problem of the status of the Negro in American society. The results are strongly confirmed by studies of race consciousness in areas where it is less intense and where the changes which it has undergone have followed a different course, as, for example, in Brazil. Historians have traced in detail the social and economic conditions which shaped Negro-White relations in the South and in the North after the emancipation from slavery. Equally detailed studies have been made of the impact of the two world wars on the status of the Negro. Urbanization and northward migration have produced profound changes in the occupational structure of the Negroes, have brought into being a differentiated Negro middle class and enormously strengthened the power of Negro organizations to exert legal and political pressure against continuing discrimination. The social and economic changes due to the Second World War and perhaps also, the increasing use made in communist propaganda of the theme of racial tensions, have deepened the awareness of Americans of what has been called the American dilemma—the conflict between the persistent attitude to Negroes and the professed democratic ideals of American society. A new climate of opinion is thus being generated, greatly helped by the scientific work of sociologists and psychologists, more favourable to changes in the status of minorities and to a lessening of the intensity of prejudice against them.

There are differences of opinion about the extent and the depth of the changes that are occurring. Writing in 1948 Professor MacIver

ON PREJUDICE

thought it quite possible that discrimination might be decreasing in some directions and growing stronger in others. It is sad to relate that in his opinion what he calls the deep fissure line dividing Jews from others was at that time holding firm, the more so in view of the more encouraging evidence of better relations in other areas.¹⁴ In all cases the problem is to account for the sense of difference, strangeness or distance which is felt in varying degrees towards minorities and which prevents them from participating fully and on equal terms in the life of the communities in which they live.

I have dwelt at some length on the problem of ethnic prejudices because of its great importance at the present time and because it throws some light on the relation between psychological and sociological modes of explanation. Whilst the analysis of its cognitive and emotional structure is essential to an understanding of prejudice, such analysis will not of itself account for the collective aspects of prejudiced behaviour or for the changes which it undergoes under different social and economic conditions. The tendencies towards uncritical generalization and the emotional sources of irrationality are always with us. What has to be explained is the form which they take when embodied in particular beliefs and directed to certain objects and not others. We need to discover the conditions which make for the wide prevalence of certain beliefs and give them a coercive character and which, on the other hand, bring about a general change in the climate of opinion in which even long established prejudices tend to wither away. Problems of this sort cannot be fruitfully explored without considering the demographic, economic and cultural conditions. It is thus clear that both the psychological and sociological modes of approach are legitimate and necessary. From the practical or tactical point of view, however, it may well be that the analysis of social conditions may have prior or stronger claims. It is easier to change conditions than to alter feelings and attitudes, especially if these have deep roots in the unconscious mind. This is not to minimize the importance of psychological inquiry or of education. Obviously everything should be done that can be done to reveal the irrationality of prejudices and to dissipate the myths that justify them. But such efforts are more likely to succeed if accompanied by outward changes in the conditions conducive to prejudice. Thus, for example, in the case of group prejudice, it is better tactics to attack discrimination directly, e.g. by efforts to raise the standard of living and to remove inequalities, than to try to change the feelings or attitudes associated with discrimination. No doubt, however, different types of prejudice have to be attacked in different ways. Dr. Edward Glover in a study of War Sadism and Pacifism gave it as his view that the first effective step towards abolishing war must be a complete investigation of the nature of the sadistic impulses and of the defence mechanisms tending to keep us unaware

of their strength. It seems that the researches required would have to be very prolonged and be planned on 100 to 1,000 years' basis. A psychoanalyst writing in 1100 or 1200 might have been equally pessimistic of the possibility of abolishing private wars and establishing a unified system of public justice in Britain. But arguments of priority in these matters are unreal. Social changes are, as we have seen, frequently circular in their operation. When the circles are vicious it is sensible to try to break them by a simultaneous and concerted attack at different points.

NOTES

¹ The third Jacques Cohen Memorial Lecture, delivered under the auspices of the Central Jewish Lecture Committee (Board of Deputies of British Jews) on June 12, 1958, at Friends' House, London. The Lecture will also be published as a pamphlet by the Committee.

² James Ward, *Psychological Principles*, p. 349.

³ James Ward, *Psychological Principles*, p. 357.

⁴ Carveth Read, *Origin of Superstition*.

⁵ cf. F. R. Tennant, *The Nature of Belief*.

⁶ William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 342.

⁷ cf. 'Race Relations in Brazil', by Roger Bastide, *International Social Science Bulletin*, vol. ix, No. 4, 1957, p. 496.

⁸ cf. R. M. MacIver, *The More Perfect Union*, p. 33.

⁹ *Reason and Unreason in Society*, chap. X.

¹⁰ For a balanced account see Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, chap. 31.

¹¹ *Exodus* i. 10.

¹² G. Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, chap. III.

¹³ cf. *The More Perfect Union*, chap. IV.

¹⁴ cf. *The More Perfect Union*, p. 46.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE JEWS OF FRANCE

H. Tint

(Review Article)

UNTIL THE REVOLUTION of 1789, the fate of the Jews in France was not unlike that of Jews elsewhere in Europe. Tolerated, expelled, readmitted only to be expelled again when it suited their rulers, they made a living as best they could, when they could. After the emancipation law of 1791, two more measures were required to give them full equality. In 1808, after the Great Sanhedrin, Napoleon put the Jewish religion on a level with the Christian religions, and in 1831 the government of Louis Philippe completed the process by making the State responsible for the payment of the Jewish clergy. For the next fifty years the process of Jewish integration into French life continued undisturbed by serious opposition, until it seemed, in the early years of the Third Republic, that the Jews, as a community, were to lose their identity. It was a period of growing prosperity for all, and of economic confidence, which even 1870 failed seriously to shake.

But by 1880 things had changed. There was a slump. There was a gigantic political upheaval. There was imminent defeat for the Catholic Church, for centuries a major political and moral force in the country. There was thus cause for many to be disgruntled. The Left maintained that the Republic was a preserve for the bourgeoisie, aided by Jewish capital; it was therefore as antisemitic as earlier French socialists had been, from Fourier to Guesde, via Proudhon. The Right was antisemitic by vocation, even if not all of its members heard the call until some of the posts they lost in the Republican purges of the administration had been given to Jews. Not least, there were the frustrated young intellectuals and artists, doctors and lawyers, who failed to prosper, partly because of the slump, partly because of sheer lack of ability. But it was the clergy that provided the best breeding ground for antisemitism. According to R. F. Brynes, 'almost a third of all antisemitic books published in France from 1870 through 1894 were written by Catholic priests'.¹ The influx of foreign Jews from Eastern Europe after the pogroms of 1881, and scandals allegedly involving Jewish financiers, fanned the flames of antisemitism, until the conflagration of the Dreyfus Affair gave it national importance. Whatever dreams the Jews of France might have dreamt of total assimilation appeared to many of them now to have been

daydreams. Herzl, Paris correspondent of a Vienna paper, conceived Zionism. Things were never to be quite the same again.

In *Milieux Juifs de la France contemporaine* (Plon, Paris, 1957, pp. 400, Frs. 1,500) Pierre Aubery sets out to discover what it has felt like to be a Jew in France during the last half-century. For his evidence he prefers to go, not to anthropologists or historians, whose writings on the subject he considers vague and often negative (p. 1), but to Jewish writers, and among these mainly to novelists. It is there that he expects to find the epitome of what it entails to be a Jew in France and, indeed, since for him French Jews are the most representative collection of Jews to be found anywhere, what it means to be a Jew as a sort of Platonic form. We shall have to consider later what kind of sociology this line of approach is likely to father.

Aubery deals very summarily indeed with prosperous Jews: 'on pouvait affirmer, avant que les répercussions de l'antisémitisme hitlérien ne se fissent sentir dans notre pays, que dans les classes aisées de la société il n'y avait plus de juifs, mais seulement des israélites' (p. 17). If this distinction amounts to anything it means that these Jews were accepted as Frenchmen of a particular religion, just as if they had been, say, Protestants. The evidence for this conclusion is one quotation from J.-J. Bernard, 'fils de l'excellent humoriste français Tristan Bernard, [qui a] écrit en 1934 et constamment répété depuis, qu'il était l'un de "ces Français qui a eu le bonheur de ne jamais souffrir personnellement de ses origines juives . . ."' (p. 17).

On the other hand, the bourgeois Jew 'se heurtait à l'antisémitisme larvé des gens de même condition' (p. 29). It was not that he made much of a show of being a Jew. On the contrary, his Jewishness was imposed upon him by his Gentile compatriots, through their refusal to consider him as an equal despite his often quixotic efforts at assimilation. During the Dreyfus Affair bourgeois Jews favoured a policy of discretion and, according to Léon Blum, preferred even to believe in his guilt rather than to take the risk of making themselves conspicuous by protesting against the violent anti-semitic campaigns waged at the time. Blum himself, writing in 1899, enjoined French Jews to behave like the English Catholics in the seventeenth century. Aubery justly recalls the parallel of the attitude of German Jews in 1934. In France, these tactics were quite successful: Aubery can find little evidence, in his sources, of concern about anti-semitism from the Affair until the middle thirties. It was then, under the combined impact of German propaganda and the not universally appreciated Popular Front headed by Blum, that many bourgeois Jews were reminded of their origins.

The Vichy laws, the assiduity of the *Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives*, and the zeal of the French police in ferreting out Jews for expulsion and liquidation by the Germans, all these served to make the war years the most anxious period for French Jewry since 1789. Its full horror appears in Joseph Billig, *Le Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives* (1955), which may have come out too late for notice in the work under review. What is perhaps most revealing during this period, is the attitude adopted by French Jews in the face of the discriminatory measures taken against them. In the concentration camp at Drancy, René Blum is said to have repeated: 'Cette ignominie est une œuvre allemande. Jamais les Français ne seraient capables de faire des choses pareilles. Plus ignobles sont les Allemands et plus on est

fier d'être Français' (p. 144). Perhaps he and his friends knew nothing of the dedicated help the Germans obtained from some very patriotic Frenchmen, who deplored that France should be that rare country which possesses no official record of who its Jews are. Others went further, refused to believe that they were arrested and deported *qua* Jews, and considered that they were suffering martyrdom for their country (pp. 143, 152-3). 'Son cousin, Jacques Ancel, faisant un exposé, dans le camp, sur la formation de l'idée nationale, s'entend poser la question de l'existence de la nation juive. Le professeur Ancel, sans hésitation, avec une vivacité coupante et catégorique répond: "Il n'y a pas de nation juive."—La centaine d'hommes qui se pressaient dans la chambrée fut comme galvanisée, électrisée, secouée d'un seul frisson et éclata en tonnerre d'applaudissements. Les étrangers, qui n'étaient qu'une minorité, restèrent silencieux' (p. 302).

Writers like Isou and Rabi have since the war shown themselves profoundly pessimistic about the future of the Jews in France, certainly so far as complete assimilation is concerned. Israel exerts its attraction, particularly for those whose roots are not deep (p. 151). Aubery's conclusion however is not reassuring: 'Pourtant, même s'ils gardent au cœur une indéradicable méfiance envers les "gentils", les juifs que nous avons rencontrés semblent sans haine. Ils demandent simplement qu'on respecte en eux l'homme faible, souffrant, aimant et espérant' (p. 151). It reminds one too much of Spire's remark that 'lorsqu'on les brutalisait, ils avaient perdu l'habitude de riposter mais ils avaient prise celle de tendre leur porte-monnaie' (p. 203).

The Jewish proletariat is largely made up of the immigrants of the 1880's and later years. These alone stress their Jewishness; not so much because they want to, but because they cannot help doing so. Unlike longer established French Jews, they tend to live mainly in the same district in Paris around the rue des Ecouffles and to speak Yiddish, even to read Yiddish newspapers. They did not take easily to French ways and, in fact, felt not only that France offered worse living conditions than the Eastern ghettos they had just left, but also that they had more in common with the Germans whose country they had crossed and whose language they could understand (pp. 58-63). The religious differences between Eastern and Western Jews are not peculiar to France and need not detain us here (p. 73). Nor is it peculiar to France that recent Jewish immigrants should have welcomed the two wars as opportunities for integrating themselves into the society in which they expected to continue to live, by joining the Armed Forces (p. 185).

In politics, according to Aubery, Jews are wedded to the principle of Justice. He quotes Blum in support: 'Si le Christ a prêché la charité, Jéhovah voulait la Justice. La Bible dit: "un Juste" quand l'Évangile dit: "un Saint"' (p. 200). Jews revere 1789, not simply because it marked the turning point in their recent history, but because it embodies the ideals of Justice to which they have always held. This is one reason why Benda was not averse from periodically reminding his audiences of his Jewish descent. Of course, Aubery remembers that a passion for Justice is not uncommon in minorities, especially when they are persecuted. But what particularly characterizes this ideal in the case of the Jews is that they universalize it (pp. 199-204).

Thus, while Jews will be found in all shades of the political spectrum, their most natural colour is a reddish pink; their messianic tradition will encourage them to retain it. There are exceptions: the desire to belong to the Jockey Club, or to be thought supremely French, causes some to exhibit an old world toryism which is almost as pathetic as the flirtations with the fascists of Maurras and Cò. by René Groos and his friends.

In any case, it appears that the majority of French Jews seek their salvation in France, as distinct from Israel, and that the trend is for a drift away from Judaism, towards assimilation: 'le judaïsme . . . perd de plus en plus ses adeptes . . . l'anéantissement des pieuses communautés juives de Pologne par les Allemands a privé le judaïsme mondial de l'interland spirituel qui soutenait sa foi chancelante' (pp. 340-41). And so, despite the pessimism of Rabi and Isou and others who know history, more Birnbaums become Poirier and more Hirschs are gazetted Le Cerf.

M. Aubery has written his book from a very sympathetic point of view. He has read widely in Jewish writers, and has even tried to get the feel of the atmosphere of a Jewish home on feastdays, not an easy task for one apparently a non-Jew. At times one wonders whether he is not too kind, as, for instance, when he puts in a good word for the Jew who, having become successful, does his best to dissociate himself from his original *milieu*: 'Sans doute considère-t-il comme une forme de politesse ou de gratitude d'éviter à son tour tout ce qui pourrait le distinguer, le faire différent, aux yeux de ceux-là qui l'ont si libéralement accueilli' (p. 342).

Less pardonable is the more general impression created by the book that it was written in rather a hurry. It is badly organized and endlessly repetitive. It tends to generalize from very few particulars, as the author admits (p. 354), and it is frequently impossible to be sure which part of the Jewish population he is talking about, even when he goes into some detail concerning certain characteristics. Are all Jews really 'messianic' (p. 340), and indefatigable fighters for Justice (*passim*)? The book even contains a howler (p. 10): it was Charles VI who expelled the Jews in 1394, not Philippe-Auguste, who by then had been dead for over a century and a half.

For a sociologist, M. Aubery has a rather exaggerated predilection for psychological 'explanations'. Who knows, he may be right that Jewish women make bad mistresses (pp. 95-6), but do Jewish men as a rule feel jealous of their uncircumcized Christian brothers (pp. 96, 104-5)? And, as for that vague realm between religion and sex, do the Jews usually produce children as a kind of religious gesture, hoping to give birth to the Messiah, and can it sensibly be said that the Israeli birthrate boost is to any extent attributable to that (pp. 93-9)? Admittedly, M. Aubery is not helped by some of the authors he has consulted. To speak of the Jews as Trotskyites in a Christian world may be an explanation of antisemitism possessed of as much wit as truth, but to call in the Oedipus complex as well is surely going a little too far (p. 103).

All this is of course sociology of a sort. But M. Aubery certainly deceives himself if he considers that the analysis of a number of books by Jewish authors will yield the composite picture of 'la situation des juifs dans la société française contemporaine' (p. 3) that he is seeking. Few, if any, of his sources claim to be factual reports, and many are the products of hyper-

THE JEWS OF FRANCE

sensitive observers with an axe to grind. And even if the author had given himself rather more time to prepare the book, it would be a miracle if the prejudices of his source materials had cancelled themselves out. To adapt Hume, literature is, and ought only to be, the slave of field work. Taken in that light, M. Aubery's work is an interesting account of the way some Jewish writers have viewed their lot in France during the first half of this century.

NOTE

¹ *Antisemitism in Modern France*, Rutgers U.P., 1956, p. 300.

SHORTER NOTICES

JOSEPH S. ROUCEK, ed., *Contemporary Sociology*, 1209 pp., 1958. Philosophical Library, New York, \$12.00.

Contemporary Sociology is yet another of the global surveys of sociology which emerge at the rate of one or two a year from the American presses. It consists of contributions from 56 sociologists and 'every effort has been made to cover the most prominent branches of sociology in America and its developments in Europe, Russia and her satellites, Asia, Africa and South America'. The framework is set in the first paper by Carle C. Zimmerman of Harvard University with an attack on 'neo-positive empiricism', while Pitirim A. Sorokin closes the symposium with another attack, in his usual polemical fashion, on social physics, pseudo-mathematics, cybernetic sociology, testomaniac sociology, operationism, atomistic and small group sociologies, etc.

The American contributions mainly come from young and relatively unknown men teaching in the smaller American departments of Sociology. While varying in quality they include a great deal of good sociological thinking and many are written with verve and attack. American sociology is certainly not monolithic either in theory or in method. Judging from the contributions to this symposium, as good work is being done in the smaller colleges as in some of the larger teaching and research centres.

The twenty-two contributions on 'Trends Abroad' are for the most part accurate and valuable. D. G. MacRae gives a full and fair account of sociology in Great Britain. Other sections which the reviewer found particularly interesting were those on Sociology in France, Germany, China, India, Indonesia and South-East Asia, the Middle East, Israel, Africa, and Canada.

The section on Sociology in Israel was compiled by R. Bar-Yoseph and Dov Weintraub of the Hebrew University and includes descriptions of researches into the integration of immigrant groups, the professions, and social differentiation in collective settlements.

The general feeling with which one closes the book, however, is of qualified pessimism. Interesting and useful empirical work is being done, not least in the 'under-developed' areas. But sociological theory, with the exception of a few minor embellishments, still stands where it was left at the death of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. Theorists like Howard Becker, George Gurvitch, P. A. Sorokin and Florian Znaniecki have little influence on the post-war generation of sociologists. Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton who at one time promised to lead sociology to the longed-for fusion of research and theory have produced little of value in recent years. It is possible that the structure of academic sociological teaching and research makes it impossible for theorists on the grand scale to emerge from within the ranks of professional sociologists. But should such a theory be conceived it will certainly only be done by a man who has made himself fully acquainted with the empirical results of the present-day sociologists.

ASHER TROPP

G. E. SIMPSON and J. M. YINGER, *Racial and Cultural Minorities, An Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination*, revised edition, 893 pp., 1958. Harper and Brothers, New York.

There are very few general books on 'race relations' worth reading. This is one of the few. The first edition, which appeared in 1953, is already well known even outside the United States; the revised version, which brings the argument and the illustrative

material up to date, should also do more than merely help feed the voracious appetite of college undergraduates. The setting of the book is, of course, largely American, but the authors, as their bibliography shows, have read widely. The writing is straightforward and unpretentious.

The Jews appear and reappear in the course of the book, while antisemitism, as a case study in prejudice, is treated in two chapters from the point of view of sociology and social psychology. The non-specialist reader may with confidence place himself in the authors' hands. I should like to congratulate Professors Simpson and Yinger for pointing out, in their chapter on the family patterns of American minorities, that 'Despite the familial emphasis, and the large volume and range of scholarly work produced by Jews, it is interesting to note that there are virtually no inductive studies of Jewish family life.'

MAURICE FREEDMAN

MICHEL BORWICZ, *Écrits des Condamnés à Mort sous l'occupation allemande (1939-1945), Etude sociologique*, 296 pp., 1954. Preface by René Cassin. Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 800 fr.

When on December 8, 1941, the great Jewish historian Simon Dubnow was led by the SS-men to the place of execution in Riga, he is reported to have exclaimed: 'Jews, make this known!' The command of the old historian was heard and obeyed. Almost from the very outset, in concentration camps and in ghettos, in 'death factories' and in their places of hiding, many took up the pen to describe, often in simple, untutored, almost illiterate style, their own sufferings and the martyrdom of others. As usual in times of emotional stress, lyrical poetry was the predominant form of expression but they wrote also novels and dramas, memoirs and even scientific papers, philosophical essays, and historical, economic, and sociological studies. The Ringelblum Archives which were rescued after the war from beneath the ruins of Warsaw contained many hundreds of such documents. Most of them were published by the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and by other special institutes in Israel, Europe, and the United States.

Dr. Michel Borwicz's *Écrits des Condamnés* is an important classification and synthesis of the literary remnants of the holocaust of the Nazi occupation and a unique sociological and historical appreciation of a literature *in extremis*.

The word 'literature' is taken in the widest possible meaning. It includes not only poems, dramas and novels, but also letters written from the cells by those condemned to death, their messages scribbled on prison walls and even their last spoken words.

The study ranges over the multilingual literature of many European countries which found themselves under Nazi occupation: from Holland to Italy, from France to Russia. However, the main emphasis is laid on the writings which appeared in Poland both in Yiddish and in Polish and which are of particular significance to the student of the Nazi extermination policy. Owing to language difficulties and also to their powerful emotionalism, these writings remain almost untranslatable into sober contemporary English and French and, in consequence, little known and appreciated in the West.

Besides its historical and purely literary interest, *Écrits des Condamnés* is a valuable study in the sociology of literature and, to my knowledge, the first such study in which the methodology of Georges Gurwitsch has been applied. This accounts for the excessive classificatory subdivisions, but at the same time gives an exceedingly clear picture of the various forces which shaped the literature written during the years of occupation from the formal, textual, and linguistic points of view.

The book is divided into four parts: the first sets out the social framework and gives a detailed historical background of the period; the second analyses the extant texts; the third provides an explicit commentary on the social forces which influenced the authors, their literary style, and their form; the fourth attempts a general synthesis of the social and historical significance of this literature. 'Dans la parole écrite,' concludes M. Borwicz, 'l'homme, refoulé jusqu'à l'extrémité de sa condition, a retrouvé, une fois de plus, le dernier rempart contre la solitude du dépérissement. Sa parole, recherchée ou maladroite, cadencée ou dégingandée, n'était inspirée que par

BOOKS RECEIVED

la volonté d'exprimer, de communiquer et de transmettre la vérité. Formulée dans les pires conditions, diffusée par les moyens du bord, dangereuse par définition, elle fut opposée au mensonge confectionné et entretenu par de puissantes équipes, dotées d'une technique gigantesque et protégées par une violence qui battait son plein.

Michel Borwicz had exceptional qualifications to write this study. A distinguished Polish poet and writer, he was himself an inmate of one of the most savage death camps in Poland where, paradoxically enough, he managed to continue his literary activity. After his escape, he joined the partisan movement and was responsible for many clandestine publications. In 1945 he became director of the Jewish Historical Commission in Cracow, and deputy director of the Central Historical Commission of Poland. He published twelve volumes in Polish, Yiddish, and French, on the history of Jews under Nazi occupation. *Écrits des Condamnés* was accepted as a *thèse de doctorat* at the Sorbonne. Although published in 1954 and widely acclaimed in France, it remains comparatively unknown in Israel, Britain and in the United States; it should be indispensable reading for anyone interested in the tragic history of the last war.

PAUL GLIKSON

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STATISTICAL PUBLICATIONS
ON THE JEWISH POPULATION OF
GREAT BRITAIN: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

prepared by

S. J. Prais

and other members of the Jewish Statistical Society of Great Britain¹

Note: This bibliography relates only to the period since 1880; it lists only the more important and systematic works. Publications dealing with local conditions, listed in Part III, are included only if they are of wider interest on account of methods used, etc.

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NOTE

¹ This bibliography is part of a general bibliography on Jewish demography and statistics which is being compiled by the Society for the Statistics and Demography of the Jews, Jerusalem.

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CHRONICLE

prepared by

P. Glikson

The Annual Report for 1957 published by the Executive of the Dutch Ashkenazi Community states that there are only 18,185 Jews left in Holland who are members of various congregations of the Sephardi community. In Amsterdam the number of those who have joined Ashkenazi congregations totals 10,500, compared with 100,000 prior to the war. At The Hague there are 2,400 Jews, compared with 16,000 before the war; Rotterdam has 700, compared with nearly 12,000 before the war, and Utrecht 430. Holland's Jewish population now totals in all about 23,000.

*

A survey published by the World Jewish Congress shows that 75 per cent. of the world's Jewish population is located in three countries: the United States (5,200,000); Soviet Russia (2,000,000); and Israel (1,760,000). More than half, 5,987,000, live on the American continent, 3,214,000 in Europe, 1,959,000 in Asia, 603,000 in Africa, and 64,000 in Australasia.

Figures for some of the other major centres are:

Algeria	130,000
Argentina	400,000
Brazil	110,000
Canada	241,000
France	250,000
Great Britain	450,000
Morocco	200,000
Rumania	200,000
Union of S. Africa	110,000.

*

Only 4-5,000 Jews remain in Iraq, out of a community which numbered over 120,000 before the outbreak of Arab-Israeli hostilities. Most of the Iraqi Jews emigrated to Israel between 1950 and 1951. The Jewish community in the Lebanon today numbers 10,000, half of whom are refugees from Syria.

*

The World Congress of Jewish Teachers, sponsored by the Jewish Agency, opened in Jerusalem in July 1958. 3,000 teachers participated, including some 200 from abroad. The Congress decided to establish a World Union of Hebrew Teachers. The low status of Hebrew teachers and the profession's poor attraction for young people had resulted in a serious shortage of Hebrew instructors, stated Dr. Shim Pollack, President of the American Hebrew Teachers' Association.

*

The increasingly sympathetic attitude of Latin-American countries towards Jewish migration is one of the most encouraging developments in the continued search for places of resettlement for Jewish refugees and uprooted persons, stated James P. Rice, Director of the United H.I.A.S., at the Fifth Annual Conference of this organization, held in Paris in October, 1958. It was also stated that Australia is now the leading country for Jewish re-settlement outside Israel. There are at present some 15,000 persons registered with H.I.A.S. The total of new immigrants to Israel for the first six months of 1958 was 8,600. The figures increased towards the end of the year, and

P. GLIKSON

in September alone 3,500 people arrived in Israel. It is expected that 15,000 people will arrive from Eastern Europe as compared with 3,400 who arrived in the first half of the year.

*

The Israel Ministry of the Interior has appointed a special committee to study the reasons motivating Jewish emigration from Israel and to suggest a possible way of removing them. In the past ten years about 63,000 emigrated officially, but it is estimated that several thousand more who left as tourists have not returned to Israel but settled abroad. In view of the fact that almost 1,000,000 immigrants arrived during the same period, this represents about 7-8 per cent. of the immigration, which is much lower than is customary in countries of mass immigration. However, it is felt that in the special circumstances under which the *aliya* is being carried out, this is much too high a percentage.

The Committee will request all applicants for emigration visas to indicate reasons for wanting to leave the country and will undertake to keep the information in the strictest confidence.

*

The pre-war Czech Jewish population was about 360,000. After the war 23,000 of the survivors emigrated to Israel, many thousands to other countries, and about 20,000 remained in Czechoslovakia. 8,000 live in Bohemia, 2,000 in Moravia, and 10,000 in Slovakia. Half of the Jewish population resides in Prague (4,500), Bratislava (3,000), Kosice (1,000), and Brao (700), the remainder being scattered in tiny communities throughout the country. There are two main community organizations, the Prague-centred Community Council of Bohemia and Moravia and the Bratislava-based Organization of the Community Councils of Slovakia. Each small community, however, conducts its own religious and cultural affairs. The overall supervision is carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture. There is a shortage of religious functionaries and very meagre religious education is given.

*

The official Soviet-Rumanian Year Book for 1957 contains data on the Rumanian Jewish population as at February 21, 1956, according to which 144,236 people gave their colloquial tongue as Yiddish.

In fact, reliable estimates give the figure of 240,000 as the Jewish population of Rumania, but since Jews are under no compulsion to declare their religion, many of them, it is believed, prefer to declare themselves to be of Rumanian or Hungarian nationality.

Below are the statistical data of those who declared themselves as Jews and as Yiddish-speaking in the various zones of Rumania, according to the 1956 census:

Place	No. of Jews	Yiddish-speaking
Bucharest (Town)	43,492	4,463
Bucharest (District)	167	16
Bacau	11,892	2,560
Baia Marc	7,469	3,613
Cluj	8,282	2,397
Constanza	978	309
Craiova	565	72
Galatz	7,223	738
Hunedcara	2,223	490
Yassi	16,677	5,624
Oradia	5,144	879
Pitesti	208	43
Ploesti	1,636	195
Brasow (Stalintown)	3,934	624
Suceava	18,658	10,518
Timisoara	12,784	1,204
Hungarian Autonomous Region	2,904	520
Total	144,236	34,265

CHRONICLE

In view of the census that is due to be held in the Soviet Union this year, some figures received of the estimated Jewish population should be of interest. According to these, the numbers of Jews in the various Soviet republics are as follows:

Russia—1,250,000; Ukraine—1,000,000; Byelorussia—150,000; Uzbekistan—100,000; Georgia—100,000; Moldavia—100,000; Azerbaidzhan—80,000; Kazakhstan—80,000; Latvia—50,000; Lithuania—50,000; Kirghizia—15,000; Estonia—10,000; Armenia—5,000; Tadzhikistan—5,000; Turkmenistan—5,000. The total, therefore, is 3,000,000.

Population by cities gives Moscow an estimated half-million Jews; Leningrad, between 200,000 and 250,000; Kiev and Odessa, 180,000 to 200,000 each; Tiflis in the Georgian Republic, 50,000; Kharkov and Tashkent, 70,000 each. Eleven cities have Jewish populations between 30,000 and 50,000; eleven between 15,000 and 30,000; thirteen over 10,000; the rest of the Jewish population being distributed widely in small towns throughout the U.S.S.R.

*

Membership of Jewish communities in Switzerland has increased by fourteen per cent., from 3,534 to 4,029, during the ten years between 1946 and 1956, and numbered 4,130 at the end of 1957. This transpires from a detailed Annual Report of the Union of Jewish Communities in Switzerland. Jewish Communities now exist in 25 localities, as against 13 when the Union was founded in 1904. Leading Jewish communities now are Zürich (1,749 members), Basle (851), and Geneva (357). Five communities have a membership of over 100; the remaining list communal membership of between 3 and 100.

*

According to an inquiry conducted under the direction of S. Zulicki, President of the Union of Jewish Students in Switzerland, 880 among the 16,500 students enrolled in 13 Swiss universities are Jews. The survey sponsored by the Cultural Department of the World Jewish Congress, and based on a sample analysis of questionnaires sent in by nearly 200 of the 880 Jewish students, shows that only 23 per cent. of the Jewish students have their pre-university education in Switzerland. 55 per cent. gave their mother tongue as English, 17 per cent. as German, 14 per cent. as Hebrew, 7 per cent. as French. 18 per cent. of the students are Swiss born; 45 per cent. were born in the U.S. and 5 per cent. in Israel.

*

The Hebrew daily *Davar* has published interesting figures on the use of Hebrew and other languages in Israel. According to these figures, in 1948, when the State of Israel was founded, Hebrew was the spoken language of 75 per cent. of the population. The increase in immigration during the years following the establishment of the State reduced the percentage to about 60. In 1950, when the immigrants were taking root in the country, the percentage rose to about 62, and this upward trend is continuing.

Of the other languages, Arabic rose to second place in 1954, with about 12 per cent., owing to the large number of immigrants from North Africa. Yiddish follows with 10 per cent., Rumanian with 2.8 per cent., German with 2.4 per cent., Ladino with 2.2 per cent., Bulgarian with 1.7 per cent., Persian with 1.5 per cent., Hungarian with 1.2 per cent., and Polish with 1 per cent.

*

A characteristic feature of Jewish education in Great Britain, as in the U.S.A. and other countries, is the increase in the number of Jewish Day Schools, particularly since the end of the Second World War.

Early in 1958 about 4,000 children attended the Day Schools in London, and approximately 2,200 in the provinces. These figures also include the pupils of the kindergartens attached to the Day Schools. Altogether about 12 per cent. of the Jewish children of school age in London attend Jewish Day Schools. The percentage in cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Gateshead is considerably higher. In all the schools the percentage of children of former refugees is particularly high.

P. GLIKSON

Following is a breakdown of the number of Day Schools, pupils, and teachers:

<i>London</i> —Primary Schools	10	Pupils 2,838	Teachers 118 full-time
			30 part-time
Secondary	5	1,052	51 full-time
			27 part-time
<i>Manchester</i> (1 Secondary)	6	1,276	50 full-time
			17 part-time
<i>Liverpool</i> —Primary	2	461	18 full-time
			6 part-time
<i>Leeds</i>	1	85	4 full-time
			3 part-time
<i>Birmingham</i>	1	240	7 full-time
			2 part-time
<i>Gateshead</i>	1	71	2 full-time
			6 part-time

As for Ireland, the figures on the two Day Schools in Dublin have been made public by the Chief Rabbi of Ireland, Dr. Immanuel Jacobovits. These institutions comprise a kindergarten, a primary and a secondary school, with a total enrolment of approximately 230 and a staff of 7 Hebrew teachers. According to Dr. Jacobovits, about 40 per cent. of the Jewish children of school age in Dublin are enrolled in these two Day Schools. The primary school is subsidized by the State, as are the kindergarten and secondary school, though to a lesser extent.

*

3,000 children receive education in Jewish schools in Mexico. Most of the schools are secular and children study Yiddish as well as Hebrew. In Ashkenazi religious and Sephardi schools only Hebrew is taught. Eight per cent. of Jewish students in Mexico learn Hebrew, a percentage which is the highest outside Israel.

FRENCH SUMMARIES

FAMILLE, PARENTÉ ET MARIAGE PARMIL LES JUIFS ACHKÉNAZ DEPUIS LE SEIZIÈME JUSQU'AU DIX-HUITIÈME SIÈCLE

Jacob Katz

Les coutumes familiales achkénaz durant ces trois siècles sont examinées dans le contexte des idées sociales, économiques, religieuses et morales de l'époque.

L'auteur analyse en détail l'institution du mariage, le choix des futurs époux, et la nature des liens matrimoniaux. Il décrit la manière dont la famille évolue et son rôle de base dans une sphère importante de la vie sociale et religieuse. Les membres de chaque famille se sentaient intégrés dans une entité plus grande qui unissait une partie des personnes de leur société liées par le sang ou par alliance.

La famille juive traditionnelle avait une conception fort généreuse des limites de la parenté et des devoirs que chacun avait envers les autres dans leur communauté familiale. Les liens de parenté avaient une grande importance dans la vie des Kehilloth: les factions étaient parfois formées sur une base de parenté quoique les intérêts familiaux ne se soient pas toujours harmonisés avec ceux des institutions communautaires.

Les autorités judiciaires et gouvernementales et l'activité économique étaient établies naturellement en dehors des liens de parenté. Malgré ceci, ni elles ni la Kehilla ne réussirent à aucun moment à abolir le principe de la solidarité familiale. La parenté jouait un rôle prépondérant dans les activités charitables de la communauté. Toutefois, la vraie solidarité économique était limitée aux membres de la famille restreinte vivant sous le même toit, qui ne faisaient appel aux parents plus éloignés qu'en cas de grande nécessité.

LE MOUVEMENT SYNDICAL OUVRIER EN ISRAËL

Ferdynand Zweig

Le mouvement syndical ouvrier juif comporte deux éléments distincts. Le premier a un caractère purement politique, tandis que le second, l'Histadrout (la Fédération Générale du Travail), est le mouvement dominant et le mieux organisé; environ la moitié de la population adulte juive d'Israël et les trois quarts de tous les ouvriers salariés en sont membres. L'Histadrout s'occupe intensivement d'assurances sociales, d'entreprises industrielles, aussi bien que d'activités culturelles.

Les comités d'ouvriers sont le fondement du pouvoir de l'Histadrout dans la vie industrielle.

Il existe des dilemmes fondamentaux dans le sein de l'Histadrout: entre les buts politiques et les intérêts ouvriers, entre la bureaucratie et la démocratie, et surtout le dilemme qui résulte des intérêts multiples de la Fédération.

Toutefois, en dépit de tous ces problèmes, il faut convenir que l'Histadrout s'est avéré un instrument utile, et même indispensable dans l'organisation sociale et économique du jeune état d'Israël. A mesure que l'État parviendra à assumer plus de responsabilités, l'Histadrout devra lui céder quelques unes de ses fonctions.

LES JUIFS EN TANT QUE CASTE HINDOUE

Schifra Strizower

Environ 14,000 Juifs de l'Inde sont dénommés Bene Israël. Leur origine est quelque peu obscure, quoiqu'il existe bien des théories pour l'expliquer. L'auteur base cet article sur des recherches personnelles faites à Bombay. Les Bene Israël se considèrent eux-mêmes et sont considérés par les Hindous parmi lesquels ils vivent comme une caste, et les relations sociales entre ces deux groupes présentent certains aspects d'un vrai système de caste. Comme d'autres castes inférieures, les Bene Israël étaient associés avec une occupation traditionnelle, celle du pressage de l'huile, et les idées de pollution gouvernaient leurs rapports avec d'autres castes hindoues. A leur tour, les Bene Israël adoptèrent les méthodes d'autres castes inférieures pour essayer d'élever leur niveau dans la société du Konkan parmi laquelle ils vivaient.

Quelques traits de caste apparurent même pour différencier les Bene Israël entre eux, entre Gora ou Bene Israël blancs et Kala ou Bene Israël noirs, ces derniers étant les descendants d'unions entre Bene Israël et femmes indigènes.

Quand les Bene Israël vinrent s'installer à Bombay et se trouvèrent face à face avec d'autres Juifs (les 'Baghdadis'), ils s'orientèrent vers le judaïsme plutôt que vers la société hindoue. Brusquement ils se virent dans une position inférieure au sein de la société juive.

Au cours des dernières années toutefois, un changement s'est opéré entre la situation des 'Baghdadis' et celle des Bene Israël.

LE JUDAÏSME NORD-AFRICAIN DE NOS JOURS

André Chouraqui

Les communautés juives d'Afrique du Nord sont d'origine très ancienne, remontant à plus de deux millénaires. Toutefois, celles d'Algérie, du Maroc et de Tunisie diffèrent sensiblement les unes des autres par leurs conditions sociales, politiques et économiques, et le facteur déterminant a été la durée pendant laquelle chaque communauté vécut sous la Souveraineté ou le Protectorat de la France.

En Tunisie et au Maroc les communautés juives ont gardé un caractère social distinct, qui trouvait sa plus claire expression dans l'établissement et le maintien de tribunaux rabbiniques. Mais avec la fin de la domination française et le développement du nationalisme arabe, la situation des Juifs, qui jusque là avaient toujours été les intermédiaires entre les sociétés européennes et musulmanes, connut un sévère déclin. Malgré l'attitude fort bienveillante des nouveaux gouvernements tunisiens et marocains, la vie des Juifs devra nécessairement se transformer de façon radicale, à commencer par le fait crucial de changer leur langue pour passer du français à l'arabe.

Les changements dans les domaines politique, spirituel et économique ont poussé un nombre considérable de juifs nord-africains à quitter leurs foyers pour émigrer en France ou en Israël. La décision d'une très grande partie des intellectuels parmi eux de choisir la France a créé un problème particulièrement délicat et difficile pour les immigrants pauvres qui optèrent pour Israël et a en même temps créé les dilemmes fondamentaux d'émancipation et d'assimilation tellement familiers dans la longue histoire des migrations juives.

QUELQUES OBSERVATIONS SUR LES RELATIONS
ENTRE LES ÉGLISES ET L'ÉTAT AUX ÉTATS-UNIS
ET SUR LES INTÉRÊTS DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ
JUIVE AMÉRICAINE

Shad Polier

La Constitution américaine, quoi qu'elle ne pose pas la laïcité comme un principe, ne permet pas au gouvernement de chaque État ni au gouvernement central de se mêler des affaires religieuses.

Légalement il est interdit de donner des cours d'instruction religieuse dans les écoles publiques. En pratique une certaine atmosphère religieuse est apparente, mais les écoles publiques américaines sont certainement laïques, surtout en comparaison des écoles publiques d'autres pays.

Les fonds publics ne peuvent pas être employés au bénéfice d'institutions religieuses.

Toutefois, cette même Constitution qui empêche l'État d'aider la religion, l'empêche aussi de la contraindre. Les écoles privées religieuses et les écoles combinant enseignement laïc et religieux jouissent d'une pleine liberté. Il faut souligner cependant qu'un minimum d'enseignement laïc est obligatoire pour chaque enfant, et que des fonctionnaires d'état ont le droit d'inspecter les écoles privées.

Les édifices scolaires et religieux doivent être situés selon les plans municipaux, quoique sur ce point la Cour Suprême ne se soit pas prononcée définitivement sur la légalité de ce qu'on appelle « exclusionary zoning ordinances ».

Les Juifs pieux sont parfois gênés par de tels décrets, et surtout par les lois qui en général ne permettent pas l'ouverture de magasins ou bureaux commerciaux le dimanche.

Le Congrès a récemment décrété une nouvelle loi sur les abattoirs qui cependant autorise l'abbatage rituel juif.

Les Juifs ont, en dépit de quelques difficultés, plutôt bénéficié de la séparation de l'Église et de l'État.

L'ORGANISATION DES SYNAGOGUES ANGLAISES

V. D. Lipman

L'histoire de l'organisation des synagogues anglaises révèle deux aspects principaux: une évolution de l'oligarchie vers la démocratie, et un mouvement vers une union des différentes congrégations. Dans ces deux domaines le développement essentiel eut lieu vers la seconde moitié du siècle dernier, entre 1845 et 1890, période durant laquelle la majorité des institutions juives anglaises furent créées et consolidées. Il y a une forte ressemblance entre les formes constitutionnelles des synagogues londoniennes et celles des corporations municipales de l'Angleterre des dix-huitième et dix-neuvième siècles.

La petite congrégation sépharad avait réussi, dès sa première *Askama* qui interdit toutes les autres synagogues de la métropole, à rendre sa congrégation et sa communauté ou *Kahal Kadoch* identiques. Mais la communauté achkénaz qui s'accroissait très rapidement ne put s'en tenir à l'organisation de sa première Grande Synagogue. Dans le courant du dix-huitième et au début du dix-neuvième siècles naquirent plusieurs autres synagogues et congrégations. En 1870, enfin, fut créée la *United Synagogue* grâce à l'influence du Grand Rabbinate, et en raison de la nécessité d'établir des services sociaux communs, et de régler plusieurs problèmes financiers. La *Federation of Synagogues* fut formée en 1887 et diffère de la *United Synagogue*. Les changements qui eurent lieu à partir du milieu du siècle dernier dans l'organisation des institutions juives anglaises étaient presque accomplis quand survint la grande immigration qui devait les éprouver, il y a environ soixante-dix ans.

LA POSITION DES JUIFS DANS LA
SOCIÉTÉ ANGLAISE

Howard Brotz

Les Juifs en Angleterre forment une minorité qui se distingue volontairement du reste de la société. L'antisémitisme n'est pas inconnu, mais il n'est ni poussé ni bien organisé et par conséquent ne représente pas un danger pour cette minorité.

Il existe aussi des distances sociales dues surtout aux préférences personnelles: il y a des Juifs qui ne se sentent jamais à l'aise dans certains milieux non-juifs, et vice versa. En général un *numerus clausus* existe pour les plus hautes fonctions, mais comme ses bornes n'ont pas encore été approchées, il demeure implicite.

Cette situation est due à quatre facteurs: 1) le nombre relativement restreint de la communauté juive; 2) la stabilité de la vie sociale anglaise, surtout dans la haute société, qui fait que l'on y accepte un Juif sans jamais craindre d'être « envahi»; 3) la stratification de la société anglaise et celle de la communauté juive qui s'entre-pénètrent et rendent possible des sentiments de vraie communion entre tous ceux qui ont reçu une éducation de gentleman; et 4) les préférences personnelles des Juifs eux-mêmes qui ne considèrent pas comme une épreuve une vie sociale particulièrement juive.

Les Juifs ont une position assurée dans la société anglaise. Ils ont en général une existence digne, quoique peut-être terne quand on la compare à celle de la communauté juive américaine, qui est plus nombreuse, plus criarde, mais aussi plus intellectuellement active.

SUR LES PHÉNOMÈNES DE PRÉJUGÉ

Morris Ginsberg

Le mot préjugé a acquis un sens péjoratif que sa dérivation latine ne justifie pas. Afin d'étudier les situations qui font naître des préjugés, il est essentiel d'examiner la psychologie de l'état de certitude. Il est deux genres de certitude, implicite et explicite. Un autre concept important est celui de la foi, qui engendre souvent le dogmatisme, et parfois le fanatisme. Le fanatisme peut être défini comme une forme intensifiée de l'état de certitude.

Un préjugé se distingue ou bien par l'influence de jugements préalables appliqués à des cas nouveaux ou bien par l'influence sur la pensée et le jugement de sentiments ou impulsions illogiques. Ces deux genres d'influences sont étroitement liés, car les sentiments peuvent nous pousser à accepter des jugements préalables que de sang-froid nous aurions rejetés, et, d'autre part, des jugements préalables peuvent susciter en nous des sentiments que nous n'aurions pas éprouvés autrement comme, par exemple, quand nous éprouvons du ressentiment contre certains individus que nous ne connaissons pas, simplement parce qu'ils sont nègres, juifs, ou turcs. Les formes rationalisées des préjugés sont la généralisation, la spécification, l'omission et la discrimination.

Diverses études de préjugés raciaux ou ethniques ont révélé que ces préjugés sont basés sur des marques de différenciation physiques ou culturelles. Le groupe considéré comme étranger est blâmé à différents égards comme l'ont démontré plusieurs ouvrages sur les nègres aux États-Unis. Les préjugés souvent se renforcent en cercles vicieux, et la façon la plus raisonnable de les combattre semble donc de briser les cercles simultanément en différents points d'attaque.

LES JUIFS EN FRANCE

H. Tint

M. Tint donne un compte-rendu du livre de Pierre Aubery, *Milieux Juifs de la France Contemporaine*. Les observations d'Aubery sont tirées principalement des œuvres de romanciers juifs de notre siècle, et on se demande si cette méthode est la bonne pour décrire fidèlement la situation des Juifs en France. Il cite peu de faits, et plusieurs de ses théories sont basées sur les observations d'écrivains à parti pris ou de sensibilité malade. Ce livre, de plus, donne l'impression d'avoir été hâtivement composé.

D'autre part, M. Aubery a une prédilection marquée pour les « explications » psychologiques. Les hommes juifs, en général, sont-ils vraiment jaloux de leurs frères chrétiens incirconcis? L'auteur se leurre s'il croit avoir peint un tableau de « la situation des Juifs dans la société française contemporaine »; il a simplement donné un aperçu intéressant des réactions que quelques écrivains juifs de notre siècle ont eu au sujet de leur sort en France.

PUBLICATIONS STATISTIQUES SUR LA
POPULATION JUIVE EN GRANDE BRETAGNE

Bibliographie

Cette liste bibliographique a été préparée par S. J. Prais et d'autres membres de la Jewish Statistical Society of Great Britain. Sont seuls cités les ouvrages les plus importants à partir de 1880. Les ouvrages sur les provinces, dans la troisième partie, sont inclus s'ils présentent un intérêt plus général du point de vue méthode, etc.

שתי דרכי השפעה אלו כרוכות זו בזו. מחד, רגשות ותשוקות עשויים לגרום לקבלת שפוטים מוקדמים אשר בשעת צלילות דעת נהיה מוכנים להטיל ספק בהם או לפחות להסס מלפעול בהסתמך עליהם. מאידך, שפוט מוקדם עלול ליצור רגשות שלא היו מתעוררים בלעדיו, כמו למשל הרגשת טינה כלפי אדם שנוצרת לפני פגשנו אותו רק משום היותו יהודי, או כושי, או תורקי. המבנה התודעתי של דעה קדומה נראה ביותר כאשר היא אתנית או גזעית. ראשית, הכללה בלתי בקרתית. שנית, הטלת דגש יתר על פרט זה או אחר. שלישית, נטייה להתעלם מפרטים אחרים כגון תכונות חיוביות. ורביעית, הפליה, דהיינו נכונות לגנות או לשבח אותה פעולה בהתאם לכך אם היא התבצעה על ידי חברי קבוצה זו או אחרת. גורמים חשובים אחרים הם הסתמכות על שמועה גרידא, סוגסטייה, אונאה עצמית כמורע או שלא כמורע, התחכמות, ומציאת הסבר ראציונלי.

כמה מחקרים של דעה קדומה אתנית או גזעית מראים כי דעות קדומות אלו מבוססות על אבחנות גופניות או תרבותיות. הקבוצה הנחשבת לזרה מאשמת בשל גורמים שונים ולא בגלל גורם אחד בלבד. כפי שמחקרים בארה"ב אודות שנאת הכושים הראו. דעות קדומות מחוקות אחת את השניה במעגל קסמים ועל כן נראה כנכון ביותר לשבור את המעגל בכמה נקודות בבת אחת.

היהודים בצרפת

ה. טינט

מר טינט מבקר את הספר של פייר אוברי הנקרא "היהודים בצרפת בתקופתנו". הערותיו של אוברי מסתמכות בעיקר על כתבים ספרותיים יהודיים וספק אם זו הדרך המתאימה לתאר את חיי היהודים בצרפת באופן כנה. הוא מוסר עובדות מעטות מדי וכמה מהשקפותיו מבוססות על הערות הלקוחות מכתבי סופרים משהודים או רגישים יתר על המדה. יתר על כן, הרושם המתקבל הוא שהספר נכתב כחפזון. למר אוברי יש העדפה נכרת ל"הסברים" פסיכולוגיים. האם היהודים בדרך כלל מקנאים באחיהם הערלים?
המחבר טועה אם הוא סבור כי הוא נתן תיאור מספיק של "מצב היהודים בחברה הצרפתית כיום". אין הוא נותן אלא סקירה של תגובות של כמה סופרים יהודיים בתקופתנו לגורלם בצרפת.

פרסומים סטטיסטיים באשר לאוכלוסיה היהודית באנגליה

ביבליוגרפיה

הסקירה הביבליוגרפית שהוכנה על ידי סי.ז. פרייס וחברים אחרים של החברה הסטטיסטית היהודית בכריפטניה מתייחסת לתקופה המתחילה בשנת 1880. הסקירה מפרטת רק את העבודות החשובות והשיטתיות יותר. פרסומים הדנים בערי השדה, הנכללים בחלק השלישי של הסקירה, הוכנסו רק כאשר יש בהם עניין רב יותר, אם משום שיטות המחקר שהשתמשו בהן ואם מסכות אחרות

ארגון בית הכנסת ביהדות אנגליה

ו. ד. ליפמן

מאמר זה דן בשני אספקטים של ארגון בית הכנסת ביהדות אנגליה בכלל וביהודי לונדון בפרט. ראשית מעבר רשות בית הכנסת מאוליגרכיה לרמוקרטיה ושנית התנועה לאחדות בתי הכנסת. בשני תחומים אלו התפתחות העיקרית חלה במחצית המאה שעברה; בתקופה שבין 1845 ל-1890 נוצרו והתגבשו מרבית המוסדות היהודיים באנגליה. המבנה התחוקתי של בית הכנסת הלונדוני דמה לזה של האגודות העירוניות של אנגליה שבמאה ה'18 ותחלת המאה ה'19. תהליך הדמוקרטיזציה ההדרגתי הקביל להתפתחות מוסדות עירוניים אנגליים. ב-1870 נוסד אהוד בתי הכנסת הנקרא ק"ק כנסת ישראל. שלושה גורמים פעלו בהקמת מוסד זה. ראשית, הקמת מוסד הרבנות הראשית; שנית, הנטיה לאחדות השרותיים. ושלישית, הצורך לברר תביעות רכוש. אחד בתי כנסת שני הנקרא חברת בני ישראל נוסד ב-1887 ונבדל מקודמו משתי בחינות: ראשית, תולדות ואופי הקהלות השייכות אליו שהיו קטנות וצעירות. ושנית, עקרונות ק"ק כנסת ישראל, שהוא שלוב בתי הכנסת וחברות לעזרה הדדית. שני שנויים מרכזיים אלו - דמוקרטיזציה ובסיס תחוקתי, וכמו כן המעבר מהתבודדות להתגבשות - חלו תוך זמן קצר באופן יחסי במחצית המאה שעברה שבה יהדות אנגליה הכינה את מסגרותיה הארגוניות לקליטת הגירה המונית שהחלה ב-1880.

מעמד היהודים בחברה האנגלית

הווארד ברוין

בתור מעוט יהדות אנגליה נהג קבוצה נבדלת בתוך החברה האנגלית מבחינות שונות. אין הפרעה להתבוללות אך נראה כי יהדות אנגליה בוחרת להשאר נבדלת, לא רק בשמירת הדת, אלא גם בקיום חיים חברתיים אוטונומיים במדת מה. אם גם יש סדת אנטישמיות באנגליה, אין היא מספיק חזקה או מאורגנת כדי לחוות סכנה. כמו כן יש מרחק חברתי מסויים שמקורו בהבדלי טעם. ישנם יהודים שלעולם לא ירגישו כמו בבית כהיותם כסביבה בלתי יהודית, ולהיפך. בדרך כלל יש נוסרוס קלאוזום לגבי כמה עמדות ספתח, אך מאחר שברוב המקרים לא הגיעו היהודים למקסימום המותר, לא הגיע הדבר לידי בטוי גלוי. יש ארבע סבות למצב הנוכחי: ראשית, מספרם הקטן יחסי של יהודי אנגליה. שנית, היציבות של מוסדות החברה האנגליים, בעיקר כמעמדות הגבוהים. שלישית, התחלקות החברה האנגלית לשכבות הסקבילה להתחלקות בתוך החברה היהודית. רביעית, הרגליהם וטעמם של היהודים עצמם. מעמד היהודים בחברה האנגלית טובשה. חיינו הגונים אם גם משעממים במדת מה - ביחוד בהשוואה לחיי היהודי האמריקני המרוכז בקהילה גדולה יותר ועשירה יותר הן בחומר והן במעילות רוחנית.

דעות קדומות

מוריס גינסברג

למושג "דעה קדומה" משמעות של זלוול שאין למקור הלטיני שלה. למחקר הגורמים לדעה הקדומה יש צורך לחקור בגורמים הפסיכולוגיים להרגשת ודאות. יש שני מיני ודאות סתום ומפורש. מושג השוכ אחר הנו מושג האמונה שתכופות קשור לדוגמאותיות ואף לפנאטיות. פנאטיות יכולה להיות מוגדרת כהרגשת ודאות מחוזקת. דעה קדומה נהנת להבחנה על ידי אחד מהתנאים הבאים: ראשית, השפעתו של שפוט סוקרס על הלך מחשבה וכוננות להסתמך על שפוט זה בתנאים חדשים ללא בחינה גם כאשר בחינה מתבקשת. שנית, השפעת מניעים שלא סמין העניין, והשפעת רגשות ותמסכיכים, על הלך מחשבה.

HEBREW SUMMARIES

כרוכים כמושגי הטומאה. הם אמצו להם מנהגים וערכים של כתות אחרות. הם מנסים להעלות את מעמדם בקרב שכניהם - בני הקונקאן. כמה הכונות השייכות למערכת הכתות הדרו אף ליחסים שבין בני ישראל לבין עצמם - בין בני גודה, בני ישראל הלבנים, וקלא, בני ישראל השחורים שהנם בני תערובת בין בני ישראל ונשים מקומיות. כאשר עברו בני ישראל לבוסבי הם באו במגע עם יהודים אחרים - "בגדאדים" - וזיקתם ליהדות גברה על זיקתם לחברה היהודית. כתוצאה ממעברם לבוסבי מעמדם בקרב היהודים הינו נחות. המחברת דנה גם כן בשנויים שחלו בזמן האחרון ביחסים שבין בני ישראל והבגדאדים.

יהדות צפון אפריקה כיום

אנדרי שוראקי

הקהלות היהודיות בצפון אפריקה הן עתיקות ותולדותיהן עשירות באותם קומפלקסים המבטיחים המשכיות הן התפתחות האפיינית להיסטוריה היהודית. יהדות צפון אפריקה אינה הטיבה אחידה וקהילות אלג'יר, טוניס ומרוקו שונות זו מזו מבחינה חברתית, כלכלית, ופוליטית. הגורם הקובע היה משך הזמן שבו היו קהילות אלו תחת שלטון או חסות צרפת. בטונים ובמרוקו שמרו הקהלות היהודיות על מעמד חברתי מיוחד הבא לידי ביטוי בקיום בתי דין רבניים. עם תום השלטון הצרפתי ועליה הלאומנות הערבית התערער מעמד היהודים משום שתפקידם היה מתמיד תפקיד מתווך בין החברה האירופית והמוסלמית. טמשלות טוניס ומרוקו סגולות הבנה למצב היהודים. בכל זאת מן ההכרח שתחיים היהודים ישתנו שם באפן רדיקאלי, והשנוי החל במעבר מן השפה הצרפתית לערבית ובשנויים מרחיקי לכת הכרוכים במעבר זה. השנוי במצב הפוליטי, הרוחני, ואף הכלכלי, הביא הרבה יהודים צפון אפריקאיים להגירה, אם לצרפת ואם לישראל. העובדה שרבים מקרב האינטליגנציה של יהדות צפון אפריקה העדיפו להשתקע בצרפת מאשר בישראל החמירה את בעית העולים הצפון אפריקאיים לישראל. באותו זמן העלתה תופעה זו מחדש את בעית היסוד של אמנסיפציה והתכולות - בעיה הידועה כה היטב בתולדותיו הארוכים של העם היהודי.

הערות באשר ליחסי דת ומדינה בארצות

הברית והאינטרס של הקהילה היהודית

שאד פוליייר

החוקה האמריקאית, אם גם אינה מפרשת שארה"ב היא מדינה חילונית, נוטלת מהממשלה המרכזית ומהממשלות המקומיות כל סמכות לדון בעסקי דת. החוק אוסר הנוך דתי בבתי ספר צבוריים. למעשה פעמים שקיימת אוירה דתית, אך אין ספק כי בית הספר הצבורי הינו יותר חילוני בארה"ב מאשר בכל מקום אחר. החוק אוסר גם על שמוש בכספי מסים לפעולות דתיות. החוקה אוסרת על הממשלה הן מלתמוך בדת והן מלהציב לה ממשולים. הקמת בתי ספר דתיים או דתיים למחצה מותרת לחלוטין, אך יש חובה על בתי ספר אלו לספק לתלמידיהם מינימום של הנוך חילוני והממשלה ממנה מפקחים שמתפקדים לשמור על קיום מינימום זה. בניית בתי ספר אלו ובניית בתים אחרים לתשמישי דת תקנות בניה אזוריות עלולות לחול עליהם אם גם בית הדין העליון לא נתן החלטה מפורשת באשר לסמכות הרשויות המקומיות בענין זה. תקנות אזוריות עלולות לפגוע ביהודים דתיים, כמו התקנה האוסרת על פתיחת בתי עסק בימי ראשון בשבוע המקובלת במדה רבה. עסק בימי ראשון לא מכבד חוק קטילת בהמות הכולל היתר שחיטה על פי דיני הכשרות. למרות התקלות והקשיים הפעוטים הכרוכים במצב זה, נראה הנסיון האמריקאי של הפרדה בין דת ומדינה ללא ספק כמועיל ליהדות אמריקה.

HEBREW SUMMARIES

משפחה ונישואים בעדות אשכנז במאות ה-16 ל-18

יעקב כ"ץ

מוסדות המשפחה והנישואים בעדות אשכנז במאות ה-16 ל-18 נבחנו כאן במסגרת הדעות המקובלות בעדות אלו בשאלות הכרה וכלכלה, דת ומוסר. המחבר מתאר בפירוט את מוסד הנישואים האשכנזי, כולל שידוכים ויחסי קשרי נישואים, גידול המשפחה ותפקידה כמסגרת פעילות חברתית. בתור מסגרת לטכסים דתיים היתה המשפחה מכשיר טבעי לתנוך הרור הצעיר. מושג הקרבה המשפחתית היה רחב מאד. בני "המשפחה הקטנה" הרגישו עצמם שייכים לכלל גדול יותר שהקיף קרובי דם ונישואים; כלפי קרובים אלו היתה גם הרגשת קרבה זו וגם רגש חובה לעזרה הדדית. מאחר שקרובים השתייכו הכופות לאותו אנף במהלוקות עדתיות, היתה ליהסי קרבה השיבות בחיי העדה בכלל. מוסדות שפוט ושלטון כמו פעילות כלכלית הושגתו בהכרח על בסיס רחב יותר מאשר יהסי קרבה משפחתית, אולם מוסדות על-משפחתיים אלו לא ההלישו את הרגשת הסולידריות המשפחתית. קרבה משפחתית היתה גורם חשוב במוסדות גמילות חסדים, אם גם האחריות הכלכלית רוכזה בעיקר במשפחה הקטנה, שהיתה עצמאית באופן כלכלי ופנתה לעזרת קרובים רק בשעת הצורך.

תנועת העבודה בישראל

פרדינגר צוויג

מאמר זה מתאר בפירוט את תנועת העבודה בארץ ובעיקר את המנגנון ההסתדרותי העצום. בחוץ לארץ נהוג לראות בהסתדרות אגוד מקצועי, אך זוהי טעות. האגוד המקצועי הינו ענף פחות חשוב של ההסתדרות הפועלת גם בשטחי תנוך ותרבות, בטה רפואי וסוציאלי, והמקיפה מפעלים כלכליים גדולים. המחבר מתאר את מוסדות ההסתדרות החל מכנס ארצי, מועצה כללית, והנהלה, וכלה בוועדי עובדים בתעשייה ובמשרד. בעיות היסוד של ההסתדרות כרוכות, ראשית, כנגוד שבין האינטרס המקצועי הצר לבין זה של ארגון לאומי של העובדים במונח הרחב של המושג; שנית, בין בעיות פוליטיות ומקצועיות, כמו כן בין בידוקרטיה ודמוקרטיה; ושלישית כנגודים שבין האינטרסים המרובים של ההסתדרות. מכל מקום, מסכם המחבר, ההסתדרות הוכיחה את עצמה כמכשיר יעיל בנהול ענינים חברתיים וכלכליים בעלי היקף מסלכתי ובכך הקלה באפן ניכר את נטל המעמסה הרובין על שכם המדינה הצעירה. ההסתדרות שנוסדה לפני קום המדינה משמשת כיום עור כנגדה.

בני ישראל בהודו

שפרה צטריצוור

כארכעה עשר אלף יהודים משתייכים לכת הידועה בשם בני ישראל. מוצאם מעורפל והשערות שונות הובעו באשר למוצאם ובאשר לדרך בה הגיעו להודו. המאמר הנוכחי, המבוסס על מחקר של המחברת בבוסבי בשנת 1956, דן בהסתגלות בני ישראל למסגרת הכתות ההינדואית. מעמדם בחברה ההודית אינו תלוי בתפישה הדתית ההינדואית ובמסערכת המושגים המיסטית שלה שאליו משתייך מושג הכת. בכל זאת רואים בני ישראל את עצמם ככת, וכך הם נראים גם בעיני שכניהם ההודים. כלשאר כתות נמוכות יש להם עסוק מסורתי - דריכת שמן - ויחסיהם לבני שאר הכתות

Articles likely to appear in future issues:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Cultural and Economic Problems of Jewish Migration
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| Trends in Occupational Structure and Distribution of
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| The Resurgence of Hebrew | <i>Leon Roth</i> |
| The Blood Groups of the Jews | <i>A. E. Mourant</i> |
| The Jewish Population of Mexico | <i>J. Meisel</i> |
| National Aspects of Diaspora Jewry | <i>Jacob Lestschinsky</i> |
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