THE JEWISH JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY

Published by Maurice Freedman Research Trust Ltd

VOLUME XXIX : NUMBER 1 : JUNE 1987

CONTENTS

Editor: Judith Freedman

ISSN 0021-6534

OBJECTS AND SPONSORSHIP OF THE JEWISH JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY

The Jewish Journal of Sociology was sponsored by the Cultural Department of the World Jewish Congress from its inception in 1959 until the end of 1980. Thereafter, from the first issue of 1981 (volume 23, no. 1), the Journal has been sponsored by Maurice Freedman Research Trust Limited, which is registered as an educational charity and has as its main purposes the encouragement of research in the sociology of the Jews and the publication of The Jewish Journal of Sociology. The objects of the Journal remain as stated in the Editorial of the first issue in 1959:

> 'This Journal has been brought into being in order to provide an international vehicle for serious writing on Jewish social affairs . . . Academically we address ourselves not only to sociologists, but to social scientists in general, to historians, to philosophers, and to students of comparative religion. . . . We should like to stress both that the Journal is editorially independent and that the opinions expressed by authors are their own responsibility.'

The founding Editor of the *JJS* was Morris Ginsberg, and the founding Managing Editor was Maurice Freedman. Morris Ginsberg, who had been Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics, died in 1970. Maurice Freedman, who had been Professor of Social Anthropology at the London School of Economics and later at the University of Oxford, succeeded to the title of Editor in 1971, when Dr Judith Freedman (who had been Assistant Editor since 1963) became Managing Editor. Maurice Freedman died in 1975; since then the Journal has been edited by Dr Judith Freedman.

Applications for subscriptions and enquiries regarding back numbers should be addressed to:

THE JEWISH JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY
187 GLOUCESTER PLACE
LONDON NW1 6BU
ENGLAND

TELEPHONE: 01 262 8939

THE JEWISH JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY

Volume XXIX : Number 1 : June 1987

CONTENTS

PUBLISHED TWICE YEARLY, IN JUNE AND DECEMBER
by Maurice Freedman Research Trust Ltd
(Published by the World Jewish Congress 1959–80)

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION
INSTITUTIONS: £12.00 (U.S. $24.00)
INDIVIDUALS: £10.00 (U.S. $20.00)
SINGLE COPIES: £6.00 (U.S. $12.00)

Applications for subscriptions should be sent to The Jewish Journal of Sociology, 187 Gloucester Place, London NW1 6BU, England. Telephone: 01 262 8939

EDITOR Judith Freedman

ADVISORY BOARD

R. Bachi (*Israel*)
Howard Brotz (*Canada*)
Percy S. Cohen (*Britain*)
Moshe Davis (*Israel*)
S. N. Eisenstadt (*Israel*)
Lloyd P. Gartner (*Israel*)
Nathan Glazer (*U.S.A.*)
Jacques Gutwirth (*France*)
Elie Kedourie (*Britain*)
S. J. Prais (*Britain*)

© MAURICE FREEDMAN RESEARCH TRUST LTD 1987

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY W. S. MANEY & SON LTD, LEEDS

BOOKS REVIEWED

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Papers submitted to *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* should be addressed to the Editor at *187 Gloucester Place, London NW1 6BU, England.* The papers must be original. They should not have been published previously, or be committed to publication elsewhere, in any language. When a paper has been accepted for publication, the author may not publish it elsewhere in any language, without the written consent of the Editor of the *J.S.S.*

MSS (please send at least two copies) should be typewritten on one side only and double-spaced with ample margins. Pages (including those containing illustrations, diagrams, or tables) should be numbered consecutively. All quotations should be within single inverted commas; quotation marks within quotations should be double inverted commas.

Notes should follow the style of this *Journal* and should be given at the end of the article in numerical sequence according to the order of their citation in the text.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

A. *Books*
Give author, title, place of publication, year, and page reference. Underline all titles of books.

B. *Articles*
Place titles of articles within single inverted commas. Underline the title of the book or journal in which the article appears.
In the case of a journal, cite numbers of volume and part, and year of publication.

PROOFS. Authors making major revisions in proof will be required to bear the cost. Unless proofs are returned to the Managing Editor promptly, authors' corrections cannot be incorporated.

OFFPRINTS. Each contributor receives thirty free offprints of his article. If there are two or more authors, the thirty offprints are shared between them.

ATTITUDES AND TENDENCIES TOWARD RETURN TO JUDAISM AMONG ISRAELI ADOLESCENTS: SEEKERS OR DRIFTERS?

Abraham Yogev and Judith El-Dor

INTRODUCTION

THE phenomenon of *tshuvah*, or the return of secular Jews to Orthodox Judaism, has become widespread in Israel. It has been recently estimated that there were about 11,000 returnees to Judaism (*baalei tshuvah*) between the 1967 Six-Day War and 1983, 8,200 of whom lived in Israel.[1] Many are young people between the ages of 18 and 25 and some are even adolescents.[2] Parents of returnees who oppose the drastic change in their children's life-style and beliefs have organized themselves to protest against what they call the lure of *tshuvah*.[3] On the other hand, Orthodox Jews claim that the current wave of returnees is just a further manifestation of a trend known in Judaism for generations: a deep personal conviction about the values of the *Torah* and of the religious way of life.[4] But these parents counter-claim that the recruitment of young returnees resembles the conversion processes of many cults and new religions. With the support of several psychologists, they argue that Orthodox recruiters take advantage of the youngsters' social alienation and self-doubts, and entice them to join the yeshivot and other religious institutions for *baalei tshuvah*.

The claims of both sides seem to represent two theoretical explanations of return to Judaism, based on 'passivist' versus 'activist' conversion models. These two models also represent two conflicting paradigms of the research on recruitment to new and para-religious movements.[5] In the passive conversion model, the converts are social drifters brainwashed by the recruiters, since the latter are capable of influencing distraught people undergoing severe personal and social stress. In contrast, the active model claims that the responsibility for conversion lies with the individuals committing themselves to new religious faiths: they are regarded as active, meaning-seeking persons who decide to convert to a new faith because of basic changes in their belief system.

The conflicting views of the two models are far from being resolved, in part because of the methodological difficulties faced by empirical studies of conversion. Since it is difficult to administer questionnaires and psychological tests to groups of converts, most of the studies in the area have heavily relied on unstructured interviews. This has also been the case with empirical research on return to Judaism, which is mainly based on ethnographic case studies of returnees in specific institutions.[6] A second methodological difficulty arises from the focus of conversion studies on the personal life histories of converts. Attempts to assess the determinants of conversion on the basis of these data may be biased by possible rationalization processes of the converts after they have committed themselves to a new faith.

The present study attempts to assess, in the light of the active versus the passive paradigms, the determinants of attitudes and tendencies toward return to Judaism among a purposive sample of Israeli secular high school seniors (17 to 18 years old). This sample is purposive since it was selected intentionally rather than randomly. The students were chosen because their social background resembles that which is predominant among young returnees to Judaism. The study compares the effects of religious beliefs and behaviours with the effects of social alienation and the belief in external control (that is, the belief that life is controlled by powers external to the individual) on the adolescents' attitudes and inclinations towards *tshuvah*. It thus enables us to contrast the active model with the social drifting paradigm. While the focus of this study precludes any conclusive generalizations regarding actual returnees to Judaism, it might point at the determinant of such conversion among potential returnees by suggesting a potential direction of inquiry about the question of active versus passive conversion to Orthodox Judaism.

The passive and the active models of return to Judaism

Both the passive and the active models of return to Judaism are advanced by the specific literature on *baalei tshuvah*; and they are backed by the more general research on conversion to new religious and para-religious movements. There is a structural resemblance between the indoctrination in yeshivot for *baalei tshuvah* and the methods of para-religious cults. According to Stoner and Park and to Pavlos,[7] the main structural features of those cults are: (a) charismatic leadership based on a religious doctrine, which enables the leader to exert absolute authority over the members; (b) the isolation of converts from the wider society, demanding their full-time devotion and loyalty to the group or sect; and (c) the creation of social and psychological dependency of members through elaborate techniques of personality change, the

discouragement of critical thinking, and the requirement of absolute obedience to group norms.

Yeshivot for *baalei tshuvah*, the institutions in which returnees to Judaism are instructed and led by Orthodox rabbis, tend to follow closely the above patterns. Though some of the returnees maintain contact with their families of origin, virtually all of them leave their former jobs and break their former social ties. Their time-consuming and elaborate religious studies and their strict adherence to Orthodox observances occupy most of their hours. They become dependent on the yeshiva both spiritually and materially. However, while the Rabbi is the absolute leader of the yeshiva, his authority derives mainly from his religious scholarship rather than directly from his charisma.

The social characteristics of the young born-again Jews also resemble those of converts to new religious and para-religious organizations: in both cases, they tend to belong to middle-class families,[8] while the middle-aged *baalei tshuvah* are frequently in white-collar occupations.[9] Some of the returnees, especially young American immigrants, have had some cult experience before joining the yeshiva.[10]

These similarities in organizational and membership patterns have led several researchers to adopt the passive recruitment model in their studies of the phenomenon in Israel. That model has dominated the religious conversion research for almost two decades. It stems, in part, from Lofland and Stark's[11] depiction of converts as individuals drifting toward a new religious faith after suffering severe personal stress, which was caused by a sense of deprivation or by frustrated ambitions. More specifically, converts to various para-religious movements were depicted as lacking efficacy and believing in an external control of their life course,[12] and as generally weak and alienated individuals.[13] As Long and Hadden have noted,[14] such depictions led to two versions of the passive conversion model: the social drifting version, emphasizing the tendency of converts to rely on the social bonds offered by the religious organization during times of personal strain; and the brainwashing version, focusing on the ability of recruiters to influence distressed individuals.

Similarly, studies of return to Judaism in Israel have claimed that the returnees are inefficacious individuals who drifted toward Orthodox Judaism especially because of their alienation from society and their sense of powerlessness.[15] The young born-again Jews are claimed to be attracted by the sense of community which prevails in the yeshiva.[16] Glanz and Harrison[17] have associated the returnees' alienation with their type of conversion, claiming that a radical conversion indicates a higher degree of alienation from the original social milieu of the returnee.

In contrast to these claims, a new active model of religious conversion has recently emerged. The argument that converts are meaning-seeking individuals who undergo a basic shift in their belief system was

put forward by Catton in 1961,[18] when he made a distinction between 'seekers' and 'observers'. The quest for an active paradigm had started in 1976 with criticisms of the traditional passivist recruitment model;[19] and Nelson claimed in 1984 that religious conversion can be understood only if defined as a product of attempts to satisfy spiritual needs.[20] New and para-religious organizations are therefore creative efforts to satisfy such needs, which exist sui generis and are not simply the product of social factors. Richardson clearly defined the active and passive models as two conflicting paradigms in conversion research; and then supported the active model, emphasizing the decision-making process involved in the conversion to new religions on the basis of meaning-seeking.[21]

The active model has not yet fully attracted the attention of students of return to Judaism. However, Janet Aviad, while emphasizing the alienation of returnees, claimed in 1983 that they differ from other discontented youth by their specific search for meaning: 'Across ethnic and sexual lines, baalei teshuvah attested to the desire to know and understand "the truth", which would give them a handle on the world. . . . The search is for a truth that will release them from ignorance regarding the fundamental questions of existence'.[22]

It therefore becomes crucial to examine the question of whether returnees to Judaism are active meaning-seekers or rather alienated and passive social drifters, incapable of determining by themselves their own life course. Although the present study of the attitudes and tendencies of secular adolescents toward return to Judaism cannot be claimed to replace the need for such studies among actual returnees, we hope that it may point potential directions of future studies regarding the two recruitment models.

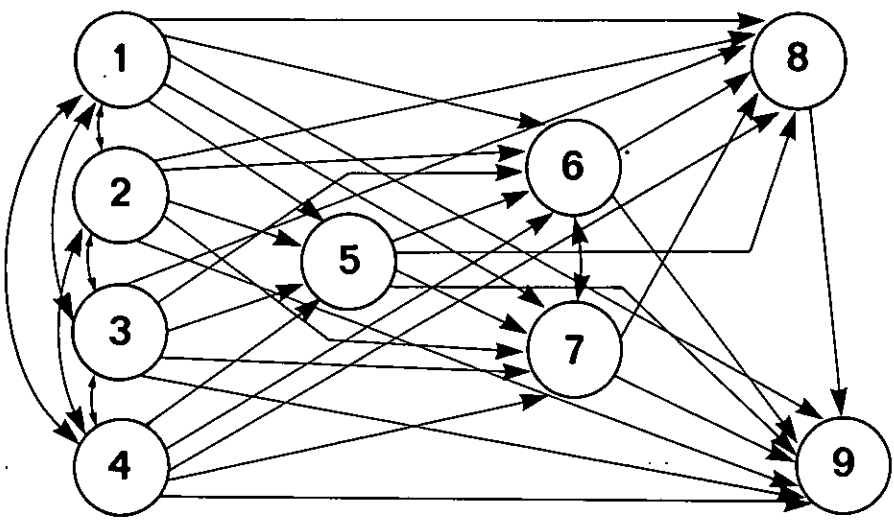
Research methods

Sample and Data. Our sample consisted of all 228 seniors (17.5 years old on the average) of a large academic high school in a town north of Tel Aviv. The school belongs to the secular (in contrast to the religious) educational system; and it was chosen in accordance with the profile of returnees to Judaism, depicted by earlier studies[23] as secular youngsters with high school education, and children of Ashkenazi parents (of European-American ancestry) of the upper-middle social stratum. The students in the sample were primarily Ashkenazim of the upper-middle social class and tended to come from secular families. There were 85 boys and 143 girls, a sex distribution pattern prevalent in secular academic high schools in Israel, owing to the tendency for boys to attend vocational high schools, which emphasize technological and agricultural training.

Data were collected in 1985 by anonymous self-administered questionnaires, filled in by the students in their classrooms. The questions consisted mainly of closed items pertaining to the examined variables.

The path model. In order to examine the effects of religiosity versus alienation and the belief in external life control on the respondents' attitudes and tendencies toward return to Judaism, we constructed a path model. The model, presented in Figure 1, starts with the effects of four interrelated exogenous variables — the respondent's socio-economic status (SES), ethnicity, sex, and parent's religiosity — on the respondent's religiosity. All these variables are depicted as determinants of the respondent's alienation and locus of control (external versus internal) which, as earlier research suggests, are interrelated.[24] Attitudes toward return to Judaism are then influenced by all the preceding variables. The final stage of the model suggests that the tendencies toward return to Judaism are determined by the attitudes and by the former variables.

FIGURE 1. *Path model depicting the determinants of attitudes and tendencies toward return to Judaism*



1. Socio-economic Status
2. Ethnicity
3. Sex
4. Parents' Religiosity
5. Respondent's Religiosity
6. Alienation
7. External Control
8. Attitudes Toward Return to Judaism
9. Tendencies Toward Return to Judaism

TABLE 1. *Intercorrelations and distribution of variables*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Socio-economic status	—	.457*	.008	−.350*	−.345**	−.135*	−.073	−.209*	.105
2. Ethnicity		—	.066	−.438*	−.266*	−.010	−.056	−.163*	.079
3. Sex			—	−.031	−.142*	−.111*	−.071	−.017	−.069
4. Parents' Religiosity				—	.629*	.073	.091	.294*	.115*
5. Respondent's religiosity					—	.147*	.192*	.482*	.103
6. Alienation						—	.435*	.051	−.084
7. External control							—	.041	.050
8. Attitudes toward return to Judaism								—	.222*
9. Tendencies toward Return to Judaism									—
Mean	0.03	0.64	0.37	−0.01	0.08	0.07	30.1	−0.05	0.01
SD	2.27	0.47	0.48	3.38	3.79	2.79	3.27	4.76	2.17

* $p<.05$

Variables and measurement. The distribution of the nine model variables and their intercorrelations are presented in Table 1. The variables were measured as follows. SES, the first of the four exogenous variables, is a factor-weighted index, composed of the weighted sum of four standardized items: father's and mother's years of schooling, father's occupational prestige as measured by Hartman's scale of occupational prestige in Israel,[25] and housing density at the respondent's home (the weights used were .794, .678, .781, and −.599, respectively). Ethnicity is a dummy variable, coded 1 for respondents of Ashkenazi ancestry (both parents of European-American origin), and 0 for all other respondents (of Asian-African or of mixed ancestry). Sex is also a dummy, coded 1 for males and 0 for females.

The religiosity of both the parents and the respondents was measured by items from Ben-Meir and Kedem's scale of religious behaviours and beliefs of Israeli Jews.[26] We selected items appropriate for our generally non-religious sample, and added to each measure an item pertaining to subjective religious identity. (The respondents were asked: 'Are you/your parents: religious, traditionalist, religiously liberal, secular, or anti-religious?') Parents' religiosity is measured by a factor-weighted index which was tested for reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = .85, which indicates a high inter-item reliability). The index is composed of the sum of seven standardized items: subjective religious identity as indicated by the respondent (weighted by .819); blessing over Sabbath candles (.710); mother's and father's fasting on Yom Kippur (.673 and .656, respectively); Kiddush on Friday evenings (.644); father's attendance at synagogue on the Sabbath (.593); and the

separation of milk and meat utensils in the respondent's home (.551). The respondent's religiosity scale consists of 10 standardized items (Cronbach's Alpha = .83), pertaining to religious beliefs as well as behaviours: belief in God (.709); subjective religious identity (.699); belief that the Torah was given on Mount Sinai (.677); belief in supernatural determinism of Jewish history (.641); fasting on Yom Kippur (.588); belief in the Messiah (.573); abstaining from bread on Passover (.563); belief that Jews are the chosen people (.550); attendance at synagogue on the Sabbath (.489); and belief in the survival of the soul after death (.311). It should be noted that despite the highly reliable measures, the majority of the respondents and of their parents are non-religious according to the respondents' subjective identification. Only 10.1 per cent have identified themselves as religious or traditionalists, and only 13.2 per cent have identified their parents as such. The most frequent identification (46 per cent of the respondents and 50.8 per cent of the parents) was with the category of religiously liberal (those observing only a few religious precepts).

Alienation and the belief in external control were measured by established scales. Dean's alienation scale,[27] pertaining to the dimensions of powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation, served our alienation measure. Six of its 24 attitudinal items were omitted because of inappropriateness for the present example. The 18 remaining items formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's Alpha = .70), which was constructed of the factor-weighted sum of the standardized items. The 23-item Rotter's scale of external versus internal control[28] was employed, after assessing its sufficient reliability for the present sample (Cronbach's Alpha = .60). Each of the items presents the alternative of belief in external control powers versus one's internal determination regarding specific life experiences and situations, and is coded 2 or 1, respectively. The summation of scores provided the final scale scores, according to the scoring procedure of the original scale.

For measuring attitudes toward return to Judaism, we constructed 16 negative and positive 5-point attitudinal items, pertaining to personal aspects of the phenomenon (that is, judgement of the characteristics of returnees) and to its social aspects (that is, return to Judaism with respect to interpersonal and family ties, and the significance of the phenomenon in Israeli society). A principal factor analysis of the items resulted in one major factor, explaining 27.6 per cent of the total item variance. The items, and their loadings on the principal factor, are presented in Table 2. Since inter-item reliability was high (Cronbach's Alpha = .86), we summed up the weighted standardized scores on all items, thus obtaining an attitudinal scale ranging from negative to positive approach toward return to Judaism.

TABLE 2. *Item loadings on principal factor of attitudes toward return to Judaism*

Items	Loadings
PERSONAL ASPECTS	
1. Returnees to Judaism could have joined other cults as well (DA)*	.643
2. Returnees to Judaism have a weak character (DA)	.637
3. Return to Judaism enables escapism (DA)	.567
4. Returnees to Judaism resemble drug users (DA)	.554
5. Return to Judaism adds content to one's life	.505
6. Returnees to Judaism cannot change society and therefore change themselves (DA)	.492
7. Return to Judaism develops one's thinking	.492
8. Return to Judaism means giving up life pleasures (DA)	.469
9. Return to Judaism helps the young seekers find their way	.277
SOCIAL ASPECTS	
10. Return to Judaism is a danger for the State of Israel (DA)	.673
11. Return to Judaism destroys parents–children relations (DA)	.643
12. Return to Judaism is a positive phenomenon in Israeli society	.637
13. Return to Judaism cuts off people from friends and family (DA)	.582
14. Return to Judaism improves relations among people	.523
15. Return to Judaism deepens the separation between religious and secular Jews in Israel (DA)	.448
16. Returnees to Judaism escape their military duties (DA)	.408
Percentage of Explained Variance	27.6
Cronbach's Alpha	.856

* DA denotes disagreement

As Table 1 shows, the variance among the respondents in this regard is high.

Finally, the respondent's tendency toward return to Judaism was measured by six items reflecting interest, acquaintance with returnees and participation in their meetings, and willingness to return to Judaism. As shown in Table 3, a principal factor analysis of the items revealed one major factor; and the inter-item reliability, though lowered by items reflecting actual chances of participation and acquaintance with returnees, was sufficient to warrant an overall tendencies scale. This was composed of the factor-weighted sum of the standardized scores on all items. As the separate items in Table 3 indicate, the tendency of the respondents to return to Judaism is weak on the average, but the variance among them (see Table 1) is quite high.

TABLE 3. *Tendencies toward return to Judaism: distribution of items and their principal factor loadings*

Items	Mean	SD	Loading
1. Discussion with friends about Return to Judaism (1 = Never, 4 = Many)	2.64	0.93	.764
2. Discussions with parents about Return to Judaism (1 = Never, 4 = Many)	2.20	0.95	.690
3. Interest in Return to Judaism (1 = None, 4 = Very Much)	1.89	0.86	.647
4. Readiness to experience Return to Judaism (1 = Certainly not, 4 = Certainly yes)	1.47	0.70	.426
5. Participation in meetings about Return to Judaism (1 = Never, 2 = One or two meetings, 3 = Several)	1.34	0.60	.339
6. Acquaintance with returnees to Judaism (1 = None, 4 = Knows four or more returnees)	2.30	0.90	.284
Percentage of Explained Variance			31.0
Cronbach's Alpha			.675

Analysis and results

The standardized regression coefficients for the path model are presented in Table 4. The first three stages of the model depict the determinants of the intervening variables: the respondent's religiosity, alienation, and locus of control.

The respondent's religiosity is explained quite well by the antecedent variables. Over 43 per cent of its variance is explained mainly by parents' religiosity and by the respondent's SES and sex. While a religious family background is by far the most important determinant of the respondent's religiosity, students of low SES of origin and females also tend to be more religious.

In contrast, our model contains variables which do not contribute much to the explanation of either alienation or locus of control. The equation for alienation shows the statistically insignificant tendency of lower-status and religious students toward higher alienation. Religiosity is also the only significant determinant of locus of control, supporting earlier indications of the relation between external control and religiosity.[29] The fact that religiosity influences alienation and external control in the same direction is due, in part, to the interrelation of these two social-psychological dimensions (as Table 1 shows, the correlation between alienation and external control is .435).

The most important stages of the model are the two final ones, depicting the determinants of attitudes and tendencies toward return to Judaism. It is evident from Table 4 that the respondent's religiosity is the major determinant of a positive attitude toward return to Judaism. This is due to the direct influence of religiosity on the attitudes, rather

TABLE 4. *Standardized regression coefficients for the path model*

Independent variables	Dependent Variables				
	5	6	7	8	9
1. Socio-economic status	−.172*	−.137	−.011	−.037	.127
2. Ethnicity	.084	.083	−.015	−.039	.135
3. Sex	−.128*	−.098	−.040	.053	−.086
4. Parents' religiosity	.602*	−.015	−.054	−.049	.185*
5. Respondent's religiosity		.118	.212*	.507*	−.066
6. Alienation				.004	−.138
7. External control				.005	.107
8. Attitudes toward Return to Judaism					.250*
R^2	.434	.045	.040	.241	.117

* Coefficient is at least twice its standard error ($p<.05$)

than to colinearities of religiosity with the other independent variables. This point has been tested by comparing the regression model for the attitudes presented in Table 4 with a reduced regression model, from which religiosity was deleted as an independent variable. The results show that the religiosity of the respondents independently contributes 14 of the 24 per cent of explained variance in their attitudes ($R^2 8.11234567 - R^2 8.123467 = .142$). The ineffectiveness of the four exogenous variables is due to their colinearity with religiosity (as Table 1 shows, low SES, Oriental ancestry, and parents' religiosity are significantly related to positive attitudes toward return to Judaism but they are also related to the respondent's religiosity). However, the fact that alienation and external locus of control do not affect their attitudes is due to their very low zero-order correlations with these attitudes (see Table 1), rather than to colinearity with the respondent's religiosity.

The final stage of the analysis reveals that positive attitudes toward return to Judaism could predispose the students to become *baalei tshuvah* and that the religious background of the respondents would have a significant effect on making that decision. Further, as Table 1 shows, the relation of parents' religiosity to the respondent's tendencies is somewhat stronger than that between the latter and the respondent's own religiosity. This probably indicates the greater likelihood that students of a more religious background (even among our rather secular respondents) may meet *baalei tshuvah* and discuss the phenomenon with their families and friends. Apart from the positive attitudes and the religious background, none of the other antecedent variables has a significant impact on the tendencies toward return to Judaism. Indeed, Table 1 shows no additional significant zero-order

correlations. However, we should note the non-significant tendency of higher status and Ashkenazi students toward return to Judiasm, which corresponds to the profile of returnees indicated by earlier studies.

Conclusion: toward an active interpretation of recruitment

Our findings clearly indicate that alienation and the belief in external control are totally unrelated to either the attitudes or the tendencies toward return to Judaism among our sample of secular adolescents. Their attitudes toward the phenomenon are mainly determined by their religious beliefs; and their personal tendency toward return to Judaism is determined, in addition, by the extent of their parents' religiosity — that is, the more observant their parents are, the greater likelihood there is that the adolescents may become *baalei tshuvah*. This is so in spite of the fact that these students attend a secular high school, affiliated with the state-secular rather than the state-religious educational system.

These apparently surprising findings in fact correspond to the findings of Janet Aviad in her study of yeshivot for *baalei tshuvah*. Although all the returnees she interviewed declared that they were 'secular Jews' before their conversion to Orthodox Judaism, their reports on their parents indicated that they came from families which observed at least some religious laws and customs.[30] Her findings in turn seem to confirm the validity of our study, in spite of the fact that our respondents were ordinary secular students (some of whom may be potential returnees) rather than actual *baalei tshuvah*.

This methodological constraint notwithstanding, our study seems to support the active model of recruitment or conversion. Positive attitudes toward return to Judaism, and the tendency to join the ranks of *baalei tshuvah*, were found not among the social drifters, the alienated and inefficacious adolescents, but among those who either have a religious faith or come from observant families. This indicates that the return to Judaism may well be a considered decision by meaning-seeking young persons who find that Orthodox Judaism answers their need for a sense of personal fulfilment.

If one chooses this active interpretation of return to Judaism, then our study may lead to several lines of research regarding the recruitment/conversion pattern. In particular, it seems worthwhile to concentrate on the specific socialization processes of adolescents who are brought up in families which consider themselves 'secular', and yet maintain some religious observances. Return to Judaism may be one type of rejection of such double standards. The disillusion of adolescents may also result in conflicts with parents on this issue.

In spite of the fact that there are unique features in the phenomenon of *tshuvah*, our findings may indicate some potential lines of future research also on conversion to new religions in general. A thorough study of the early religious upbringing of converts may be fruitful for the development of the active model.

NOTES

[1] Shaul Meizlish, *Return to Judaism: Phenomenon and People* (Hebrew), Tel Aviv, 1984, p. 14. Students in yeshivot for *baalei tshuvah* constitute more than four per cent of the total members of yeshivot: see Morechai Bar-Lev, 'Modern and Traditional Tones in Israeli Yeshivot', in Walter Ackerman *et al.*, eds, *Education in an Evolving Society* (Hebrew), Tel Aviv, 1985, p. 408.

[2] Of the sample of returnees in the yeshivot for *baalei tshuvah* interviewed by Aviad, 71 per cent were between the ages of 18 and 25, and six per cent under 18. See Janet Aviad, *Return to Judaism: Religious Renewal in Israel*, Chicago, 1983, p. 163. For the phenomenon of adolescent returnees, see also Meizlish, op. cit., pp. 173–75.

[3] On the organization of these parents and their claims, see Meizlich, op. cit., pp. 107–10.

[4] For recent manifestations of religious views on the modern *baalei tshuvah* see Adin Steinsaltz, *Tshuvah* (Hebrew), Jerusalem, 1982 and Yoel Schwartz, *Opening for Baalei Tshuvah* (Hebrew), Jerusalem, 1977.

[5] See James T. Richardson, 'The Active vs. Passive Convert: Paradigm Conflict in Conversion/Recruitment Research', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 24, no. 2, 1985, pp. 163–79.

[6] For examples, see David Glanz and Michael I. Harrison, 'Varieties of Identity Transformation: The Case of Newly Orthodox Jews', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 20, no. 2, December 1978, pp. 129–41; Aviad, op. cit.; and William Shaffir, 'The Recruitment of *Baalei Tshuvah* in a Jerusalem Yeshiva', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 25, no. 1, June 1983, pp. 33–46.

[7] Carroll Stoner and Jo Anne Park, *All Gods Children: The Cult Experience: Salvation or Slavery?*, New York, 1978; and Andrew J. Pavlos, *The Cult Experience*, London, 1982.

[8] See Frederick Bird and Bill Reiner, 'Participation Rates in New Religious and Para-Religious Movements', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 21, no. 1, 1982, pp. 1–14.

[9] See Meizlish, op. cit., p. 60.

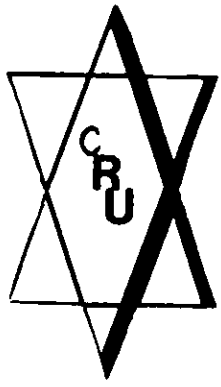
[10] See Shaffir, op. cit.

[11] John Lofland and Rodney Stark, 'Becoming a World Saver: A Theory of Conversion to Deviant Perspective', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 30, no. 6, 1965, pp. 862–75.

[12] See Robert B. Simmonds, 'Conversion or Addiction: Consequences of Joining a Jesus Movement Group', *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 20, no. 6, 1977, pp. 909–24.

[13] See James T. Richardson and Mary Stewart, 'Conversion Process and the Jesus Movement', *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 20, no. 6, 1977, pp. 819–37.

[14] Theodore Long and Jeffrey Hadden, 'Religious Conversion and Socialization', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1983, pp. 1–14.
[15] See Aviad, op. cit., pp. 72–76; and Meizlish, op. cit., pp. 59–60.
[16] See Shaffir, op. cit.
[17] See Glanz and Harrison, op. cit.
[18] William R. Catton, 'What Kind of People Does a Religious Cult Attract?', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 26, no. 5, 1961, pp. 753–58.
[19] See Roger Straus, 'Changing Oneself: Seekers and the Creative Transformation of Life Experience', in John Lofland, ed., *Doing Social Life*, New York, 1976, pp. 252–72; and Long and Hadden, op. cit.
[20] G. K. Nelson, 'Cults and New Religions: Toward a Sociology of Religious Activity', *Sociology and Social Research*, vol. 68, no. 3, 1984, pp. 300–25.
[21] Richardson, op. cit.
[22] Aviad, op. cit., p. 77.
[23] See Aviad, op. cit., and Meizlish, op. cit.
[24] See especially Arthur G. Neal asnd Melvin Seeman, 'Organizations and Powerlessness: A Test of the Mediation Hypothesis', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 29, no. 2, 1964, pp. 216–26.
[25] See Moshe Hartman, 'Prestige Grading of Occupations with Sociologists as Judges', *Quality and Quantity*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1979, pp. 1–19.
[26] See Yehuda Ben-Meir and Peri Kedem, 'Index of Religiosity of the Jewish Population of Israel' (Hebrew), *Megamot*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1979, pp. 353–62.
[27] See Dwight G. Dean, 'Alienation: Its Meaning and Measurement', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 26, no. 5, 1961, pp. 753–58.
[28] See Julian B. Rotter, 'Generalized Expectancies for Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcement', *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 80, no. 1, 1966, pp. 1–28.
[29] See Richard L. Gorsuch asnd Craig S. Smith, 'Attributions of Responsibility to God: An Interaction of Religious Beliefs and Outcomes', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 22, no. 4, 1983, pp. 340–52.
[30] Out of the fathers of the 375 interviewed *baalei tshuvah*, 29 per cent regularly attended synagogue services on Saturdays, 61 per cent observed all or some laws of kashrut, and 72 per cent always fasted on Yom Kippur: see Aviad, op. cit., pp. 164–65.



COMMUNITY RESEARCH UNIT

BOARD OF DEPUTIES
OF BRITISH JEWS
WOBURN HOUSE
TAVISTOCK SQUARE
LONDON
WC1H OEP

* *

We are compiling a Register of Social Research on British Jewry. We should be grateful for any details of projects proposed, or at present in hand, on any aspect of contemporary Jewish life in Britain.

If you are involved in such research, or know of anyone who is, please contact the Executive Director at the above address.

The Register will be published in The Jewish Journal of Sociology, where previous Registers have appeared.

SEPARATION FROM THE MAINSTREAM IN CANADA: THE HASSIDIC COMMUNITY OF TASH

William Shaffir

EVERETT C. HUGHES, writing about the many small societies not yet swept out by the broom of our industrial and urban civilization, reflected: 'How long will it take to mop them up, no one knows. The process seems to be going on rapidly now, but it will probably last longer than any of us would predict'.[1] The persistence of Hassidic groups, and indeed their growth, in North America has shown their capacity for survival.

Hassidim are ultra-religious Jews who live within the framework of their own centuries-old beliefs and traditions and who observe Orthodox law so meticulously that they are set apart from most other Orthodox Jews. Even their appearance is distinctive: the men bearded in black suits or long black coats with black hats over side curls and women in high-necked, loose fitting dresses, with kerchiefs or traditional wigs covering their hair. They are dedicated to living uncontaminated by contact with modern society except in accord with the demands of the work place and the state. They do not, for the most part, own radio or television sets nor do they frequent cinemas or theatres. They dress and pray as their forefathers did in the eighteenth century, and they reject Western secular society which they regard as degenerate. They do not, however, constitute a uniform group but are divided into a number of distinctive communities, each organized around the teachings of a particular *rebbe* or charismatic religious leader. In spite of their differences, all attach great importance to preventing assimilation by insulating their members from the secular influences of the host culture — a theme commonly encountered in ethnographic studies of such communities.[2]

An examination of Hassidic institutional life in Montreal reveals that far from diminishing in numbers (either through defections or on account of a lower birth rate), the Hassidic groups in the city flourish and are regarded both as attractive and viable by their respective followers. They pursue their Torah-based way of life with the same

vigour and determination which characterized previous generations of their sects. In his analysis of the confrontation between *Haredim* (an extremely Orthodox sect) and the modern city, Menachem Friedman argues that, quite paradoxically, the urban centre has been largely responsible for the renaissance of such groups:[3]

> In the setting of the big city, the haredi ghetto provides a solid territorial base for the various subgroups in the community. It enables the Haredim to maintain an independent culture which can borrow selectively elements from the surrounding culture, and to maintain a large measure of internal social control. The modern city thus affords the chance to sustain the haredi voluntary community in a dialectical balance of isolation from, and mingling with, the rest of the population.

That argument applies to various Hassidic groups in Montreal and other modern cities. However, although some Hassidim have been very successful at making use of conditions in large urban centres by pointing to the alienation, crime, and drug and alcohol abuse afflicting many of the residents, and inviting a comparison with the Hassidic style in their own enclave, others have chosen to literally distance themselves further by moving to a more rural-like setting.[4] In 1963, for example, 18 households of Tasher Hassidim moved from Montreal to Boisbriand, about 18 miles away. One of the community's administrators explained: 'What we have is precious to us and our teachings tell us that when you have something precious, you build a fence around it the better to protect it'. A farmer's field of some 130 acres had been acquired in 1962; and the supply of electricity was arranged through Hydro Quebec while provisions for running water and sewerage were co-ordinated through the Boisbriand municipality.

The name 'Tash' is derived from a little town in Hungary near the Czech border where the great-grandfather of the present Tasher *rebbe* began gathering Hassidim round him about a century ago. The Boisbriand community can now boast that it has the only Tasher Yeshiva in North America; the Tash groups in the United States only have two small synagogues, one in Williamsburg and one in Boro Park. The Boisbriand Tasher Hassidim were enabled to move away from Montreal (where they had lived in close proximity to other Hassidic groups since 1951, when their *rebbe* came from Hungary to Canada) by the loan of half a million dollars from the Federal Government's Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The community promptly built a Yeshiva, a synagogue with accommodation for 1,000 persons, a ritual bath, classroom space for boys and girls, offices, 18 bungalows for the *rebbe* and senior staff members, dormitories, and a kitchen and cafeteria.

I was told that the decision to move away from Montreal was apparently taken to escape the deteriorating moral climate of the city:

> Unfortunately the streets of today's society are a negative influence . . . So it was only the foresight of the clever people [the *rebbe* and his closest followers] that felt that the streets are getting worse and worse and if we don't move now, it'll be too late. We won't have even what to move for.

In 1987, the Tasher settlement has about 115 households and some 70 yeshiva students; the majority of the latter are local residents while others have come from Montreal and New York. The total population numbers about a thousand souls. The older members are mainly immigrants from Hungary and Poland, of Tasher background, who came to Canada after the Second World War. In recent years, a number of the *rebbe*'s New York followers joined the Boisbriand community because of both their leader's charismatic appeal and the ideal geographic setting. The demand for extra housing was satisfied in part by successful negotiations with the Federal and the Provincial governments to designate part of the Tasher settlement as eligible for public housing subsidies, in order to accommodate households with a limited total income. The Tasher also receive financial assistance from their followers and sympathizers.

Although the Tash community is officially apolitical, it seems that exception may be made in the interests of good relations with the Federal government and with the government of the Province of Quebec. The community's administrators proudly display the many letters of congratulations received by the Tasher *rebbe* from the highest ranking politicians of the country. The *rebbe* is said to have supported the aspirations of the Parti Québécois and to have influenced large numbers of Jews to vote for that party. Moreover, the Tasher named one of their streets 'Place Nov. 15' to commemorate the PQ's 1976 victory on that day. But the Federal government was equally rewarded: in April 1979, a new street was officially inaugurated in the Tash settlement; it was called 'Place André Ouellet' in honour of the Federal Minister of Public Works who helped to approve a grant for a Tash housing complex in the settlement. The Minister and several politicians accepted the *rebbe*'s invitation to attend the ceremony. Three months later, an employee of the Tasher was reported to have told a Toronto daily newspaper: 'We are grateful to the PQ government. This is the best Government Jews have ever had in Quebec'.[5]

The Tasher apparently were not content with their stringent measures to distance themselves from the surrounding secular culture. That same year, 1979, they attempted to obtain separate municipality status for their Boisbriand settlement, with all the rights and privileges such a status entailed. Thus, paradoxically, in order to achieve a greater degree of officially sanctioned autonomy they had first to become more closely involved in provincial politics.

In this paper, I begin by outlining this interesting chapter in the community's history. I then examine the Tasher stress on the

importance of geographical isolation; the community's attempt to achieve self-regulation and self-sufficiency in that isolation; and the organization and supervision of secular studies. The data were collected over a number of years since 1970, when I was employed by the Tasher for a brief period; and I have maintained regular contact until the present time, mainly through participant observation and informal interviews.[6] An earlier version of this article was sent to the Tasher and their comments enabled me to correct a number of factual errors.

'A Strange Bid for Autonomy'

In 1979, in what one magazine article headlined as 'A Strange Bid for Autonomy',[7] the Tasher submitted an application to the PQ government of Quebec for full municipal status, including the power to turn their religious rules into bylaws. *Maclean's* reported:[8] 'Here was Quebec's government, obsessed with the primacy of the French language and culture, hand-in-hand with a Yiddish-speaking enclave where, according to tradition rooted in the history of Eastern European Jewry, married women must shave their heads and boys and girls must never touch until they are paired for marriage by matchmakers'. However, there was a precedent for the creation of such a municipality. A few decades earlier, the Roman Catholic monks at the abbey in Saint-Benoit-du-Lac, in the Eastern Townships, had been allowed to make the abbey lands into a municipality and they still enjoyed that status when the Tasher made their bid.

At first, it seemed that the Tasher were not likely to encounter serious opposition. Indeed, their achievement of separate municipal status would have apparently served the interests of various parties. For the Tasher, it would provide not only religious autonomy but also an industrial tax base and the right to issue municipal bonds. For the wider municipality of Boisbriand, there would be a settlement of a tax dispute, as we shall see below. The provincial government, on the other hand, burdened with a reputation for antisemitism, saw in the plan a way to demonstrate its ready tolerance of Jews; and quick to appreciate the public relations value of the proposal, it made the following statement in the August 1979 issue of *Quebec Update*,[9] an official newsletter for American business leaders published in New York, under the heading of 'Hassidic Community Wins Government Help':

> The Quebec government will help about 400 Hassidic Jews of the Tashever sect form their municipality north of Montreal in Boisbriand. There are about 1,000 Hassidim in Canada and most of them are in Montreal. It will be the first time that Hassidic Jews have formed their own municipality in Canada thus enabling them to pass laws and regulations in keeping with their own traditions. Boisbriand voters will be asked to approve the plan

this autumn and then a bill will be introduced into the Quebec National Assembly to set up the town. The Quebec government currently finances 80% of the operating costs of Jewish private schools in Quebec as it does for private schools of other denominations.

When the Tasher settled in the Boisbriand area in 1963, they sought to have their community declared tax exempt as a religious institution. The municipality agreed to do so in respect of some of their buildings but claimed that part of the open land was being retained for speculative purposes and therefore taxed it. This dispute over the real estate status of part of the community's lands eventually reached the Supreme Court of Canada in 1965, which ruled in favour of the Boisbriand municipality and ordered the Tasher to pay $300,000 in back taxes. They paid only $57,000.

Later, in 1979, while still owing back taxes to the municipality, the Tasher mounted a new effort to secure a tax-exempt status for their community. Their case was heard in Quebec's Provincial Court and their plea was successful. They then stated that they would settle the outstanding sum they owed the municipality of Boisbriand after they achieved separate status. The provincial government consented to grant such a status provided the plan was approved by the Boisbriand municipality. Meanwhile, the Hassidim had obtained the support of the Mayor and most of the municipal councillors. The *Globe & Mail* of 27 July 1979 reported the Mayor as saying: 'They should have their own municipality. They live a totally different life. It's like another world'. It was proposed that the residents of the total area of Boisbriand would express their views through a referendum — the cost of which, an estimated $15,000, would be borne by the Tasher. The latter appeared confident that they would be granted a municipal charter within a matter of months.

At that stage, however, newspapers catering to both English-speaking and French-speaking readers intervened. *The Gazette*, Montreal's English-language daily, claimed in an editorial in July 1979 that the Hassidim's problems were rooted in matters of taxation; and added that even if they overcame those difficulties, there was a further matter to consider:[10]

> Neither would they be able to guarantee their own majority in the new town. They could not, under the Charter of Human Rights, make residence conditional on religion, and since Boisbriand is right on the road between Montreal and Mirabel Airport, the future may well bring an influx of new people who would leave the Hassidim with the same minority position they now find trying.

The editorial concluded: 'The best bet would seem to be to organize as a cultural and religious community, as the Hutterites have done successfully in Alberta and as the Hassidim themselves have done already if not entirely to their own satisfaction'.

Two months later, in September 1979, Montreal's French daily, *La Presse*,[11] published a lengthy article headed, 'Does Quebec want to legalize the creation of a city-ghetto?' The Tasher were described as 'the most intransigent' of the Hassidic groups residing in Quebec while the provincial government, in its wish to appear tolerant of cultural minorities in general and of the Jewish community in particular, 'could risk committing a grave historical error'. The author stressed the difference between a natural grouping of citizens of the same faith or culture and a ghetto sanctioned by civil law and then proceeded to ask: 'Does Quebec want to be the first modern country to have the honour of creating a Jewish city and legalizing a ghetto?' There might be unforeseen and regrettable consequences of setting such a precedent:

> What would the government do should the same request come from the Apostles of Infinite Love, Jehovah's Witnesses or a group of Catholics that would decide to establish a city where divorcees would be excluded . . .? Or again, if the Italian community of Saint-Leonard decided to separate and to form a new municipality with a cultural base?

Shortly after the publication of that article, the Mayor of Boisbriand withdrew his support of the Tasher's application for a separate municipal charter. In the 3 October 1979 issue of a weekly newspaper — *Voix Des Milles-Iles* — he was reported to have stated that the *La Presse* article was the last straw that broke the camel's back. There were informal meetings with Boisbriand residents at the Town Hall, described as 'an oral poll', which led the municipal administration 'to come out against the request for separation'. The Mayor declared that the file was closed and added: 'I can assure you that the citizens of Boisbriand are greatly relieved'.

The hostility of Boisbriand's municipal council and of many residents was apparently exacerbated by the presence of outsiders, immediately after the publication of the *La Presse* article, who claimed to be conducting a public opinion survey on the subject. The Tasher denied allegations that they had commissioned such a survey — which, for the most part, revealed that Boisbriand residents were indifferent to the Hassidim's request. As for the Mayor and the Town Council, they decided against implementing their earlier decision to have a referendum. A Jewish weekly, *The Canadian Jewish News* of 15 October 1979, published an interview with the Mayor who was reported to have said: 'We already spent too long on this question. . . . The citizens of Boisbriand are totally against this idea'. Some informed observers, however, were of the opinion that the Town Council's decision sprang from the fear that a Hassidic municipality would attract industry and would soon be transformed into a town with its own economy in competition with that of Boisbriand.

In the event, the failure to secure a municipal charter does not seem to have been a severe blow for the Tasher. They have been attempting

to reach a settlement on the taxation dispute and meanwhile they have acquired additional acreage adjacent to their settlement. Indeed, they were hopeful in 1986 that the Boisbriand Town Council would pass rezoning legislation enabling the community to erect new buildings on land designated for agriculture. Apparently, that was one of the main reasons why they wanted to acquire separate status — in order to rezone the land for the construction of housing units — and it now seemed that they might succeed in their aim. However, perhaps it was a sour grapes reaction which prompted an administrator of the Tasher to comment to me, 'If I was offered a municipality today, I'd think twice before I'd say "Yes"'.

The importance of geographical isolation

A pamphlet published by the Tasher in English — 'The Story of Tash' — made the following statement:

> While Tash seeks to imbue its members with a set of specific religious attitudes and values, it also generates a moral climate that ensures its members will comply with the social and ethical standards the community believes ought to be cherished and upheld by the larger society. It is precisely in this area that Tash is proud to deviate from some of the major trends in contemporary society such as delinquency, divorce, drug and alcohol abuse. These social ills are unheard of because the society is strong. Quite simply, no one in Tash need turn to these things. Each chassid is basically content with who he is; he knows his life holds meaning and purpose.

For the Tasher, the realization of such meaning and purpose is more readily achieved in a secluded setting, where the members of the community, and especially the younger generation, can be carefully shielded from exposure to undesirable influences.[12] That does not mean, however, that the technological achievements of modern society must also be rejected. Indeed, by 1983 the Tasher's central administrative office boasted computer equipment which several individuals manipulated with considerable skill. What they reject are many of the values and beliefs of the secular culture which are in direct opposition to the principles of a Hassidic way of life. The younger generation must be taught to live according to the highest principles of Orthodox Judaism. A Tasher told me:

> That's made very clear to them that there's an outside world which we're not supposed to follow. Of course they are aware [of the outside world]. They see things and they're taught that these are not the right things. . . . I mean everybody is going to end up in the outside world to a certain extent.

The Tasher of Boisbriand are not the only Hassidic group in North America to have deliberately chosen geographical isolation. A number

of other Hassidic groups have organized enclaves and communities in suburban or semi-rural areas.[13] A Tasher cited a comment by Maimonides that people are very influenced by their surroundings; and since that is so, a proper environment must be secured at all costs:

> We would give away quite a lot of *blats* [pages] of *gemooreh* [Gemara] in exchange for avoiding certain influences. Had you given me the option of having the yeshiva in town that my son would be able in a year's time to learn 100 *blat gemooreh* in exchange for coming here and learning only 50 *blats*, there's no question I'd choose the 50 *blats*. I'd even choose 10 *blats* instead of 100.

Such an attitude is in sharp contrast to that adopted by other Hassidim who live in Montreal and who believe that they can protect their children in an urban environment by pointing to many of the evil ways of delinquent children in surrounding areas and thus confirming the superiority of the Hassidic life-style. For the Tasher, it is dificult enough to bring up children as devout and law-abiding Jews without having the additional burden of constantly ensuring that they are not influenced by the behaviour of modern city dwellers. One of them told me that even in such an area as Williamsburg, in Brooklyn, where Hassidic Jews are concentrated, his children would be exposed to many things which he would not want them to see — things 'which don't exist' in the Boisbriand enclave. Another Tasher told me of the problems encountered when he went with his son into a department store for the first time:

> And my son said, 'Look at this', and I said, 'You're not allowed to look. She's not modest dressed. Don't look'. We went by a television, '*Tattee* [Dad] look. Look, look, he's jumping'. 'Don't look, the television is not for you to look'. He doesn't have so much to fight with [at Tash] because he doesn't see it. . . . So it's not so hard for him to fight. A boy [in Montreal] who's going every day to *cheder* [religious school] and is going by a Radio Shack and the television is out there with the big screen, every day he has to turn around.

The same sentiments were echoed by another young father who said that if he took his son to Montreal he would constantly ask him to avert his eyes from what was exhibited in the shop windows and in the street. In the end, his son was likely to say in exasperation: 'So what should I do? Should I close my eyes? A car will come and knock me down'. In the Boisbriand enclave, on the other hand, he would not see the obscene covers of the magazines on newsstands in Montreal, he would see nothing that was evil in the streets. He would not even know what drug addiction is because he would never have seen a drug addict; and he would not know about such crimes as murder, because none took place in the Tash settlement. His son would not have to ask himself, 'Should I be good or should I be bad?' because he would have been taught and would have seen mainly what is good.

It is not only young children who might be led astray by the ways of the big city. A Tasher told me of the harmful influences which some modern magazines might exert on gullible Hassidic women in Montreal: a woman will pick up a woman's magazine because she has seen something on the cover about a piece of furniture she is thinking of buying; then she will read the magazine and find that it is quite interesting; 'so tomorrow she's going to buy another one and the week after she might buy a more interesting one. This all goes in a chain. . . . If I would live in a city, I wouldn't guarantee that I wouldn't become the same'. But there was no such temptation in Boisbriand. Moreover, I was told that the secluded location of the Tasher ensures not only the moral but also the physical welfare of children. They can play without risk of danger in the streets and at meal times all a mother has to do is go out and call them home. She can attend to her household duties without having to check constantly that her children have not strayed too far. Tash parents, furthermore, do not have to be concerned about their children's playmates, as urban dwellers must in order to guard against harmful influences. In the Tash enclave, the role models for the young are provided by the resident adults and it is claimed that the physical security which prevails makes it possible to achieve the spiritual richness of life in the community. A Tasher explained:

> I don't have to be very concerned if my kid leaves school at 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock to know exactly where he was till 7 o'clock. I'll assume he was playing in the snow because there's no place to go. Had I lived in town, I'd have a real problem. And there are people in town who would pick up their kids from school and they would take them home and they would be locked indoors. . . . Someone can succeed with the same objectives as we do but their social life is the one that suffers. We have more *gashmeeus* [social life] even though we don't have to lose on our *ruchneeus* [spiritual life].

Self-regulation and self-sufficiency

The only street leading into the community (Avenue Beth Halevy) winds around a partially unfinished building — the girls' school —as well as a playground and several bungalows before ending at the *Oir Hachaim* Yeshiva complex. The main street of the settlement is semi-circular in shape and is lined with rows of duplexes; and there are two other small streets. The environment is austere; and both the interior and the exterior of the Yeshiva — the centre of spiritual and social life in the community — could benefit from a fresh coat of paint. A prefabricated structure serves as the younger boys' school — the older ones study in the Yeshiva — and while a similar structure was available for the girls, a new girls' school has neared completion and is already in use. The community maintains two ritual baths: one for the men, which is located in the Yeshiva, while the women's *mikveh* is in a separate

building. One supermarket stocks a variety of food products and household supplies for the everyday needs of the residents.

The men are mainly engaged in religious-oriented occupations (as teachers, ritual slaughterers, and kashrut supervisors) and in study in the *kollel* (advanced Tamudic academy) for which the participants receive a financial subsidy. In addition, a few individuals have developed commercial enterprises in such areas as printing, textiles, silk-screening, lumber, automatic sprinkler systems, and *shtreimel* (a round fur hat made of sable worn by married men on the Sabbath and other religious holidays) manufacturing. None of the women is gainfully employed outside the settlement. About 15 to 20 of them are involved in some teaching capacity in the girls' school; but only a few of them have had some formal teacher training before settling in Tash. A Tasher woman is the principal of the girls' school and while overseeing the secular studies assumes primary responsibility for the Jewish curriculum.

In Tash, as in other Hassidic communities, the *rebbe* in every way is the leader of his flock and that fact is central in the organization of the group. His followers turn to him for advice not merely on spiritual and ethical problems but also on a wide range of practical matters — moving to another location, taking a new job, planning an overseas trip, or even consulting a doctor. The *rebbe* is revered as a *tsaddik* (righteous person) and is believed to have special qualities of insight; his people therefore turn to him for guidance 'in the uncertain areas of life rather than in the clearly defined domain of the law'.[14]

Decision-making in the Tash community is theoretically vested in an advisory committee consisting of seven members (males), of which two or three are appointed by the *rebbe* and the remainder elected by adult males in the community. Before the election, which is held in the *Bays Medresh* of the Yeshiva, a slate is drawn up, slips of paper with the names of the candidates are distributed to those gathered, and secret balloting takes place. In practice, however, decision-making is the domain of the charismatic leader, the *rebbe*, alone. The seven who serve on his committee, I was told, are men 'he feels he can trust that they know what he wants'. The responsibilities of the elected members include those matters which are not the primary concern of the *rebbe*, such as an extension to the playground, for example, or modifications to the time-table of the community's bus service to Montreal.

A set of bylaws, established by the *rebbe*, governs the behaviour of all the residents; and each adult, whether male or female, must agree to abide by these bylaws before taking up residence in the settlement. Anyone who transgresses may be liable to eviction. What follows is a translation of these bylaws from a document in French prepared by the Tasher in 1979 for Quebec's Provincial Court in connection with their bid for autonomy:

No book, newspaper, or magazine is permitted in the buildings of the community, unless their content is in conformity to Orthodox Judaism.

All members of the community must attend religious services, three times per day, at the synagogue.[15]

No radio, television, record, or cassette is allowed in the buildings of the community.

No member of the community may attend the cinema or be present at any theatrical performance under the penalty of immediate expulsion.

All women residing in the community must dress in accordance with the Orthodox laws of modesty, as follows:

All dresses must be at least four inches below the knees, no trousers or panty-hose may be worn by young girls 3 years of age and older.

[Married women's] Hair must be completely covered 24 hours a day, by a kerchief or by a wig which is no longer than the nape of the neck.

It is forbidden for men and women to walk together in the street.

Men and women must be separated by a wall, at least 7 feet high, when attending any gathering of a social or religious nature.

All food consumed in the buildings of the community must conform to the dietary laws of the Code of Laws and be approved by the Chief Rabbi [*rebbe*] or his second-in-command.

No car may be driven by a woman or by an unmarried man.[16]

The members must submit any interpersonal conflict to the arbitration of the court established by the Chief Rabbi.

The Sabbath day must be observed in strict conformity to Jewish law.

Members must study the Bible and other religious texts for at least two hours daily.

The above bylaws are permanent and cannot be amended by a democratic vote of the residents. One of the latter explained:

> You don't have no choice. He [the individual] had a choice. When he came here he knew that this is what he will eat. This is what we're cooking and this is what we will eat. . . . Therefore, it's not like we're making votes and we voted this and this and a minority is not happy. Everybody who comes here knows what he will get.

In some other secluded Hassidic communities (such as Kiryat Yoel in Monroe, upstate New York, established by the Satmar Hassidim), the residents may own their housing units; but in Boisbriand the majority of the available accommodation is owned by a legal entity representing the Tàsher *rebbe* and the households rent their dwellings. This policy permits the *rebbe* to select newcomers to the settlement and enables him to retain complete control of community politics and spiritual direction.

All communities which aim to live in isolation must find ways to satisfy the everyday needs of their members by providing a range of structures and services which would lessen dependence on outsiders

and achieve a high degree of 'institutional completeness'.[17] The Tasher are no exception. One of their pamphlets states that after acquiring 130 acres of land in 1962, the community built a synagogue, a religious college (Yeshiva), dormitories, and 18 houses in 1963. No expansion occurred until 1970, when three more houses were built; these were followed by a prefabricated structure in 1971 to serve as the young boys' school; a women's ritual bath in 1972; 18 apartments in 1974; a matzo bakery and a slaughterhouse for kasher meat and poultry in 1975; a supermarket in 1976; a further 78 apartments during 1977–78; a children's playground (divided in two, one for boys and one for girls) in 1979; and in 1980 a school for young girls and a *kollel* for married men. But despite the availability of a plentiful supply of arable land, the Tasher do not grow any of their food.

Medical care so far has required members to go outside the confines of their settlement. Women are free to select the physician of their choice and give birth in the hospital with which their physician is affiliated. The Tasher did employ a visiting paediatrician who came for half a day each week, but does so no longer for reasons beyond their control. They wish to have a visiting dentist also but since they cannot guarantee a fixed income they have yet to appoint such a practitioner. On the other hand, the Tasher maintain a fully-equipped ambulance, including a cellular telephone; it is staffed by several members, one of whom has paramedic qualifications. They have also recently acquired an incubator; and some of the residents can now analyse the results of throat cultures. Meanwhile, it is necessary to leave their enclave if they must visit a doctor or a dentist; and so far, no attempt has been made to interfere with a person's choice of medical or dental practitioner. A bus service linking the settlement to Montreal is provided; it completes the return trip (35 minutes each way) three times daily during the week. As a rule, yeshiva students are permitted to use the bus by themselves — but reluctantly, for fear that they will see in the city manners and behaviour which are not in keeping with strict religious observance. The bus is also used by those who wish to make necessary purchases of items not available locally, such as clothing and electrical appliances.

Finally, the Tasher so far have no provisions for local burial; they make use of an Orthodox funeral parlour in Montreal. Nevertheless, the members of the community are proud of the high degree of self-sufficiency they have achieved. I was told: 'I think we're the most independent community . . . If we would be put into a blockade . . . the basics we have here'.

The organization and supervision of secular studies

A Tasher pamphlet printed in English states:

> The Tasher community is living proof that one need not have advanced degrees in secular studies in order to succeed. Although the yeshiva and

girls' school do teach French, English, mathematics and other secular subjects, the Rebbe does not place too much emphasis on these.

Like other Hassidic groups, the Tasher maintain that secular education threatens their traditional values; and in order to shield their children against its potentially harmful influences, which they believe to have affected Jewish children in lay schools, they run their own schools where secular classes are closely supervised to ensure that the pupils will not see any conflict with the contents of their religious studies.[18]

The secular programmes in the two Tasher schools (one for boys and one for girls) which have about 160 pupils each are narrowly defined and do not fully comply with the requirements of the provincial authorities. The boys are instructed in French and in English in reading, writing, and arithmetic for approximately two hours on weekday afternoons by outside teachers; the latter are fully qualified and work in the settlement to supplement their income. The aim is that the pupils will become proficient at writing a business letter, at communicating in English and in French, and at mastering basic arithmetic.

The girls have secular classes for about three and a half hours every weekday and the languages of instruction are French and English; but all notices on the bulletin board are in Yiddish. The emphasis is on home economics; the natural sciences are not taught but there are courses in history and in geography. The fact that the girls are engaged for almost twice as long as the boys in secular classes is defended on the grounds that, first, the boys must have the minimum amount of diversion from their religious studies: they might become attracted to secular subjects to the detriment of their religious learning; and second, that girls will require practical skills later in life: 'They have to be able to understand much more of the outside world and what goes on because they're the people who'll be building the home, doing the shopping and everything else'.

The Tasher are convinced that education, whether religious or secular, is too important a matter to be dictated, or controlled, by outsiders. They have long refused any school subsidies from the government because they do not wish to comply with the obligations entailed.[19] They claim that in an interview with government officials, they said bluntly: '. . . we are Jews. We live as Jews. We will die as Jews. If you tell us we cannot continue our education the way we want it . . . then we have news for you. Either we're going to leave Quebec or we're going into shelters like in Russia, in basements'.

Like other Hassidim, the Tasher carefully screen the secular material used for teaching. Stories told to the children must not have 'ultra-modern' views. When I enquired about what kind of story they would consider harmful, one of their administrators gave as an example

a tale about a Jewish boy who was a pupil in a non-Jewish school. The boy was eventually accepted for the baseball team; and on one Saturday they came to pick him up to play on that day but his father refused to let him go. My informant commented:

> Now that's a game that we think a boy shouldn't have on his mind, that he could go out and play baseball on *Shabbess* afternoon. . . . I'm not saying that that's the worst example of a story that might be passed. But there are stories that have sex in them, and things like that which are totally out.

The particular techniques used to screen the secular material vary according to the predilections of the individual charged with that responsibility. One such person used to censor photographs which showed women immodestly dressed or ink out in black pen sections of a photograph he thought reprehensible. Another one was more tolerant and explained that he thought it stupid to ink out the pictures of a little girl because she was not wearing socks, when it was clear from the context that the girl was a Gentile:

> Our kids are aware that the *goyim* do not dress the way we dress. . . . I mean, if you're reading a story about *goyim* then you know that *goyim* don't wear socks. As long as it's not a mini skirt or anything like that, it's O.K. I mean, everybody knows what they look like. I mean, it's no use blacking anything out. . . . You see, going to a very strong extreme causes problems.

Those employed to teach secular studies are specifically instructed about the constraints within which they must conduct their work. This is particularly the case for teachers in the girls' school where the curriculum is co-ordinated in a more formalized manner than is the case for the boys' secular studies. Teachers not only receive verbal instructions from the principal concerning the rules and regulations by which they must abide, but, in addition, proscriptive topics of discussion and methods of teaching are distributed to them in written form. For example, the written instructions to the English staff listing the rules and regulations specify:

1. All textbooks and literature to be used by the students in class or at home for extra-curricular activities, etc. must first be approved by the principal.
2. No stencil or photo copy of any other book may be used without the principal's approval.
3. Students are not permitted to go to the library nor is the teacher permitted to bring into the school, for the students, such books.
4. No newspaper or magazine may be read in school or hung up. Students are not permitted to read the above at home either.
5. No record or tape may be used in the classroom without the approval of the principal.
6. No extra subjects, books, magazine supplement or other information which is not on the required curriculum of the school may be taught.

7. For extra credit work or for class projects, etc., students should not be told to write away for such material. The teacher should supply them with the material with the principal's approval.
8. No discussions on boyfriends.
9. No discussions on reproduction.
10. No discussion about radio, TV or movies.
11. No discussion about personal life.
12. No discussion on religion.
13. No discussion about women's lib.
14. No homework on Thursdays.

The absence of homework on Thursdays is to enable the girls to help at home with preparations for the Sabbath. This particular regulation is irrelevant for the boys, however: they are never given any homework relating to secular studies.

The above instructions provide a clear picture of the stringent measures taken by the Tasher to ensure that their schoolchildren do not become acquainted with (or, worse still, become attracted to) the ways of those who do not faithfully adhere to their strict Hassidic life-style.

Conclusion

When I asked a Tasher administrator whether he thought that his community was a success, he replied that it obviously was, since the girls were modestly dressed, the boys all had earlocks, and all the men were bearded, and there was nothing offensive on sale in the local supermarket or on view in the streets. The settlement, he asserted, was 'a big success'. This sentiment was echoed by all those whom I interviewed. It was admitted that there was the odd case of deviant behaviour but such instances of rebellion or disaffection were said to be very rare and to pose no real threat to the norms of the community. The Tasher fiercely cherish their geographical isolation and they have learnt to screen carefully students who apply to study at their yeshiva; for if those young men come from metropolitan New York, they might have acquired habits or modes of thought which could corrupt the strictly reared native residents.

In her study of nineteenth-century communes, R. M. Kanter[20] noted two of the most serious problems they faced, which were factors leading to their eventual dissolution: the erosion of their membership and a mounting scepticism about the realization of the ideals which had been the basis of their communal existence. In contrast, the Tasher so far are increasing in number, largely because of a high birth rate while defections are virtually non-existent; and the members, including the younger generation, appear to be quite content with their life-style and attracted to the values they have been taught to respect.

Paradoxically, it is precisely the high birth rate and the negligible amount of defections which may endanger the future of the community: within a few years, when the present teenagers marry and have children in turn, there will be an urgent need for the provision of extra accommodation and services. That, in turn, will require the infusion of considerable financial resources and it might then become necessary to approach the provincial government as well as the mainstream Jewish community — two bodies with which the Tasher have so far carefully controlled their involvement. On the other hand, the isolated setting of the community may help to shield it against the effects of such intrusions.

It will be interesting to see how the present *rebbe*, born in 1923, or his successor in title will face the challenge when it comes.

NOTES

[1] Everett C. Hughes, *Where People Meet*, New York, 1952, pp. 25–25.

[2] See, for example, Jacques Gutwirth, *Vie Juive Traditionnelle: Ethnologie d'une Communauté Hassidique*, Paris, 1970; Jerome Mintz, *Legends of the Hasidim*, Chicago, 1968; Solomon Poll, *The Hassidic Community of Williamsburg*, New York, 1962; Israel Rubin, *Satmar: An Island In The City*, Chicago, 1972; and William Shaffir, *Life In A Religious Community: The Lubavitcher Chassidim In Montreal*, Montreal, 1974.

[3] Menachem Friedman, 'Haredim Confront the Modern City', in Peter Y. Medding, ed., *Studies In Contemporary Jewry*, Bloomington, 1986, pp. 74–96.

[4] Two examples of such relocation include New Square and Kiryat Yoel, the communities established by the Squarer and Satmar Hassidim respectively. The former, founded in the mid-1950s and incorporated in 1961, under the leadership of the Squarer *rebbe*, is located near Spring Valley, about a quarter of an hour's drive from the centre of New York City. Kiryat Yoel, situated outside Monroe in Orange County and incorporated in 1977, is a self-sufficient community where individuals own their homes and includes factories, schools, shops, and medical facilities.

[5] *Globe & Mail*, 27 July 1979, p. 2.

[6] In an earlier article in this Journal, I reported briefly on the Tash attitude to secular education: William Shaffir, 'Hassidic Jews and Quebec Politics', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. xxv, no. 2, December 1983, pp. 105–18.

[7] 'A Strange Bid for Autonomy', *Maclean's*, November 1979.

[8] Ibid.

[9] *Quebec Update*, vol. II, no. 31, August 1979, p. 1.

[10] 'Separatism in Boisbriand', *The Gazette*, 27 July 1979, p. 7.

[11] 'Quebec veut-il légaliser la création d'une ville-ghetto?', *La Presse*, 29 September 1979, p. 4.

[12] The following view, published in *Di Yiddishe Heim* (vol. 20, p. 21) by a Hassidic woman from Lubavitch, also expresses the Tasher's opinion: 'Everyone today is so nutrition conscious. There are many tempting foods available, but we know they are really junk foods. . . . We cannot be any less

aware of what we allow to enter our children's minds. We must be aware that what we give them provides the best nourishment for their souls — full of spiritual vitamins and minerals, not superficially tasty yet full of harmful chemicals and additives.

To expect to stop all secular activity is unfortunately unrealistic. But at least we should be more aware of the potential harm involved, of how vigilantly we must supervise all of our children's activities'.

[13] In spite of efforts to guard against the intrusion of undesired outside influences, the process of assimilation has greatly altered much of the environment in which Orthodox Jews, including Hassidim, function in North America. See Gershon Kranzler, 'The Changing Orthodox Jewish Family in the Context of the Changing American Jewish Community', a paper delivered to the convention of the National Council for Jewish Education, Washington, DC, 1977 and Egon Mayer, *From Suburb to Shtetl: The Jews of Boro Park*, Philadelphia, 1979.

[14] See Jerome Mintz, op. cit., p. 89. For a discussion of the role and influence of the Hassidic *rebbe*, see also Israel Rubin, op. cit., and William Shaffir, op. cit.

[15] Concerning this bylaw, a Tasher explained: 'We don't really have a regulation that says somebody must *davn* [pray] three times a day, because that's like saying somebody must be a Jew. For the court we had to explain everything'.

[16] I was told that this bylaw pertains to persons under the age of twenty.

[17] See Raymond Breton, 'Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. LXX, no. 2, September 1964, pp. 193–205.

[18] See Solomon Poll, op. cit., pp. 37–51; Rubin, op. cit., pp. 137–56; and William Shaffir, 'The Organization of Secular Education in a Chassidic Jewish Community', *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. VIII, no. 1, 1976, pp. 38–51.

[19] See William Shaffir, 'Hassidic Jews and Quebec Politics', op. cit., p. 115.

[20] Rosabeth M. Kanter, *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective*, Cambridge, Mass., 1972, pp. 139–61.

new community

Journal of the Commission for Racial Equality

Dealing with all aspects of ethnic and race relations and migration in Britain and internationally

Editor: Sheila Patterson

Volume XIII, No. 3, Spring 1987
contains a special section entitled:

RACE, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

Michael Banton on *What We Now Know About Race*

Pamela Constantinides on *Health Care Service for Populations at Risk for Genetically Determined Disease*

Malcolm Smith/Robert Layton on *Why Haven't We Speciated?*

S. S. Papiha on *Genetic Variation and Disease Susceptibility in NCWP Groups in Britain*

Other contributors include: **Jørgen Nielsen** on Muslims in Britain: searching for an identity; **A. G. D. Bradney** on separate schools, ethnic minorities and the law; **Shamit Saggar** on the 1984 Labour Force Survey and Britain's 'Asian' population, and **Jeffrey P. Green** on 'high society and black entertainers' in the 1920s and 1930s.

Annual Subscription:
Institutions – £16 (US$32); Individuals – £12 (US$24)
Back Numbers – £5 (US$10); Single copy current issue – £4 (US$8)

New Community Subscriptions
Elliot House
10/12 Allington Street
London SW1E 5EH
Telephone: 01-828 7022

THE JEWISH QUESTION IN JAPAN

Tetsu Kohno

THERE is a belief that the Japanese are descended from the ten lost tribes of Israel, that is, from the inhabitants of the kingdom of Samaria who were deported by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.E. and were believed to have vanished later from the face of the earth. Joseph Eidelberg in *The Japanese and the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel*, published in 1980, compared the history of the Jews as related in the Old Testament with that of the Japanese as recorded in the *Nihongi*, the Chronicle of Japan, which was compiled in 720 C.E. and is still considered as a sacred historical text dealing with the origins of the Japanese nation and the formation of the Japanese Empire. Eidelberg states:[1]

> As we continue turning the pages of the *Nihongi*, we discover that some of the events related to early Japanese emperors are almost identical with events that took place during the reign of ancient Hebrew kings; that the wars of the ancient Japanese with the Yebisu and Idomi tribes are similar to some of the wars of the ancient Hebrews with the Yebusites and Edomites; and that many details in the Japanese story of the Exodus and the journey to settle in a land of 'Reed-Meadows' are very similar to events described in the Hebrew story of the Exodus and the journey to settle in the land of Canaan.

Eidelberg comments that 'Although the narratives of the *Nihongi* refer to the ancient kingdom of the Japanese nation as Yamato, the description of Yamato does not quite fit the islands of Japan'.[2] It follows, therefore, that Yamato referred mainly to that remote period in the history of the Japanese nation when they were still in their 'country of origin', and indeed etymologically 'Yamato' could derive from *Ya-umato* (nation of God) in a Hebrew–Aramaic dialect. The ancient Japanese began their journey in the year of *kinoye tora* which may be interpreted as *kniya Torah* (acquisition of the Torah). And when the Japanese finally settled in the land of the Reed-Meadows (*Toyo-ashi-hara*), Emperor Jimmu conferred on some of the ancient Japanese leaders the title of *Agata Nushi* which could derive from *aguda nasi* or *nasi aguda*, chief of congregation.

Eidelberg further finds connections (to my mind, far-fetched and etymologically crude) between the Hebrew word *Knesset* (an assembly)

and the Japanese word *kensei*, which means constitutional government; *mishge* and *michigai*, which both mean mistake; *kol* and *kei*, which both mean sum total; and *goy* (a non-Jew) and *gai*, as in *gai-jin*, a foreigner.

Some Japanese writers have also produced their own versions of the theory that the Japanese are descended from the Jews. They, too, have drawn on historical, mythological, archaeological, and phonetic coincidences; and like Eidelberg, they have emphasized the dozens of similarities without accounting for the hundreds of differences. By tracing Japanese descent to the ancient Hebrews whose religious glory is unquestionable, they could certainly feel compensated for their collective as well as individual frustrations caused by the dominant and domineering Western or Christian civilization. Very suggestive is the fact that such prominent 'Japanese–Jewish common descent' theorists as Zenichiro Oyabe and Shogun Sakai were both educated and ordained as Christian priests in the United States before the turn of the century; then both immersed themselves in Jewish studies, finally forsaking the Christian faith. Nor did they remain mere worshippers of Jewish tradition; they were driven into the eventual 'logical' consequence that the Divine Land of Japan should be elevated to the spiritual leadership of the whole world with the Japanese Imperial Family enshrined as the Messiah for all humanity. It had to be the Japanese rather than the Jews themselves who could claim to be the legitimate heirs to the ancient Hebrews.

A later epigone of the same theory, Masao Masuda, who was very active during the Second World War, went even further and denounced Judaism as the devilish thought developed from a perverted view of Japanese Shinto culture.[3] When touched by fanatical chauvinism, the 'common descent' theory shifted its character from that of philosemitic worshippers to that of antisemitic demagogues, thus conforming and contributing to the 'Holy War' ideology hand in hand with other shintoist-militarist propaganda efforts.

Let us now turn to better-documented historical events. Portuguese and Dutch ships reached Nagasaki during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and there *might* have been Sephardi sailors on board. However, it is a matter of record that after 1854 — when Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry of the United States Navy steamed into Tokyo Bay with an armada, and demanded that Japan end its traditional isolationist policy, open its doors, and enter into a treaty with the United States — Jewish traders from England, France, Germany, India, Iraq, and Syria came to Japan as nationals of their native countries.

Eight years later, in 1862, the American Jew Raphael Schoyer published in Yokohama the first English daily newspaper in Japan, *The Japan Express*. Yokohama was a temporary refuge for many Russian Jews who had fled their native land and were hoping to go to America.

In 1889, a group of them had come to Nagasaki and within a year established a synagogue; but after the economic depression which followed the First World War, they sold their synagogue building and, before their dispersion, gave their Torah scrolls to the Kobe Jewish congregation which maintained a small temple.[4]

To the best of my knowledge, the first Japanese scholar to make a historical, and admirably unbiased, introduction to the 'Jewish question' in Europe was Sentaro Kemuyama; he published in instalments in the May and June 1905 issues of *Chuo Koron* an article entitled 'Antisemitism and Zionism'. Japanese perceptions of Jews had been shaped for the most part without any direct personal contacts with Jews until the late 1930s, when Japan became an ally of Germany, and had to face, under Nazi pressure, the problem of how to treat 30,000 Jewish residents and refugees in Manchuria and Shanghai — as will be seen below. (Nowadays, there are about 1,000 Jews of various nationalities concentrated in the Tokyo and Kobe areas.[5] The two congregations have a synagogue each; and they are affiliated to the World Jewish Congress.)

There have been hundreds of performances of the Japanese version of the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, and countless Japanese can hum the charming tune of 'If I were a rich man'. Notwithstanding the implication of that phrase, the general Japanese image of Jews is that they are, in fact, rich men. In part, this is the result of the loan negotiated for Japan during the Russo-Japanese War by Jacob Schiff, a partner of Kuhn, Loeb and Co., an American investment bank. Baron Korekiyo Takahashi (who was vice-president of the Bank of Japan and who was later to become finance minister and then prime minister) confided to a man who happened to be sitting next to him at a party in London that he was trying desperately to borrow money on the international market and that if he did not succeed fairly soon in doing so, Japan would lose the war to Tsar Nicolas II. The stranger he had been addressing was Jacob Schiff, a Jew who held the tsarist regime responsible for the Kishinev massacre of 1903 and for the other pogroms to which Russian Jews had been subjected.

The morning after the party, Schiff's deputy called on Takahashi to discuss the terms of a loan of £5,000,000. David Kranzler has noted that it was 'Schiff's Jewish connections in European financial circles that made possible the even more successful second and third multinational loans to Japan in 1904 and 1905', amounting to a total of £41,000,000.[6] (As a circumspect investor, Schiff had first asked his London agent to discover whether there were substantial Japanese assets in Britain; and the agent told him that there were two Japanese warships under construction in the United Kingdom.) Japan won the war, acquired new territories and new resources, and its international prestige was enhanced. As a result, the equation of Jews with ownership of massive

and global financial resources and thereby with the ability to manipulate world events, underlies until today nearly all the debates on the Jewish question in Japan.

The first phase

It is popularly believed that there has been no Jewish problem in Japan because the Japanese have had very little direct religious or socio-economic dealings with Jews in Japan. In fact, however, there is a formidable bibliography of Judaica literature in Japan dating back to the late nineteenth century when adapted versions of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* were first published. The first phase of any collective antisemitism in Japan started immediately after the end of the First World War.[7] When tsarist Russia was trying to suppress its revolutionaries, the Japanese feared for the safety of their own empire and dispatched an expeditionary force of 75,000 men to Siberia to give support to the tsarist army; but that force was shamefully defeated by the Red Guards whose victory led the ruling political, financial, and military circles of Japan to view the Bolsheviks with dread and hatred. Firmly convinced that the Jews were the instigators of the Revolution, the tsarist army officers had given the Japanese liaison personnel a variety of antisemitic literature. General Grigori Semyonov had ordered that every one of his own soldiers was to be given a copy of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an infamous Russian fabrication purporting to be the minutes of a secret meeting held by a secret Jewish 'government' to plot the overthrow of the entire Christian world.

Captain Norihiro Yasue of the Japanese army, who was attached to General Semyonov's staff, later translated the whole text of the *Protocols* into Japanese, in the belief that the document was indeed the authentic Jewish text, and published it in Tokyo in 1924, sandwiched between an 80-page introduction and 120 pages of background details, under the title of *The Inside of the World Revolution*.[8] Yasue apparently was not aware that Philip Graves, the Constantinople correspondent of the London *Times*, had demonstrated in 1921 that the *Protocols* was a forgery. Yasue was ordered in 1926 by the Japanese Army's General Staff Office to visit Palestine, but he reported back that no one in that land 'so much as whispered a hint about the international conspiracy'.[9] He was later to play a major role in the discussions on the treatment of Jews in Manchuria.

During the Siberian expedition, naval officer Koreshige Inuzuka was on board a battleship off Vladivostok; and he was to take part two decades later in the arguments about the treatment of the Jews of Shanghai. Meanwhile, an army officer called Nobutaka Shioden, ten years older than Yasue and later to be the doyen of Japanese antisemites, was working for secret military agencies in Vladivostok

and Harbin. Thus, the three major antisemites of Japan had all been indoctrinated concurrently in or near Siberia.

It must be remembered that tsarist and Japanese officers shared the same kind of reverence for their sovereigns and viewed with abhorrence and outrage any attack on the latter. If we bear in mind the prominent role of some Jews in the Russian Revolution and the antisemitic practices and myths then current in Western countries, it is not surprising that even in Japan Bolshevism should have been equated with the so-called Jewish Conspiracy — a conspiracy for world domination which was alleged to have caused all major wars, revolutions, assassinations, and moral degeneration. A coterie of ideologues, both military and civilian, advocated strong measures to counter the Jewish Peril. The establishment was alarmed at demands for democratic policies which were being voiced by some modernizing circles; and it blamed the Jews for what was taken to be political subversion as well as for current labour disputes.

Here it must be stressed that in Japan such antisemitism flourished only among the upper and middle classes, generally those with higher education. *The Merchant of Venice* was first published in 1877 in an adapted form and later, in 1906, in what became the standard Japanese version;[10] it fostered the image of Jews as profiteers and usurers who took a mean advantage of the adversities of poor, honest, and innocent people. In 1917, for example, Kako Ohba who was a reporter of the *Asahi Shimbun*, the most prestigious newspaper in Japan, stated: 'Jews are an extremely disgusting race; scholars or merchants, male or female, they are all Shylock-type usurers . . . . Russia is being infested with vermin called Jews . . . . They act as parasites to both friend and foe . . . . In Russia where people are honest and innocent, Jews should be ghettoized . . . .' The reporter then concluded that the Kishinev massacre of 1903 had been a well-deserved punishment for Jewish political subversion in collusion with Social Democratic rebels.[11] (As for *The Merchant of Venice*, the vogue in present-day Japan is to sympathize with Shylock's smouldering hatred of the domineering Christians.)

It is worth noting that there were some Japanese who openly expressed disbelief in the Jewish Conspiracy theory after the Russian Revolution and the First World War. Prominent among them was Sakuzo Yoshino, then assistant professor of politics at the University of Tokyo and later to be acclaimed as the theoretical pillar of the democratic movement in the Taisho era (1912–26). He was convinced that *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was a forgery. It was ridiculous, he pointed out, to state that the prophecies of *The Protocols* had been realized since it was clear that Jews had certainly not emerged triumphant. He added that all were urged to fight the Jews in the cause of freedom and progress while, in fact, freedom and progress were both

the very things which the Japanese translator of the *Protocols* was doing his best to repudiate. That was 'nothing but getting hold of the wrong end of the stick'.[12]

In 1923, Tadao Yanaihara (then assistant professor of economics at the University of Tokyo and later to become its President) published a serious study of Zionism in which he criticized Werner Sombart's theories about the particular position of Jews in a capitalist system.[13] He also firmly rejected the belief in a Jewish Conspiracy and declared: 'Those who fear a Jewish Conspiracy are those who suffer from nightmares of persecutions they themselves inflicted on Jews'.[14] A fervent Christian, he greatly admired Zionist ideals and the establishment of Zionist colonies in Palestine which were clearly non-exploitative. He even went so far as to declare: 'From the viewpoint of all mankind, seven or eight hundred thousand Arabs are not entitled to ownership of Palestine';[15] but he did qualify that statement by adding the proviso that Jews must not build their national home at the expense of the Arab inhabitants. His cherished belief was that colonization was permissible only if it did not entail any political or economic exploitation; and as an expert on colonial policy, he maintained that position in all his treaties on colonies without excluding those under Japanese imperial rule. Other pious Japanese Christians[16] were equally thrilled by Zionism, seeing Jewish resurgence in Palestine as a miracle and believing that it was the precursor of a still greater miracle, the second advent of Jesus Christ. For them, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 was a world-shaking event .[17]

The second phase

After the Nazi accession to power, Japan's invasion of Manchuria and its secession from the League of Nations, all in 1933, the country fell under the domination of the military hierarchy, and was being led towards fascism. The stage had been set for the three aforementioned major antisemites — Yasue, Inuzuka, and Shioden — who were followed by other like-minded men in both military and civilian occupations. They began to give lectures and to write books about the already familiar theory of an international Jewish conspiracy for world dominion. Japan entered into the Anti-Comintern pact with Germany in 1936; and in 1940 it joined Mussolini's Italy into the Triple Military Alliance. Until the Sino-Japanese Incident of 1937, liberal intellectuals had been allowed to publish critical comments on Nazi racist policies and the outrageous persecutions of Jews; but they underestimated Hitler when they predicted that Jewish capitalists in Germany would never be oppressed or that there would be a decisive conflict between the Nazi regime and an anti-Nazi power.[18]

In 1938, a retired army general named Teiichi Muto published a book entitled *The Jewish Offensive Against Japan.*[19] There were hardly any Jews in Japan at the time; but on the other hand, it must be admitted that a number of Jews were helping Chiang Kai Shek in his war against Japan. An article published in 1937 by Kiyo Utsunomiya (Inuzuka's pseudonym) stated: 'Jewish financiers . . . intended to drive the Japanese out of China . . . [Moreover] the British, French and German Jews have given a loan of $200,000,000 to China for the development of Southwest China, in order to forestall a further advance of Japan southward . . . [as part of] an anti-Japanese plot by the Jews . . . .'[20] It is also true that many Jewish career soldiers who had served in the German army now joined Chiang Kai Shek's troops. Miriam Karnes, who founded the Chinese Women's Army Corps, was killed in action during the Japanese attack on the city of Nanking. Moshe Cohen played an important role in procuring war supplies for Chiang's army. Engineers, medical doctors, and scientists from among Jewish refugees contributed greatly to anti-Japanese war efforts in the Chinese hinterland where Chiang's Nationalist troops entrenched themselves.[21]

In 1938, a new Japanese translation of the *Protocols* by Eikichi Kubota was published (and it is worth noting that the book was re-issued in 1959). Now that Japan was so closely linked with Germany, antisemitism became firmly institutionalized, and the Jewish Conspiracy theory was given fresh impetus by military leaders and ideologues whose main concern was to protect the pure national polity, based on the Shintoistic emperor worship, against any impure demonic foreign influences. This was yet another classic case of antisemitism existing almost independently of Jews. Whether or not Jews did or failed to do something to the Japanese was not immediately relevant; the determinant was a particular political climate or the requirement of political leaders. Those brave enough in Japan at the time to ridicule or to denounce publicly the Jewish Conspiracy theory, as was done in a liberal and anti-totalitarian spirit in democratic countries, were likely to end in prison.

The German Embassy in Tokyo was now in full swing as a Nazi cultural centre, sponsoring book after book which eulogized the Nazi regime and denounced the international secret power of the Jews. Indeed, such was the climate that Hitler's *Mein Kampf* became an enduring best-seller, though not rendered into Japanese in full —eleven pages in which Hitler stated that the Japanese might be culture-carrying but could never be culture-creating were expurgated for obvious reasons from the then popular two Japanese versions. However, Japan did not lack intellectual samurai — as witnessed by the case of an active right-winger, Junjuro Ishikawa, who, in his study of *Mein Kampf* published in 1941, not only included his translation of

the controversial section about Japanese creativity but also cast scientifically valid doubts about Nazi theories of racial superiority and inferiority. No Japanese leader made use of Ishikawa's arguments, since that would not have been politically expedient at the time.[22]

It was then quite the vogue for high-school students to study German and to sing German songs; and the German ambassador in Tokyo awarded medals to those who won German speech contests. Visits of Hitler Jugend boys to Japan were highlighted in juvenile magazines to give Japanese children lessons in discipline. At an annual conference of Japanese *Germanisten* in the middle of the war, attended mainly by teachers of the German language at high schools and colleges, the chairman proposed three cheers of 'Hitler Banzai!' ('Long live Hitler!'). (It is worth recording here that, in contrast, the 1979 conference of Japanese *Germanisten* had as one of its themes 'the German-Jewish cultural symbiosis', and discussed specifically Heine, Kafka, Joseph Roth, and Elias Canetti; and the participants moreover had the opportunity of listening to a paper on Yiddish language and literature delivered by one of the few Japanese scholars of Yiddish.[23]) It must be borne in mind that even in the heyday of the Nazi cult in Japan, many learnt German first and foremost in order to read in the original the works of Lessing, Schiller, Goethe, and even of Heinrich Heine. And many also preferred classical German music to Nazi songs and military marches.

It was in this second phase of antisemitism during the late thirties and early forties that Japan for the first time had to deal with an actual Jewish presence in its domain: the Jewish refugees who had settled in Harbin and other Manchurian cities as well as in Shanghai. It was then that a plan was evolved to use these refugees as a bargaining asset: American Jewry would be told that if it could influence the United States government to adopt a pro-Japanese, or at least a neutral, position in the Far East, then the Jewish refugees would be treated sympathetically by the Japanese authorities. As a preliminary, the first conference of the Far Eastern Jewish Council was held in January 1938 in Harbin; it was attended by some 2,000 Jews from Manchuria as well as from Japan, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. The participants declared that they would co-operate with Japan and Manchukuo in the establishment of a new order in Asia.

Meanwhile, the newly-appointed commander of the Secret Military Agency in Harbin, Major-General Kiichiro Higuchi, used his best endeavours to allow some 20,000 Jewish refugees (mainly from Germany) who had fled through Poland, Russia, and across the border town of Otpor, opposite the Japanese military base at Manchouli, to be carried in special trains to Harbin. Thence, most of them made their way due south to Shanghai or Hong Kong. German protests were ignored.[24]

Within the Japanese government, there were two opposing factions: one which believed that it would be ultimately to Japan's advantage to promote good relations with world Jewry; and another which was in full agreement with Nazi policy and implacably anti-Jewish. Tokayer and Swartz, in *The Fugu Plan* (published in 1979), give a vivid description of the arguments put forward in that controversy.[25] Finally, those who were of the opinion that Japan would not be imperilled by the presence of the Jews within its borders won the day. They had argued persuasively that several hundred years earlier China had allowed thousands of Jews to settle in the Kaifeng region; and the Jews had not taken over China — which, moreover, had benefited from their cleverness and industry and then swallowed them up almost without trace. Surely the Japanese, especially since they were aware of the potential danger, could do at least as well as the Chinese. And so the Fugu Plan was launched. *Fugu* is the Japanese word for a fish which has a succulent flesh but which also contains a lethal poison in its roe. (Incidentally, Mr Eidelberg might be interested in the fact that the Hebrew word *sakanah* means danger while *sakana* is the Japanese word for fish.) Jews could be as dangerous as the fugu fish; but if processed skilfully, they would prove to be equally rewarding.

Thus it was that in 1938 Mr Mitsuzo Tamura, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who had lived for some twenty years in the United States and had a wide range of social connections in that country, was dispatched as an emissary to Stephen Wise, who was then President of the American Jewish Congress and believed to be a close friend of President Franklin Roosevelt. Tamura approached Wise about the possibility that Japan might settle a number of Jewish refugees from Europe in Japanese-held Asia; and the implication was that Wise in return would use his influence on Roosevelt to persuade him to show favour to the Japanese government. Wise received Tamura courteously but would not commit himself. He is quoted as commenting:[26]

> The Japanese military have been excessively harsh with other minorities who have come under their power. Certainly the Chinese, particularly the residents of Nanking — excluding, naturally, the three hundred thousand civilians who were massacred after the city surrendered in 1937 — certainly the Chinese would have little cause to recommend living in Japanese-controlled lands.

Tamura therefore failed in his mission to Wise; but nevertheless the Japanese authorities decided at the so-called Five-Ministers' Conference in December 1938 to treat Jewish refugees in the same manner as any other aliens, and to welcome only those Jews who were capitalists, industrialists, scientists, or artists. That decision angered Japanese military and civilian believers in the Jewish Conspiracy theory while the German Foreign Ministry immediately sent a note of

protest — which had the opposite of the desired effect. Japanese samurai pride was injured; and it was bluntly stated that Japan was not a German dependency and that its alliance with Nazi Germany did not mean that the Japanese automatically had to become as militantly antisemitic as the Germans now were. Some Japanese leaders had not yet given up the idea of taking advantage of the fact that there were many thousands of Jewish refugees under Japanese protection, because they still believed that American Jewry could influence President Roosevelt and American public opinion in favour of the Japanese.

In August 1940, Sempo Sugihara was acting as the Japanese consul in Kovno in Lithuania when thousands of Polish Jewish refugees arrived with travel papers showing that their final destination was Curaçao — the then Dutch colony in the Caribbean which did not require entry visas. Sugihara and his family processed files of applications day and night to issue Japanese transit visas to these displaced Jews to allow them to travel across Japanese-held territory. The Japanese Foreign Ministry did not disavow this entirely personal decision of their young consul in Kovno, thus allowing the Jews to halt temporarily in Kobe on their way to Shanghai. (Sugihara's name is inscribed among the 'righteous Gentiles' at Yad va-Shem in Jerusalem.[27])

After Japan entered the Second World War in December 1941, Colonel Josef Meisinger came to Shanghai with two Gestapo officers to discuss with the Japanese authorities how to dispose of the 17,000 Jews in the city. He proposed three alternatives: (1) the Jews would be stripped of all they possessed, even of their clothes, and loaded on to several old and unseaworthy ships, which would be towed out to sea with their rudder cables cut; and they would die of thirst and hunger, after which a naval detail would sink the ships; (2) the Jews could be put to work in several disused salt mines, given the maximum amount of labour with the minimum amount of food, and they would soon die; or (3) a concentration camp might be built in an island in the mouth of the Yangtse river to intern Jews, who would be used for medical experiments such as the extent of the human nervous system's tolerance of pain, for example.[28] Meisinger even recommended that Jews should be rounded up on their New Year's Day (Rosh Hashanah) when they attended their synagogue services.

Some Japanese officials in Shanghai were receptive to Meisinger's proposals, but a courageous and humanitarian vice-consul in the city, Mr Mitsugi Shibata, warned Jewish leaders of the fate which was threatened. One of these leaders bluntly asked the head of the Japanese Military Police in Shanghai what the authorities planned to do to the Jews, whereupon all those involved in the information leak, including the vice-consul, were imprisoned and tortured. However, the Japanese government abided by its 1938 decision to deal with Jewish refugees as

fairly as with other aliens and therefore did not implement any of Meisinger's recommendations. (After the end of the Second World War, Mr Shibata was appointed an Honorary Member of the Jewish Community of Tokyo.) The Jews of Shanghai were herded into a ghetto in the city while those in Manchuria were said to have been treated less harshly than were the Chinese or the Koreans.

Meanwhile, within the borders of Japan proper, antisemites were busy advancing their Jewish Conspiracy theories; and their tirades against Jews appeared to be popular. In the general election for the Diet (parliament) in 1944, Nobutaka Shioden (who had retired from the army with the rank of lieutenant-general) polled more votes than did any other candidate. On the other hand, it was possible to exhibit openly virulent antisemitism while secretly advocating an apparently humanitarian policy with regard to refugees. That was certainly true of Captain Inuzuka of the Japanese navy, one of the proponents of the Fugu Plan which was instrumental in rescuing from destruction those Jews who were living in Japanese-held territory. Many years after the end of the Second World War, in 1961, Inuzuka published an article entitled 'Japanese Auschwitz Was a Paradise'; and after his death, his widow piously claimed that the Japanese Imperial Navy had been the 'Protector of the Jews'.[29] However, by the mid-1950s a Jewish resident in Tokyo well versed in the Japanese language, Michael Kogan, had examined enough secret documents of the Japanese wartime Ministry of Foreign Affairs to confront Inuzuka publicly with incontrovertible evidence that he had certainly not been a friend of the Jewish people.

The third phase

After the war, the Japanese were stunned by the revelations of the atrocities committed against helpless Jews in concentration camps by Germany, their former ally. In 1952, the Japanese version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* was published and it became an immediate best-seller; by 1973, it had been reprinted 150 times. A high school pupil wrote a prize-winning essay in which she stated: 'The fact that six million Jews had to be persecuted and massacred only because they were Jews made me think that it was not only because of the war but because something else had already existed . . . .'[30] I myself understand the agony of those who are subjected to racial or ethnic discrimination because I am the son of a Korean father and a Japanese mother, and have been much grieved by the deep-rooted Japanese hatred and contempt for Koreans. Anne Frank aroused full sympathy from me when she wrote in her diary on 22 May 1944: 'I only pray that this hatred toward Jews will be only temporary, that the Dutch people will return to what they really are, and will not lose their sense of justice, because rejection of Jews is

against justice . . . I love Holland. Having no homeland of mine, I hoped Holland would be mine. I still hope so.'

Books by psychologist Victor Frankl and other concentration camp survivors were also translated into Japanese and their grim revelations horrified the readers. By then, it was widely known that the Japanese army, after having occupied Nanking in 1937, had committed countless atrocities, eventually massacring some 200,000 non-combatant Chinese, and exploded poison-gas shells in Northern China as well as allowed vivisection on Chinese prisoners in a secret medical experimental facility near Harbin. However, those brutalities had been committed against the Chinese as members of the enemy nation and not merely because they were members of a specified 'racial' group which had to be exterminated.

A parallel was also drawn with the merciless nuclear devastation inflicted upon Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Many Japanese believed that bombs would not in fact have been dropped if the inhabitants had had white rather than 'yellow' skins; and they bitterly noted that the only US citizens of foreign ancestry to have been forcibly confined in the so-called 'relocation camps' during the Second World War had been the Japanese Americans. It was only after the Hiroshima and Nagasaki holocaust that the Japanese came to understand what it meant for the Jews or any other people to be a pariah nation.

When Eichmann was tried in Israel in 1961, the Japanese media asked scholars to provide background material about the Jewish question, Nazism, and the State of Israel. There was a great deal of sympathy for persecuted Jews, but conflicting opinions were expressed about the legality of the trial. For example, essayist Michiko Inukai censured Israel and stated: 'The United Nations, however imperfect and weak, is still a supranational organization, actually the only one that could take a standpoint free from national rancour or retribution, therefore Israel should have entrusted the U.N. with a final judgement over this case'.[31] But critic Takeshi Muramatsu countered: 'It is an unprecedented, unheard-of event that one nation planned and implemented the extermination of another; where there is no precedent there is no law, therefore procedures had to be primitive. A trial of a victimizer at the hands of victims and their bereaved is similar in appearance to, but different in essence from a trial of a defeated power at the hands of the victorious. Why not understand this point?'[32]

Meanwhile, Israel had already received a number of Japanese visitors. Not a few Japanese had been fascinated by ancient Jewish culture; and a group of Japanese archaeologists excavated the ruins on the slope of Mount Carmel in 1961. In association with the Israeli Embassy in Tokyo, the Japan Kibbutz Institute (established in 1962) has annually sponsored many young persons who wish to live in Israeli kibbutzim. On their return, these youngsters bring back glowing

reports which stress the spirit of lively comradeship they enjoyed in Israel. Other Japanese visitors, especially those who are members of Christian sects with a strong Messianic orientation, also tend to idealize Israel. But such attitudes are exceptional in Japan.

The fourth phase

At the outbreak of the Six-Day War, there occurred a clash of opinions among Japanese intellectuals regarding the Arab–Israeli conflict. Some sided with Israel and criticized the simplistic dichotomy which not a few progressives had drawn between Jewish Nationalism as an imperialist movement and Arab nationalism as an anti-colonialist vanguard. They also asserted that Jews had consistently recognized the necessity of Arab–Israeli coexistence — as had been proved by the frequent Israeli peace appeals addressed to, but invariably rejected by, the Arabs since pre-Independence days. On the other hand, probably many more supported the Arab camp, attributing the Middle East turmoil to the establishment of the Zionist state in Palestine. It was vehemently insisted that only when Jews would abandon Zionism, sever their ties with Western imperialist powers, and become Palestinians, could they stand on a par with Arabs. Naturally 'the Jewish State' was never to be tolerated in their 'Palestinian-centered' perspective. (Nowadays, the erstwhile anti-Israeli zeal on the part of Japanese Arabists seems to have cooled off somewhat; but this does not mean that they have stopped being critical of Israeli policies, as will be seen below. In their conception, Zionism is still a degenerate ideology which aims to develop a Jewish sector at Arab expense.)

Such conflicting attitudes were clearly exemplified in 1972 when members of the Japanese Red Army shot passengers at Lod airport. After Kozo Okamoto was arrested, pro-Arab Japanese students praised the 'heroism' of the attackers and asked for donations for Okamoto's defence, while sympathizers with Israel immediately started collecting funds for the injured and the relatives of those who had been killed; and a group in Kyoto held a prayer-meeting to mourn for the innocent victims.[33] Also in 1972, when there was an Arab massacre of Israeli Olympic athletes in Munich, only one solitary Japanese official attended their memorial service — a decision that was deplored by at least one Japanese reporter who accused his compatriots in Munich of being 'medal animals'.

Since the onset of the Arab oil strategy, there has been a general image of Israel as the troublemaker and a concomitant tendency among Japanese intellectuals to express sympathy for the dispossessed Palestinians and to believe reports of Zionist injustices to Arabs. There was even an abortive attempt to boycott an Entebbe rescue film.

My own university decided in 1979 that ten of its teachers would hold a colloquium on the Middle East problem; but eight of these professors happened to be mainly interested in Arab countries and to know very little about Israel. Such a ratio of eight to two was fairly representative of the Arab-oriented inclinations then prevalent in Japan.

There is no doubt that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was far more emphatically condemned than was the occupation of the West Bank. The Japanese had not forgotten the lessons drawn from their abject failure in expansionist policies including the seizure of Manchuria; and the Israeli government's utter disregard of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as a political entity reminded them of the erstwhile Japanese imperial government's one-sided statement in 1937 that it would have nothing to do with Chiang Kai Shek's nationalist government.[34] Even before Lebanon, Israel's annexation of the Golan in 1981 had already aroused suspicions about its territorial aspirations; thus, the *Yomiuri*, a newspaper with the largest circulation in Japan, deplored: 'With each move made by Begin does the perspective of peace in the Middle East recede.'[35]

The Japanese since the end of the Second World War have been unswervingly anti-militarist, while conveniently ignoring the fact that their country is in effect under the protection of the American nuclear umbrella. The Israelis, in contrast, are known to allocate a very large proportion of their total resources to military defence and to be constantly vigilant about the security of their beleaguered country. Their rallying cry is 'Massada will never fall again', while that of the Japanese is 'No more Hiroshima' — which has managed to prevent the Constitutional article on eternal abandonment of armaments from being repealed and to set a ceiling on its military budget around one per cent of its gross national product. It is therefore no wonder that there is a communications gap between the two countries.

Finally, the Japanese view with profound distrust the religious arguments which some Israeli leaders employ to justify their occupation policies. They have dark memories of the past when they were taught, according to the state religion of Shinto, to believe that they were divinely chosen and divinely entitled to spread their empire. The Japanese Holy War propaganda was a laughing-stock among the other nations, for the idea that God chose a particular people and promised them a land was neither the responsibility nor the concern of other communities. Japanese intellectuals are aware that the inconsistency between power and morality does not occur in Israel alone; but they believe that the Jews who have such a long history of enduring, and exposing, unjustified persecutions should be particularly sensitive about recognizing the harmful effects of their own power politics on other national groups.

Recent developments

This short survey of the Jewish Question in Japan has shown that it is impossible for members of the general public to entertain antisemitic ideas spontaneously and that anti-Jewish feelings can be aroused only by the vigorous efforts of ambitious demagogues. As it is usually not individual Jews who provide any direct justification for antisemitism, the tendency has been to ascribe to the Jewish people in general the sinister role of conspirators against national or global welfare. This is why antisemitic arguments become so abstract.

In Japan in the 1920s, as we saw above, all seditious or revolutionary ideas and movements, such as Bolshevism and democratic uprisings, were believed to have been engineered by the leaders of the Jewish Conspiracy; while in the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s all foreign interventions against Japanese military expansion were also immediately connected with the same 'conspirators'. And whenever there is a crisis arising from overwhelming external pressures, the Japanese seem to react in similar fashion. (Perhaps a parallel could be drawn with the Yellow Peril theory which still persists in some Western countries.) The present trade imbalance between America and Japan, the unprecedented surge in the value of the yen against the dollar, and the difficulties faced by the export-oriented Japanese industries have contributed to a general malaise which leads people to seize with both hands any plausible explanation about the genesis of the problem. Historical amnesia has allowed the old familiar Jewish Conspiracy theory to be resurrected without due reflection on whether Japan's own industrial and international trading policies have been sufficiently equitable.

More than one million copies of two paperbacks published in 1986 and entitled respectively *If You Know the Jews, You Will Understand the World* and *If You Know the Jews, You Will Understand Japan*[36] have been sold. The author, Mr Masami Uno, claims that the trade disputes between Japan and the United States and the 'high yen' crisis could be traced back to the Jewish Conspiracy. According to him, Japan's economic slow-down and industrial 'caving-in' have been engineered by the Jews who surreptitiously control almost all major American corporations. But he gives no specific detailed or documented exposition on individual cases to show that Jewish influence was in fact responsible for anti-Japanese economic activities — let alone to prove that there is a Jewish Conspiracy striving for world dominion. As with those antisemitic libels which prevailed in the 1920s and 1930s, Uno's arguments are based on inaccurate data (he states, for example, that Rockefeller, Morgan, du Pont, Mellon, Roosevelt, Schultz, etc., are Jewish names) and hazy conjectures about an economic offensive being launched by international Jewish capital to take over one vulnerable Japanese enterprise after another.

It is easy to dismiss such fabrications as unworthy of being seriously considered to be antisemitic. But Uno's publications and those of other Japanese authors who exhibit similar anti-Jewish attitudes[37] are enjoying a tremendous popularity; and that fact is worthy of comment. One possible interpretation of the present 'antisemitic wave' is that many Japanese think it safer and easier to express national discontent and hatred against the Jews in general and against American Jewry in particular rather than against the United States: the Jewish Conspiracy is to be blamed for the escalating economic conflict between the two countries. It is certainly not the first time in history that Jews have been made the scapegoats; and within America's borders there is the parallel phenomenon of Black antisemitism.

Since the 1960s, the successive achievements in industry and international trade have inspired the Japanese to believe that their prosperity is due to their tradition of self-sacrifice and teamwork which derives from the very homogeneity of the nation; and there is a general conviction, confirmed by their Prime Minister, that such achievements could not be attained by a plural society. Such ethnocentric pride can easily lead to xenophobic paranoia if Japan considers itself to be threatened by foreign economic offensives. In such circumstances, Uno's prophecies about 'another global depression being engineered by international Jewish capital' or 'Japan's downfall through the reversion to the gold standard' can easily precipitate alarm and bitter resentment among all social strata. Moreover, some recent events (not yet exploited by Uno in his publications) may have confirmed the suspicion that the leaders of 'international Jewish power' were capable of anything: there was the American Jew who admitted that he had engaged in very profitable but illegal stock exchange deals (and who had made handsome donations to Jewish charities); another American Jew who was convicted of spying for Israel; Israel's role in the secret supply of arms to Iran; and the assertion by a disaffected Israeli operative who had worked in a top security plant that Israel did possess nuclear bombs.

A belief in the Jewish Conspiracy theory (however ill-founded) combined with the very real fear of a serious economic recession which would adversely affect the whole socio-economic structure of the country is reminiscent of the conditions which led to Hitler's success after the First World War. Admittedly, the position in Japan, where there are only about a thousand Jews, is quite different in other respects from the German situation in the 1920s and 1930s; but it is a historical fact that the Japanese demagogues of pre-war Japan tried, as Hitler did, to blame national crises on Jews and on Marxism with considerable success. The consequent impairment of a sound international perspective led Japan on the tragic road to ruin, as was the case with Germany. It is therefore necessary at this stage to analyse in greater

detail the causes and effects of this latest Japanese 'antisemitic wave' as carefully and as penetratingly as Sakuzo Yoshino did in the 1920s and to beware of the possible consequences of 'trade wars' which so often revive the old theory of a 'Jewish Conspiracy'.

Acknowledgements

This article is a revised and slightly condensed version of my contribution to the *Bulletin of the Hosei University Faculty of Liberal Arts*, no. 46, published in 1983 and entitled 'Debates on the Jewish Question in Japan'. That paper was based on a lecture co-sponsored the previous year by the Department of Asian Studies and the Judaic Studies Program of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The final section of the present article was written last April, in order to take account of recent developments.

NOTES

[1] Joseph Eidelberg, *The Japanese and the Lost Tribes of Israel*, Sycamore Press, Givatayim, Israel, 1980, p. 23.

[2] Ibid., p. 72.

[3] See Masanori Miyazawa, *Nihonjin-no Yudaya-Isuraeru Ninshiki (Japanese Perceptions of Jews and Israel)*, Showado, Kyoto, 1980, p. 43.

[4] See Rokuichi Sugita, *Higashi Ajiya-e Kita Yudayajin (Jews Who Came to East Asia)*, Otowa Shobo, Tokyo, 1969, p. 4.

[5] See *American Jewish Year Book 1986*, p. 361.

[6] See David Kranzler, 'Japanese Policy Toward the Jews 1938–1941' in *Japan Interpreter*, vol. 2, no. 4, Spring 1977, p. 515.

[7] According to Professor Masanori Miyazawa, the first phase of the debate on the Jewish question lasted until the early 1930s. I adopt his method of periodization without any reservations. See his *Yudayajin Ronko (A Study on Japanese Debates on Jews)*, Shinsensha, Tokyo, 1971, revised edition published in 1982), pp. 11–14. His appended 120-page bibliography is an indispensable guide to this field of research; and his pioneer study was of great assistance when I prepared the original lecture on which this article is based. I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Miyazawa for providing in his publications the necessary data in a manner reliably unbiased. All quotations from *Yudayajin Ronko* follow the pagination in the revised edition.

[8] Ho ko Shi (Yasue's pseudonym), *Sekai Kakumei-no Rimen*, Niyusha, Tokyo, 1924.

[9] Marvin Tokayer and Mary Swartz, *The Fugu Plan: The Untold Story of the Japanese and the Jews During World War II*, Paddington Press, New York and London, 1979, p. 49.

[10] *Benisu-no Shonin*, translated by Shoyo Tsubouchi and first published in *Waseda Bungaku*, July 1906.

[11] Quoted from Kako Ohba's *Roshia-ni Asobite (Journey to Russia)*, 1917, p. 18, as cited by Miyazawa in his *Yudayajin Ronko*, op. cit., p. 27. Hereafter, Miyazawa's 'op. cit.' refers to this book.

[12] See Sakuzo Yoshino, 'Iwayuru Sekaiteki Himitsukessha-no Shotai' ('The True Character of the So-called Global Secret Society'), *Chuo Koron*, June 1921, pp. 41, 24, and 32.
[13] See Tadao Yanaihara, 'Shion Undo-ni Tsuite' ('On the Zionist Movement') in the first volume of the author's *Complete Works*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1963, pp. 543–44.
[14] Ibid., p. 551.
[15] Ibid., p. 586.
[16] Such as Kanzo Uchimura and Shigeharu Nakada.
[17] See Miyazawa, op. cit., p. 59.
[18] See, for example, Ryokichi Minobe, 'Daisan Teikoku-ni Taizai Shite' ('Report from the Third Reich'), *Kaizo*, November 1934.
[19] Teiichi Muto, *Yudayaminzoku-no Tainichi Kosei*, Naigai Shobo, Tokyo, 1938.
[20] See Kranzler, op. cit., p. 504.
[21] See Sugita, op. cit., pp. 46–47.
[22] See Masaki Miyake, 'Hitler-to Nihon' ('Hitler and Japan') in *Rekishi-to Jimbutsu* (*Chuo Koron Sha*), September 1973, pp. 167–70.
[23] See Hajime Yamashita, *Kindai Doitsu Yudaya Seishinshi Kenkyu* (*Studies on Modern German–Jewish Thought History*), Yushindo, Tokyo, 1980, pp. 28–29.
[24] M. Takeyama, T. Takashima, and A. Kawamura, 'Nihon Rikugun-to Yudayajin' ('The Japanese Army and the Jews — A Symposium'), *Jiyu*, June 1973, pp. 194–95.
[25] Tokayer and Swartz, op. cit., pp. 58–59. See also Kranzler, op. cit., p. 513.
[26] Quoted in Tokayer and Swartz, op. cit., p. 75.
[27] See R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, 'The Japanese and the Jews', a review article in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 20, no. 1, June 1978 (pp. 75–81), p. 78.
[28] Tokayer and Swartz, op. cit., p. 224.
[29] Kiyoko Inuzuka, 'Yudayajin-wo Hogoshita Teikoku Kaigun', *Jiyu*, February 1973. Captain Inuzuka's 1961 article is printed side by side with hers.
[30] See Tomiko Inui, 'Teiko-to Shi-to Ai' ('Resistance, Death, and Love'), *Asahi Journal*, 24 July 1966; also quoted in Miyazawa, op. cit., pp. 136–37.
[31] Michiko Inukai, 'Kokuren-ga Sabakubekidatta' ('The United Nations Should Have Passed Judgement'), *Asahi Shimbun*, 16 December 1961, as quoted in Miyazawa, op. cit., p. 157.
[32] Takeshi Muramatsu, *Tairyo Satsujin-no Shiso* (*Thought of Genocide*), Bungei Shunju Shinsha, Tokyo, 1961, pp. 91–92, quoted in Miyazawa, op. cit., p. 157.
[33] See Miyazawa, op. cit., p. 174.
[34] See Yuzo Itagaki, 'Lebanon-no Senso-to Nihon ('The Lebanese War and Japan'), *Asahi Shimbun*, 7 September 1982.
[35] 'Golan Kogen-wa Dare-no Monoka' ('To Whom Does the Golan Belong?'), *Yomiuri Shimbun* editorial, 20 December 1981.
[36] The two paperbacks were published successively in late 1986 by the Tokuma Shoten, Tokyo.
[37] Such as Kinji Yajima (professor of international affairs at Aoyama Gakuin University), *Yudaya Protokoru Cho Urayomi Jutsu* (*How to Read the Hidden Meaning of the Jewish Protocols*), Seishun Shuppan Sha, Tokyo, 1986.

ON THE FRONTIERS OF JEWISH LIFE

(Review Article)

V. D. Lipman

STEVEN J. ZIPPERSTEIN, *The Jews of Odessa. A Cultural History, 1794–1881*, xiii + 212 pp., Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1985, $32.50.

NEIL C. SANDBERG, *Jewish Life in Los Angeles. A Window to Tomorrow*, University Press of America, Lanham, New York, and London, 1986, n.p.

JEWISH HISTORY in the Diaspora can arguably be presented as the history of Jewish communities in towns and cities. The life of such a community is usually as significant as that of a whole country, which in Jewish terms is often a mere grouping of disparate communities. To review together books on the Jewish communities of Odessa and Los Angeles reflects more than the accidental fact of their almost simultaneous publication. Both communities have a paradoxical similarity of geographical distinction within their respective countries. Both were on the frontier of settlement and both share a kind of frontier status in their Jewish character and as pointers to what has seemed a possible communal future. Both are situated in climatically attractive areas, which drew settlers from the hinterlands of original Jewish habitation; and they were both founded by pioneering Jewish elements who had moved away from the constraints of older Jewish areas. Both communities developed patterns of Jewish life which aroused the wonder and often the reprobation of Jews in more traditional communities.

Odessa was founded in 1794, in territory which Russia had acquired after its war with Turkey. The Russian government wished to settle the region and gave inducements to foreigners and members of ethnic minorities to settle there. There were therefore concessions and a much more relaxed regime than obtained in the older regions of the Empire and this atmosphere persisted to some extent even after the initial days of settlement and development. In Odessa in particular, the policy was to build up an international port and commercial centre. The administration was headed in the early years by a number of officials of

non-Russian origin, notably the French emigré Duc de Richelieu (later Prime Minister of Bourbon Restoration France).

The objective would be aided by creating the image of a cosmopolitan city, with cultural institutions like an opera house. The cultural image was therefore an essential part of the concept of Odessa and one which could not but affect its Jewish residents, used elsewhere to regarding traditional Jewish culture as superior to its environment. This is a partial explanation of the high degree of acculturation (by nineteenth-century Russian standards) of Odessa's Jewish community — which Dr Zipperstein in his masterly study attributes to the city's newness and cosmopolitan character and to commerce, which was the lifeblood of Odessa. If only to fit them for commercial careers in an international port, Jewish children, even of traditionally Orthodox families, were encouraged to study secular subjects and languages. Odessa was perceived as a centre of *Haskalah* ('Enlightenment', the movement for spreading modern European culture among Jews), but the drive towards the acquisition of general culture was at least as much utilitarian in origin as it was dictated by ideological cultural motives.

Jews were attracted to Odessa as the city developed to become the main entry port for goods from the East destined for eastern European markets and the main export port for grain from the South Russian hinterland. (It was the development of American grain exports after the American Civil War that reduced Odessa's role as a grain port.) The city's population grew from 86,000 in 1849 to 193,000 in 1873 and then again doubled to 404,000 by 1892. Within these figures, the Jewish population, 17,000 in 1854, increased to 52,000 by 1873 — by which time the Jews were, after the Russians, the largest ethnic group in the population. It was not only the economic opportunities which drew Jewish immigrants from elsewhere in the Russian Empire but the less constrained conditions of life, and also the climate and fine appearance of the town (although the high winds also produced clouds of dust). Odessa was to gain the reputation in Yiddish folklore of a city of pleasure ('to live like God in Odessa') and irreligion. Some of the early immigrants were bound to be rough pioneering types — inevitable because of the primitive conditions of life — and religious constraints tend generally to be relaxed on the frontiers of settlement; but many of the first settlers achieved prosperity as merchants and were on good terms with Russian officials.

The process of acculturation was aided by the arrival of another element from outside Russia. The image of Galician Jewry is normally one of Hassidism, cultural isolation, traditionalist ways, and often widespread poverty. But in the context of Odessa, the Galician immigrants of the early nineteenth century were very different. Coming especially from Brody, which had been under Austrian rule since the 1772 partition of Poland, they were enterprising merchants drawn by

the commercial potential of Odessa. Already orientated towards participation in affairs outside the Jewish community from their involvement in inter-regional and international commerce, they wanted to enhance their skills in this respect and to ensure that their children developed a background of adaptation to the world of commerce. There was also an element of ideological motivation towards modernization, which manifested itself in some reform of worship rituals and an openness to intellectual enquiry, and this in turn owed something to the cultural climate of Odessa. The Galicians who acquired a key position in the grain trade achieved from about 1830 a virtual dominance in the communal institutions, if only because they were then the wealthiest element.

A notable consequence was the formation in 1826 of what became the most effective modern Jewish school in Russia, where after a few years pupils no longer studied Talmud (which was the core, and indeed the greater part, of the curriculum of traditional Jewish education in Russia). Unlike the government schools founded by Uvarov in the 1840s, the Odessa school was not notorious for Christian, mainly convert, teachers; and it was attended by pupils from a wide social range. Dr Zipperstein attributes its success to the higher salaries of teachers, which the wealth of Odessa Jewry could afford, and to the incentives for a secular education which the local economic opportunities offered. The school was followed by changes in synagogal practice, which, while not reaching anything like the extremes of German or American Reform Judaism, made changes in matters like the introduction of regular sermons, choirs, and the appropriation of rented seats; and these were later followed by more drastic innovations like the confirmation of girls and the use of an organ. *Maskilim* (those who advocated *Haskalah*) played a central role in Jewish communal affairs by the 1840s. Their leader was Bezalel Stern; he was both the headmaster of the school and the non-traditionalist member appointed to the St Petersburg Rabbinical Commission.

Odessa Jews in general, not only the *maskilim*, took part in cultural activities — opera, music, theatre; a Russian writer described the Odessa Jew in 1839 as 'fanatico per la musica' (p. 65). This was a tendency which left its legacy in Odessa's distinction as a centre for *hazzanut* (the art of synagogue cantors) and later as the home of Jewish violinists like Mischa Elman and David Oistrakh.

In the 1860s, Odessa became a major *Haskalah* centre during the Russification movement of the earlier, reforming years of Alexander II. After the municipal reform of 1863, half the city's elected councillors were Jews. A Hebrew, Yiddish, and Russian Jewish press developed — notably with Alexander Zederbaum's *HaMelits* — and it became a centre of Jewish publishing.

While the economic fortunes of Odessa declined as a result of the Crimean War and the subsequent competition of American grain exports, the Jews' relative position within the economy strengthened and by 1875 over 60 per cent of the city's commercial firms were Jewish. Odessa was regarded as the example of what Jews could do for the Russian economy if given the chance. Secular education was taken for granted; neglect of Jewish religious practice was widespread. While the community was outwardly and officially traditional, there was a combination of religious indifference with occasional conformity that prefigures certain western Jewish phenomena — as in the case of the man who on a Sabbath rushed in from business to say *Kaddish*, hastily extinguishing his cigarette before entering the synagogue (p. 131).

The 1860s in Odessa were a period in which the city's Jews showed themselves apparently at ease in security and self-confidence. But their expectation of the inevitability of progress and the eventual success of Russification was jarred by the pogrom of 1871 which killed six, injured 21 and, because it spread to all the Jewish neighbourhoods, left thousands homeless (p. 114). There had been disturbances before in Odessa but they were put down by the authorities. The 1871 pogrom became serious because the police did not intervene after rumours were started by the Jews' rivals, the Greeks. The riots showed animosity rather than a desire to loot as the motive; and the non-Jewish members of the local intelligentsia did not rise to the defence of the victims but blamed the Jews who, they said, by their acquisition of wealth had 'created the oppressive economic circumstances in which such action was the only avenue for self-defence' (p. 124).

After 1871 modernization continued apace in Odessa; but the Jewish intellectuals became increasingly disillusioned with the benefits of Russification. While, for reasons which applied in Russia as a whole, there was an increase in the number of Jews receiving secular education, this contrasted with a decline in Odessa's prosperity; and, though the increase in Jewish secular education and the economic decline arose from different causes, their conjunction was a contradiction of *Haskalah* theory, under which economic and educational advances should go hand-in-hand. It was not unexpected therefore that from the 1880s onwards Odessa should give rise to new schools of thought about the solutions of the Jewish people's problems, and that acculturation and Russification should be followed by new responses such as Jewish nationalism and Zionism. Odessa was then the city of Pinsker and of M. L. Lilienblum (whose complex intellectual development is lucidly analysed by the author).

Dr Zipperstein's book stops at 1881, on the eve of what has been termed 'the epoch of Odessa' — from 1881 to 1914, when many Jewish intellectuals moved to Odessa and it became a great centre of Zionism, Hebrew writing, and Jewish publishing, with innumerable literary

figures. The survey concentrates on the intellectual and religious history of the formative years when Odessa seemed to be giving a lead to what other Russo-Jewish communities might develop in the way of acculturation and 'progress' as an answer to the Jewish future. In analysing these trends, Dr Zipperstein shows how modernization was the result more of local factors and practical motives than of conscious responses to ideological considerations.

As for Los Angeles Jewry, this too is a community which in very different circumstances has seemed in the last half century to move faster and farther towards what might have been regarded as the natural evolution of American Jewish life; and this is reflected in the book under review's subtitle: 'A Window to Tomorrow'. It is claimed on the jacket that the Jews of Los Angeles are 'creating a third Jewish civilization in which secularism is confronting religious tradition' — something that an observer of Odessa in 1870 might have speculated about.

Los Angeles, the ultimate in city development in the age of the automobile, has been described as forty suburbs in search of a metropolis. It is a polycentric metropolis both linked and divided by freeways. Its Jews have had to adapt themselves to this most extreme form of metropolitan living and in doing so have developed features which may be portents for the future of many western Diaspora communities. Dr Sandberg's book is primarily based on an analysis of interviews with Jewish adults aged 18 and over; 500 individuals were selected in a representative sample but in the event only 413 interviews were conducted. The processing of the data was completed in 1979. Dr Sandberg, who is a sociologist and Western Regional Director of the American Jewish Committee, enhances his Los Angeles material with references to other recent American surveys of Jewish communities. But he provides no map, although geographical distinctions and urban migration within the metropolitan area are matters discussed in the text. Nor does he provide much historical background, although this is remediable because there is an excellent *History of the Jews of Los Angeles* by Max Vorspan and Lloyd P. Gartner, published in 1970 by the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

There was a small, pioneering Jewish community in Los Angeles since 1861; it graduated from nominal orthodoxy to outright Reform Judaism in less than twenty-five years (causing the resignation of the rabbi who had come from Poland). But the great expansion of the Jewish community came with the Second World War and after. With over half a million Jews, Los Angeles is probably the third largest Jewish metropolis in the world, after New York and Greater Tel Aviv. Yet up to 70 per cent of the Jewish residents have come there since the last war. Migration to Los Angeles has been essentially from elsewhere in the United States, so that the Jewish arrivals were already Americanized before settling in the city.

What one can see in Los Angeles is a new approach to the definition of Jewish identity: 'Religion used to be the key defining characteristic of a multi-faceted Jewish identity. This has been overlaid, but not completely replaced, by ethnic Jewishness — a sense of peoplehood or national identity' (p. 63). Dr Sandberg has tried to measure the impact of factors like the Holocaust, the existence of and threats to the State of Israel, and antisemitism in making non-religious Jews take up Jewish causes when they might otherwise have left the community. To some extent this trend has been favoured by the current tendency of Americans to identify with some kind of group and the emergence of 'ethnicity as a new social category, as significant as that of social class' (pp. 64–65). The importance of these organizationally unaffiliated Jews, who yet feel an 'ethnic' tie to the Jewish community, is highlighted by the fact that the survey shows that 55 per cent of those in Los Angeles regarding themselves as Jewish did not belong to a synagogue or to any other Jewish communal organization; only 28.9 per cent were members of a synagogue (p. 70). That Los Angeles is way ahead of America generally in this process of disaffiliation is shown by the estimate in 1973 that nearly half the adult Jewish population of the United States — or nearly twice the Los Angeles percentage —reported membership of a synagogue; although the tendency was also noted for 'the percentage of those affiliated with Jewish religious and communal institutions . . . to decrease as the size of community increases' (p. 67).

Within the synagogally affiliated section of the population, 18 per cent claimed membership of Orthodox, 47 per cent of Conservative, and 33 per cent of Reform synagogues; about one quarter of the respondents — almost as many as those who claimed synagogue membership — classified themselves as secular, atheist, or agnostic (p. 73). The definition of Orthodox for this purpose seems to be somewhat flexible, since only 38 per cent of the Orthodox (as against 26 per cent of the Conservative and 11.8 per cent of the Reform) 'would respond negatively to a child's intermarriage'. This attitude towards the intermarriage of their children on the part of those who themselves had not intermarried has produced an increasing trend towards intermarriage. Whereas, in the sample, only about 20 per cent of all Los Angeles Jews who are married have non-Jewish spouses, it is significant that intermarriage was found in 11.6 per cent of the first-generation immigrants, 12.7 per cent of the second, 28.8 per cent of the third, and 43.6 per cent of the fourth generations (p. 141).

There are interesting, if unsurprising, figures on Jewish religious observance. Even among those religiously affiliated only 27.7 per cent bought Kasher meat and 18.5 per cent kept separate milk and meat utensils at home; and only 40.3 per cent lighted Sabbath candles. The figures among the unaffiliated majority were minimal. On the other hand, 46 per cent of the unaffiliated lit Hanukkah candles and 58.5 per

cent attended a *seder* on Passover. 'Those who are religiously affiliated are very selective about traditional observance and have developed a new concensus of what is deemed to be acceptable religious behavior. Rituals and holidays that require the least ongoing obligation or sacrifice are the most kept, including attendance at high holiday services and Passover seders [*sic*], fasting on Yom Kippur, and lighting Hanukkah candles. Religious requirements calling for frequent and regular observance are performed less often, including lighting Sabbath candles, buying kasher meat and keeping separate dishes' (p. 75). It should be remembered in assessing these trends that the vast majority (80 per cent) of those affiliated to synagogues are members of Conservative or Reform congregations. The development of the *seder* as a mark of ethnicity — two-thirds of the sample report attending one — is an example of the development of new key marks of identification among unaffiliated Jews. In contrast to the emergence of the new type of unaffiliated ethnic Jew, there is some evidence of an increase in observance among the minority who are religiously affiliated.

There is a very important chapter in Dr Sandberg's book, too detailed to be summarized adequately in a review, about the new Jewish ideology of 'survivalism', which has almost taken on the characteristics of a 'civil religion'. Roughly the same proportion as those who are unaffiliated to any Jewish organization, 57.7 per cent, although not necessarily the same people, define Jews in ethnic-cultural terms. For this majority of Los Angeles Jews the impact and memory of the Holocaust, the survival of Israel, and antisemitism are all crucial factors in their identification as Jews. There is an interest in Jewish culture, and a growing interest in Yiddish, but one wonders how far this ethnic-cultural definition of Jewishness will survive for more than the present generation, in view of the high rate of intermarriage.

Thus both Odessa and Los Angeles present the picture of the development of a new type of Diaspora Jew. Odessa held out the prospect of a Jew at home in both Jewish and European culture, adapting to his Russian environment and making a valued contribution to it. That dream vanished in the harsh light of Russian persecutions and was replaced by new nationalist (including Zionist) responses. Los Angeles, while the affiliated minority are not unaffected by the strengthening of the movement for return to traditional Jewish values, presents for the majority a new type of secular Jew, perhaps paralleling similar trends within Israel itself; and Dr Sandberg's study of Los Angeles may help to discern the hallmarks of this new type of Jew and assess the prospects of its viability.

A final word about the contrasting characters of these two books. Dr Zipperstein's work is marked by careful scholarship, mastery of sources, and a lucidity of style. He has had to base himself mainly on printed matter — books and newspapers — because there was no

practicable access to the archival material that presumably still exists in Russia; and he has used material in archives in America and Israel as well as in the British consular reports in the Public Record Office. Dr Sandberg's main source is the community survey, and perhaps a layman may enter a reservation about whether 413 interviews, however carefully selected the sample was, can reliably provide the data for all the detailed conclusions about smaller sub-groups within the sample. Dr Sandberg, according to the biographical information in the book, has served as 'an adjunct professor of sociology' and his style bears this out. A not unfair example is the following sentence on pp. 66–67: 'Those who do not successfully go through the process of ego synthesis during this period are likely to be subject to identity diffusion'.

BOOK REVIEWS

RONALD S. AIGEN and GERSHON D. HUNDERT, eds, *Community and the Individual Jew: Essays in Honor of Lavy M. Becker*, viii + 195 pp., Reconstructionist Rabbinical College Press, Philadelphia, 1986, $20.00 (paperback, $12.00).

Part I of this *Festschrift* to a prominent Canadian rabbi and communal leader on his eightieth birthday contains, among others, articles on the various ways in contemporary Jewish life in which attempts are made to reconcile modernity with tradition. Robert Gordis, representing Conservative Judaism, compares and contrasts Jewish and Christian fundamentalism; W. Gunther Plaut assesses Reform Judaism in the 1980s; Emanuel Rackman notes the wide diversity of opinion within Orthodoxy today; Jacob J. Staub remarks on the legacy of Reconstructionism, the philosophy espoused by Mr Becker himself under the influence of Mordecai Kaplan, and Jack J. Cohen also considers Reconstructionist philosophy in the second half of the volume. As the editors observe, although Zionism does not qualify as a religious movement in the sense in which the other four do, it is proper to have an article on this fifth movement in Jewish life in Canada and the United States; and Arthur Hertzberg, the Zionist historian, writes on 'Nahum Goldmann's Zionist Legacy'.

The articles in Part II, under the heading 'Jewish Studies', present issues of communal life in the various eras of Jewish civilization. Of particular interest to readers of this Journal are contributions of Michaël Oppenheim on 'The Concept of Community in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig and Eliezer Schweid' and of Michael Brown on the Canadian connections of Sir Moses Montefiore.

It might be pedantic to point out that the editorial reference (p. 2) to Hillel as 'Rabbi Hillel' is an anachronism. 'Rabbi' as a 'Rabbinic' title had not yet come into vogue in Hillel's day. As the Geonim say: 'Greater than the title *Rabban* is the [unadorned] name' and they say it with particular reference to Hillel and his contemporaries.

The book is a useful contribution to the study of Jewish life and thought but it is not substantial enough to be hailed as a really significant volume of studies.

LOUIS JACOBS

STEVEN M. COHEN and PAULA E. HYMAN, eds, *The Jewish Family: Myths and Reality*, viii + 242 pp., Holmes & Meier, New York and London, 1986, $42.50.

Most of the chapters in this book (although it is not stated which) were first presented as papers at a Conference on the Evolving Jewish Family, held in New York in 1981. There are sixteen short chapters, divided into six sections. The first two sections are mainly historical, with contributions by well-known scholars such as Shlomo Deshen and Moshe Shokeid, who both deal with Moroccan Jewish families in Israel. Other, more daring, contributions (such as those of Gershon Hundert and David Biale), speculate about the possibility that Hassidism, Haskalah, and other eastern European social movements were products respectively of youthful rebellion and a briefly documented youth (population) explosion. Both use Responsa literature as data, without discussing the quality and significance of that material, while Deshen has some pertinent comments to make on this subject.

There are three 'literary' papers which are only marginally relevant to the central theme of the book. More important are the next three papers on demography. Calvin Goldscheider presents valuable material on family and ethnicity in Israel; Sergio Della Pergola provides a fascinating study of North African Jews in France and in Israel; and Frances Goldscheider looks at the 'Yiddish-Mother-tongue Subpopulation' in the United States 1970 Census, arguing for distinctive, though statistically untested, differences between this group and the United States total population.

In the next section, William Shaffir highlights a fundamental issue in his account of Hassidic families in Canada: they are determined to maintain their chosen isolation from wider socio-cultural influences. In what must surely rank as the best and most original chapter of the book, Chava Weissler offers a detailed analysis of a Bar Mitzvah in an American *havurah*. These new groups (the *havurot*) appear to be a mixture of Reform (for example, men and women participating together in religious services) and Conservatism (where the structure of the service is much closer to the Orthodox version). Central to her discussion is the role of community, one of the most significant features in most types of Jewish family, though not seriously considered by other contributors.

If there are any core characteristics of the *Jewish* family (as opposed to a family composed of Jews), then its relationship to community would be one of these. A *Jewish* family does not and indeed cannot function as a private domain. It remains Jewishly alive only so long as the community intrudes into the family and the family protrudes into the community. The family, in varying degrees, but at all times, operates as part of a public domain. This has profound implications for

family structure and the distribution of social roles, particularly those of women. As I have argued elsewhere ('Family Structure and the Position of Jewish Women' in Werner E. Mosse *et al.*, eds, *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 in German-Jewish History*, Tubingen, 1981, p. 180):

> If in the traditional Jewish family the roots of communal action reside in the family, then the privatisation of the family on the one hand deprived the religious involvement of the woman in the home of public status and thereby excluded her from the communal domain, and on the other, it imposed barriers between the family which was now private and communal organisation which becomes public. What is more, the privatised status of the woman was now equated with her position in society, because as a public domain, communality had lost the capacity to provide the affirmation of justice and the reinforcing vitality through which communal service had hitherto normalised and repaid the home, thus sponsoring a wholly spurious justification for the increasing isolation of Jewish women and their corresponding alienation from traditional roots.

What Chava Weissler demonstrates in her paper is an attempt in the *Havurah* movement to restore to the Reform-orientated family a return to community, designed, it would seem, to re-establish the family in the public sphere and thereby enhance its Jewishness. It is a promising development. Another hopeful note is struck by the co-editor of this book, Steven M. Cohen, who (unlike most community leaders and demographers) does not see the increasing proportion of SCIDs (singles, childless, intermarrying, and divorced) in the American Jewish community as a threat to Jewish survival.

JULIUS CARLEBACH

STUART A. COHEN and ELIEZER DON-YEHIYA, eds, *Conflict and Consensus in Jewish Political Life* (Volume II of 'Comparative Jewish Politics' series), 212 pp., Bar-Ilan University Press, Ramat Gan, 1986, $20.00.

From the outset, the editors of this latest volume to emerge from the Department of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University make it clear that its contents do not permit 'the postulation of grand and synoptic hypotheses concerning the structure and processes of Jewish public life'; and they readily concede that what they do show is the rich variety of the fabric of Jewish society, which is too complex to allow the 'offhand formulation of a general typology of Jewish political behaviour' (p. 7). What then is the purpose of this somewhat arbitrary collection of interesting essays? Again, to quote the editor, it is 'to investigate individual instances of Jewish communal discourse and to examine some of the consequences to which each gave rise within its own particular temporal and geographic context' (p. 7).

Having been told this, it should come as no surprise to the reader to find that at least seven of this volume's twelve chapters deal with events and communities in the past, reaching as far back in the case of the first study by Leah Bornstein-Makovetsky to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In a sense, this opening chapter (which is concerned with relations between *Parnasim* and Rabbis in the communities of the Ottoman Empire) illustrates the essential weakness of the entire book. Each individual case study constitutes something of an historical and political curiosity. This is not to deny their intrinsic importance, but it is not easy to appreciate their broader meaning in contributing to our understanding of political processes and behaviour.

Take for example the fascinating discussion by Professor David Vital, entitled 'The Afflictions of the Jews and the Afflictions of Zionism (The Meaning and Consequences of the "Uganda" Controversy)'. Whatever possessed Herzl to believe that the Jewish People could be persuaded to accept Uganda as their homeland? Vital explains, with his usual clarity, that for Herzl and his supporters Zionism was a matter of the utmost urgency. There had to be an immediate solution to the Jewish question even if it had to be found elsewhere than in Eretz Israel. But his opponents believed that for the sake of Jewish continuity, that is in order to ensure the Jewish character of the Zionist state, the historical, cultural, and religious links with the Land of Israel were essential. They preferred, says Vital, to ignore the dangerous external environment and focused instead on inner Jewish life.

There can be little doubt that the Uganda controversy was of immense importance in the history of the Zionist movement, just as issues discussed elsewhere in the book were vital in their time. Professor Anita Shapira in 'The Struggle for "Jewish Labour" — Concept and Consequences' is concerned with a matter of major significance in the history of the Yishuv; but it is doubtful whether the general public saw it as such at the time. In an age when Nazism was on the rise in Europe and when issues such as the murder of Arlosoroff, Revisionism, and the partition of Palestine loomed larger in the public consciousness, the principle of Jewish labour (*Avodah Ivrit*) was the focus of debate among comparatively few ideologues. Where Jewish labour was concentrated, in the cities, few Arabs were employed and in the rural areas the number of Jewish colonies was too small to be a problem. Like the Uganda controversy, however, the real significance of the issue lay elsewhere. For according to Professor Shapira, the dramatic struggles for Jewish labour had enormous educational value ' by creating in the public mind the basis for accepting an ideology, whose political postulate was the separation between Jewish and Arab societies' (p. 100). This made partition seem a natural solution to the problems of two very different peoples with two different economic and social systems sharing the same territory.

Whether we are discussing the Jewish world of Herzl or the Palestinian world of the Yishuv, we are referring to the self-contained political environment of the community. In a sense, size is unimportant — what matters is the voluntary relationship or identification of the individual with the collectivity. Where this particular collection of essays is to be faulted is in its failure to draw a clear distinction between the historical context of the Jewish People and the contemporary situation where Jews are citizens of their own State. This distinction is important for two reasons.

First, today in the Diaspora few Jews live in self-contained communities such that their lives can be more than marginally affected by autonomous internal political processes. The two largest communities in the Diaspora, in the United States and in the Soviet Union, live under two very different economic and social systems, although both, in their separate ways, deny more than a very limited local autonomy to their citizens. Even in the United States, there has been a massive shift of economic and political power from the periphery to the centre, and a standard uniformity of social mores and values has been imposed by both the education system and the media of mass communications. This is not to belittle the contributions in this volume by Chaim I. Waxman and Emanuel Rackman on the American Jewish Community, nor the interesting comparative study by Stuart A. Cohen on the historical conflict over Zionism in Anglo-Jewry entitled 'Same Places, Different Faces — A Comparison of Anglo-Jewish Conflicts over Zionism during World War I and World War II'. Rather, it is to question their relevance.

Second, the five chapters in the book which do deal with contemporary issues are all concerned with internal Israeli affairs. Sam Lehman-Wilzig writes about 'Conflict as Communication — Public Protest in Israel, 1950–1982', while three chapters deal with religious controversies. Few would disagree with Eliezer Don-Yehiya in his essay on 'The Resolution of Religious Conflicts in Israel' where he says that problems of religion and state 'are among the most divisive issues in Israeli politics: they reflect deep-rooted differences of opinion and ways of life within Jewish society in Israel' (p. 203). For the contemporary Jew living in Israel, his association with Jewish political life is neither voluntary nor marginal. It is the life of the state of which he is a full and equal citizen. He has rights, but he also has obligations — the first of which is the obligation to obey the law. The differences between state and religion arise not over points of theology or even of ideology, but from the ability of the state to impose its politically-determined will on its citizens.

Thus Jewish political life today takes on a character very different from that of the past. In the Diaspora, autonomous Jewish political existence is threatened less by persecution or discrimination (although

in such countries as the Soviet Union this still persists) than it is by centralizing pressures both from within the host society as well as, and by no means least, from Israel. In Israel itself, apart from the historical legacies to be found in the traditional political parties and the ideologies they espouse, there is little that is distinctively Jewish about political life. There is a peculiarly Israeli polity with specific Israeli political processes.

Interesting and important as most of the essays in this volume undoubtedly are, paradoxically they tell us all too little about conflict and consensus in Jewish political life as it is today in both the Diaspora and Israel.

DAVID CAPITANCHIK

NAHUM M. SARNA, *Exploring Exodus*, xii + 277 pp., Schocken, New York, 1986, $17.95.

Following the very helpful and hugely successful guide to the first book of the Bible, *Understanding Genesis*, Dr Nahum Sarna now provides a guide, on the same lines, to the second book of the Bible. The two great themes of the Creation and the Exodus are, as the author observes, at the centre of the Biblical message. In Sarna's work the Bible is seen with the eyes of a Jewish scholar; 'Jewish' because his exposition takes full account of the theological and didactic aspects; 'scholar' because the assured results of modern Biblical criticism are never ignored, as they are in a fundamentalist approach, but, on the contrary, are used to throw light on the Biblical record.

All the tremendous themes of the book of Exodus are explored — the bondage; the character of Moses; the burning bush; the ten plagues; the hardening of Pharaoh's heart; the first Passover; the Exodus itself; the crossing of the Sea of Reeds (and why this came erroneously to be called the Red Sea); the Decalogue; the laws in the Covenant Code; and the golden calf and the building of the Tabernacle. In his treatment of these themes Sarna draws on the insights of other scholars while conveying his own insights; this makes for an exercise in sound scholarship with easy readability — and since the two rarely go together, this is a remarkable achievement.

Sarna's approach is based on a comparative methodology used without obscuring the uniqueness of the Bible. He states (p. xi): 'While it is today unassailable that the Sacred Scriptures cannot be adequately understood and appreciated except within the context of the world out of which they emerged, I am not addicted to "parallelelomania" . . . . It seems to me obvious that contrast is a more analytical index of cultural configuration than is comparison, and for this reason I have made a point of emphasizing differences at least as much as similarities when drawing upon ancient Near Eastern materials'.

There are many problems in connection with the book of Exodus, some of which were noted by the medieval Jewish commentators, some giving rise to modern critical theory. Sarna shirks none of these problems, which is not to say that every solution offered, his or that of other experts, is entirely satisfactory and equally convincing. One illustration can be given here. The book of Exodus states that at the time of the Exodus there were 'about six hundred thousand men on foot'. Together with the women, children and the 'mixed multitude' this would make a total of around two million, equal to the population of a city like Manchester, as Bishop Colenso, a pioneer of Pentateuchal criticism, put it in the last century. Except by a miracle, how could Moses have spoken to such a vast assembly in single speeches, as the narrative suggests? And how could the 70 souls who came down to Egypt have produced so many descendants in the space of four or five generations? And how can this span of four or five generations be accommodated to the 430 years the narrative states the Israelites were in Egypt? Sarna points out that Scripture often subsumes under the heading of an event or an epoch happenings that really occurred at diverse times but which have a unified pattern. Since the building of the Temple in Jerusalem by King Solomon was the culmination of the Exodus saga, the 430 years are from the actual Exodus to that event. 'Viewed from this perspective, the Exodus population problem loses its severity because the figure of six hundred thousand takes on quite a different connotation. It represents the Israelite population at the time of David and Solomon, which was seen to be the culmination of the Exodus era that began with the liberation from Egyptian slavery. This era constitutes, in the mind of the narrator, a continuum in which variation in time and content is effaced as being meaningless' (p. 102). Of course, if this is accepted, the 'narrator' lived not earlier than the time of David and Solomon so that, whoever he was, he was not Moses, as the fundamentalists would maintain. This is all very well but Sarna might have devoted at least a couple of paragraphs to the question of the authorship of the Pentateuch'; I have been unable to find any direct reference to this either in *Understanding Genesis* or in *Exploring Exodus*.

Nevertheless, every student of the Bible will be indebted to Sarna for this book and will look forward to further instalments — on Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy — from his gifted pen.

LOUIS JACOBS

JONATHAN SACKS, ed., *Tradition and Transition: Essays Presented to Chief Rabbi Sir Immanuel Jakobovits to celebrate twenty years in office*; English section, 324 pp.; Hebrew section, lv pp.; Jews' College Publications, London, 1986, £20.00.

This tribute to the Chief Rabbi's personality and achievements consists of 20 articles in English, four in Hebrew, a brief Introduction by the

Editor, an Appreciation by Lionel Swift, and a comprehensive bibliography of the Chief Rabbi's astonishingly wide output, compiled by Ruth P. Goldschmidt-Lehmann. It is perhaps useful to compare the volume with those published to honour Sir Immanuel's predecessors —*Essays Presented to J. H. Herz Chief Rabbi on his seventieth birthday*, edited by I. Epstein, E. Levine, and C. Roth, London, 1942; and *Essays presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie on the occasion of his seventieth birthday*, edited by H.J. Zimmels, J. Rabbinowitz, and I. Finestein, London, 1967 (this latter also a Jews' College Publication).

All three volumes have a Hebrew and an English section and all three are tributes to a British Chief Rabbi but there the resemblance ends. A major difference lies in the ratio of contributors residing in the United Kingdom to those residing elsewhere. Three of the nine authors in the Hebrew section of the Hertz volume, 24 of the 32 in the English section (six of these non-Jews), resided in England. Nine of the 15 authors in the Hebrew section of the Brodie volume and 19 of the 29 in the English section lived in Britain. Two of the four authors in the Hebrew section of the Jakobovits volume but only four of the 20 in the English section live in the United Kingdom. No fewer than nine are residents of the United States and their essays have been printed in the style and spelling in which they were written. (Moreover, no attempt at consistency in transliteration has been made: the Hebrew letter *het* is variously rendered as 'h' and as 'ch'). Why have so many scholars working in this country been overlooked? It would be invidious to mention names, but anyone familiar with the Jewish scholarly scene will be bound to know reputable scholars who were either invited to contribute and declined the invitation or were not invited at all. Apart from the Editor, whose contribution is limited to a two-page Introduction, none of the teachers at Jews' College itself appears in these pages, unlike the case in the Hertz and Brodie volumes. Readers of this Journal may be tempted to account for it somehow on sociological grounds.

Apart from the difference in matters of authorship is the difference in quality of the contents. Whereas all the essays in the Hertz volume and most of those in the Brodie volume are original contributions to Jewish scholarship, less than half of the essays in the book under review qualify as solid scholarship, even if the scope of the subject is extended to cover modern Jewish history and sociological studies. Some of the others are marred by a strongly homiletical tone. If sermons were considered suitable, why not real sermons rather than thinly disguised ones?

This criticism cannot fairly be levelled against the four Hebrew contributions (one of which is by the Chief Rabbi's son), even though these are, in fact, pure Halakhic Responsa. They are fully entitled to their place, particularly since three of them are in the field of the Chief Rabbi's specialty — medical ethics.

Both the eminent Halakhist and Orthodox thinker, J. David Bleich, and the renowned author, Elie Wiesel, deal with the Talmudic 'legend' (so-called by Wiesel; Bleich evidently treats the story as factual) of the Heavenly voice which decided in favour of the House of Hillel against the House of Shammai. But, instead of considering this important topic, the reliance on supernatural communications in order to determine the law, historically, Bleich treats us to what he himself calls 'a philosophical pilpul' (quite brilliant, as pilpul often is, but poles removed from scholarly investigation) while Wiesel writes as if he were telling one of his Hassidic tales, as only he can, but neither is that scholarship.

Bernard M. Casper's 'Reshit Zemichat Geulatenu' is little more than an apologia for right-wing, religious Zionism, as is Harold Fisch's 'Purim and Hanukkah: A Phenomenological Comparison' for contemporary Jewish activism, not to say hawkishness. The case for both can be argued but surely not in a *Festschrift* for a scholar. Similarly, Reuven P. Bulka's 'Characteristics of Rabbinic Leadership — A Psychological View' and Cyril Domb's 'The Torah Concept of Leadership', while containing useful hints on how rabbis and their congregations can get along together, would have been more appropriately placed in a rabbinic journal of the kind put out by the United Synagogue.

In short, even those who may consider that Lionel Swift's fulsome praise of the Chief Rabbi is somewhat exaggerated will still think that he has not been honoured as befits him in this *Festschrift* and will hope that a far better and more scholarly tribute may be prepared for him on his seventieth birthday,

LOUIS JACOBS

ALEX WEINGROD, ed., *Studies in Israeli Ethnicity: After the Ingathering*, xix + 361 pp., Gordon and Breach, New York, 1985, $49.00.

This book is the published version of the proceedings of a conference on Israeli ethnicity that took place in June 1980 (with a postscript by the editor). Since the sixteen conference papers were written independently of one another and have varying subjects and standpoints, the book, like most volumes of conference proceedings, is not a unified treatise. Some of the chapters are ethnographic: on Yemenis, Moroccan folk-healers, Druze, Iranians. Others deal with more general themes: mobility, politics. And a number discuss the theoretical implications of the way in which the very subject of ethnicity has been treated in Israeli sociology.

The last mentioned topic gives the collection the unity it possesses. Israeli sociology began its work shortly after the establishment of the State of Israel; and it had assimilationist expectations. School and

army would be the key institutional agents of a process by which immigrants of diverse origins and backgrounds would be 'absorbed'. But then the facts of demography — and also the facts of human life — threw a wrench into a doctrinaire understanding of this process. The Eastern or Oriental Jews, the *edot ha-Mizrah* (which the editor persistently transliterates as *eidot mizrakh*) who, among others, were to be 'absorbed', came to outnumber by a slight majority the Ashkenazim who had — and still have — social and political hegemony in Israel. In the face of this change, Israeli sociology was compelled to take a turn of which the 'recognition of pluralism' is a convenient if superficial formulation. An immigrant commented: 'In Iran I was a Jew. Here I am an Iranian'; this is the type of reaction which the 'pluralists' brought to light.

Now the social and political implications of the demographic change are surely present in the thoughts of each and every contributor to this book. But having duly noted this fact, one is bound to register disappointment with the way in which these scholars have (or have not) pursued an interesting and important question. Part of the problem arises because many of them seem to be more interested in clarifying sociological 'models' and 'paradigms' than in giving a coherent politico-ethnographic account of the ethnic story in Israel. Yet nothing less than such an account can suffice as the foundation for intelligible and useful theorizing.

It is of interest to point out that the postscript was written well after the conference — in fact, after the General Election of June 1981. The editor admits that he was very surprised by the way the distinction between the Ashkenazim and the *edot ha-Mizrah* became a central if not dominant issue of the election in which Labour and the Likud drew disproportionately from each group respectively. He also asserts that nearly everyone else was equally so surprised. Perhaps that was, in fact, the case; but what is clear is the impact which the animated if not acrimonious electoral campaign and the Likud victory had on the editor. For his postscript has an altogether different tone from that of any of the contributors. Here, in the light of a political event, we are given the rudiments of a comprehensive account. Here, the editor states, in plain English, that Ashkenazi hegemony had been challenged. In turn, he points out other details of the change in relative status of the *edot ha-Mizrah*. As for the sociological question of 'absorption' versus 'pluralism', the editor judiciously abandons a simplistic 'either/or' dichotomy. The existence of the two communities can no longer be swept under the carpet; he notes (p. 350): 'the ethnicity genie is out of the bottle' but he does no more than raise the question of what the implications might be. He is thinking primarily of internal tensions about ethnic political power. However narrow such a consideration that makes light of differing political opinions — are the

edot ha-Mizrah more likely to be doves or hawks, pro-capitalist or pro-socialist? — he is to be congratulated for at least raising the question. And there is the paradox that in the face of a manifested political cleavage the rate of intermarriage between the two communities is actually increasing.

HOWARD BROTZ

CHRONICLE

The Summer 1986 issue of *News from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem*, received in London at the end of last October, states that some fifty senior Israeli civil servants 'participated in a 12-week seminar on "Sources of Tension and Conflict in Israeli Society" at the University's Martin Buber Institute for Adult Education. The seminar . . . was intended to give policy and decision makers in the government a deeper understanding of various problems existing in Israeli society that lead to tension and conflict, such as issues concerning the social gap, the status of religion and state, and relations between religious and secular citizens and between Jews and Arabs'.

*

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Free University of Berlin have entered into an agreement for co-operation in the areas of teaching and research; for an exchange of teaching personnel and students as well as an exchange of scientific information; and for joint research projects and conferences, especially in the field of Jewish studies.

The Hebrew University has also entered into an agreement with the Pontifical Gregorian University. There will be an 'exchange of scholars and students, scholarships for exchange students, collaborative research projects, scholarly conferences and mutual visits. The Hebrew University's Institute of Jewish Studies will aid the Gregorian University in developing Jewish Studies programs'.

*

The Hebrew University's Martin Buber Institute for Adult Education conducts a Hebrew–Arabic *ulpan* (language instruction programme). That *ulpan* was started in 1967 and more than 7,000 persons have studied either Hebrew or Arabic since that date. The pedagogical director of the Institute stated that a survey carried out among the *ulpan* students some years ago 'showed that the Jews who study Arabic in the ulpan do so mainly for ideological reasons in order to create conditions that can further co-existence and to learn the language and culture of their neighbors, while the Arab students are mainly interested in learning Hebrew for practical reasons, in order to help them in their work and to get along in Israeli society'. Arab students are also studying Hebrew in extension classes in Hebron.

*

A Research Project on the History of the Jews of Hungary has been established at the Hebrew University. It will involve teaching, research, symposia, and the publication of materials relating to the Jews of Hungary and of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

*

The second international conference on the history of Jewish mysticism was held at the Hebrew University. The theme of the conference was 'The Beginnings of Jewish Mysticism in Europe'; and the areas of discussions were 'Jewish mysticism in the transitional period between ancient and medieval times; Ashkenaz Hassidism; the relationship of Jewish philosophy to mysticism; and Kabbalistic circles in the 13th century'. The conference was organized by the University's Gershom Scholem Center for the Study of Kabbalah and the Jewish National and University Library; the foreign scholars who attend the conference came from France, West Germany, and the United States.

*

The Winter 1986 issue of *Tel Aviv University News*, received in London last January, states that the Faculty of Medicine of Tel Aviv University has initiated a postgraduate course in internal medicine for Arab physicians. 'Thirty doctors from Beit Jala, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Jericho, and Hebron participated in the first course, and were awarded diplomas after six months of training. . . . The program is intended to familiarize West Bank doctors with the latest developments in internal medicine, while promoting co-operation between Arabs and Jews in the field of public health.' The Deputy Director of Ramallah Hospital, speaking on behalf of the graduates, 'said the course had helped to answer an urgent need for continuing medical education in the administered territories. He expressed the hope that it would continue, noting that patients in West Bank hospitals were already benefiting'.

*

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the Israel Association of the Volunteers of the International Brigade in Spain donated last year its archives to Tel Aviv University. The archives include posters, pamphlets, diaries, photographs, newspaper articles, and hundreds of letters 'documenting the experiences of the 300 volunteers from the Jewish settlements in Palestine who joined the besieged Spanish Republic in its struggle against fascism. The archives have been added to the Wiener Library of Antisemitism, the Holocaust, and Fascism, and will be organized and classified so that its unique contents can be made available for scholarly research'.

*

The School of History of Tel Aviv University has a new journal, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, which will be published twice yearly. In a foreword to the first issue, the editor states that the *Review* aspires 'to become the focal point for studies reflecting the internal movement of Mediterranean history' and 'also hopes to be a forum for those dealing with the mutual influences between the region and the outside world'.

*

A study conference on the self-definition of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism in the first to fifth centuries of the Common Era will be held at Westhill College, Selly Oak, Birmingham, England, from the 2nd to the 9th of

September 1987. The announcement of the conference states: 'The common roots of Judaism and Christianity and the reasons why they chose different paths will be the theme of this major study conference. As Christians and Jews overcome centuries of polemic and prejudice, they will be enabled to recognize the causes of past bitterness and to share in building a new future based on understanding and dialogue. The Conference is arranged jointly by The Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish/Christian Relations and The Council of Christians and Jews. It is also sponsored by the Theology Department of the University of Birmingham; Westhill College, Birmingham; Queen's College, Birmingham and the International Council of Christians and Jews.'

The address of The Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish/Christian Relations is Central House, Selly Oak Colleges, Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LQ, and the telephone number is 021–472 4231; and the address of The Council of Christians and Jews is 1 Dennington Park Road, West End Lane, London NW6 1AX, telephone: 01–794 8178.

*

The International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC) in co-operation with the All Africa Conference of Churches sponsored last November an African-Christian/Jewish Consultation in Nairobi. At the end of the four-day Consultation, the participants issued a statement expressing their profound gratitude to the sponsors and emphasizing that they were 'most eager for this encounter to be followed by ongoing joint efforts'.

*

The February 1987 issue of *Les Cahiers de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* states that in the academic year 1985–86 there were 15,644 pupils in 37 schools established by, or affiliated to, the *Alliance* in nine countries. This represents a slight increase over the previous year, when the total was 15,240. Israel had the largest number of pupils, 7,958, followed by Canada with 2,697, Iran with 1,664, Morocco with 1,280, Belgium with 600, France with 591, Syria with 409, Spain with 275, and the Netherlands wih 170. Only 566 out of the total of 1,664 in Iran were Jewish pupils.

*

It was announced last April that Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg will offer in the next academic year a BA Honours degree course majoring in Hebrew and Jewish Studies. The present Department of Hebrew Studies will be expanded to become the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies; and students will have the option of spending one full academic year at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

*

A monument has been erected in the town of Larissa in Greece in memory of its 235 Jewish citizens who were deported by the Nazis during the Second World War and perished in concentration camps. The monument is in the Square of the Jewish Martyrs of the Nazi Occupation, the site from which the

victims were deported, and the inscription reads: 'So that the tortures of the 235 innocent Jews of Larissa and their six million brethren who were victims of genocide in the Nazi concentration camps should not be forgotten, this statue was erected by the Jewish community in the square the town has dedicated to them'. The Greek Environment and Public Development Minister and the Mayor of Larissa attended the unveiling ceremony.

*

The April 1987 Report of the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization announces the establishment of the Interuniversity Fellowship Program in Jewish Studies and states: 'The Program is designed for serious students in Jewish studies at all levels, from advanced undergraduates to doctoral candidates completing their dissertations. They are offered the opportunity to spend a year working in the Department of Jewish Studies at one of Israel's universities. Students in the Program can take courses, do research in Israel's Judaic libraries, and have personal contact with Israeli scholars in the field. Each student's course of study and/or research will be designed to meet his/her own particular needs. In addition, students in the Program will participate in a joint seminar arranged especially for them. A small number of the very best students admitted to the Program will be awarded full fellowships, covering tuition, transportation, and a small grant toward living expenses in Israel. Students are nominated for the Program by their universities. They can also be in touch directly with the office of the Progam (330 Seventh Avenue, Suite 609, New York, N.Y. 10001)'.

The Report also states that Hebrew and Jewish studies are being taught in an increasing number of Universities. McGill University in Canada has now the first endowed chair in Jewish studies in Canada, called The Montreal Jewish Community Chair in Jewish Studies; Hebrew and Bible Studies are being offered in Nigeria in several governmental universities, according to the Head of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Jos, who attended the 1986 workshops of the International Center; the Free University of Brussels is to offer a degree in Jewish Culture and Civilization; Kent University in England is to offer two courses in Jewish law and an MA degree in Jewish and Islamic Law; and the Universities of Aix-Marseille I, II, and III at Toulon, Avignon, and Nice have jointly established the Institut Inter-Universitaire d'Etudes et de Culture Juives.

*

The Knesset Speaker's 1987 Prize for the enhancement of the quality of life in Israel has been awarded to Professor Moshe Davis in recognition of his 'distinguished contribution to the advancement of knowledge and understanding of Diaspora communities and to the strengthening of Israel's links with them'. Professor Davis is the Academic Chairman of the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization and the Founding Head of the Institute of Contemporary Jewry of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

*

An Institute for the Study of the Heritage of Ethiopian Jewry has been established in Jerusalem. It has also been agreed that the *kesim* (the Ethiopian community's traditional religious leaders) will co-operate with rabbis and advise Israel's rabbinical courts on the lineage of Ethiopian Jews.

*

Jerusalem's thirteenth international book fair was held last March, with more than a thousand publishers' stands from 40 countries, including Hungary, Japan, and Poland.

*

The Asia Pacific Jewish Association (APJA) held its biennial conference in Hong Kong last March. There were about 30 delegates from Australia, New Zealand, and from the small Jewish communities of Hong Kong, Japan, New Caledonia, Singapore, and Thailand. A parallel meeting of rabbis in the region agreed to set up a 'fraternity' to assist communities without a minister. It will be known as the Asia Pacific Rabbinical Association and it will help with services and with conversions under the auspices of the Australian Beth Din.

The APJA conference was followed by the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium on 'The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images'; there were four sessions: (1) on cultural perceptions of self and others, (2) on the emergence of stereotypes, (3) on the stranger phenomenon in society, and (4) on identity and national identity.

*

The Inter-Governmental Committee for Migration announced last May that a total of 717 Jews emigrated from the Soviet Union last April — the highest monthly number since 1,000 were allowed to leave the country in July 1981. The total of 717 is based on the arrivals in Vienna; last March 470 Jews came to Vienna while the figure for February was 146 and for January, 98. The Committee noted that the total of Soviet Jews who emigrated in 1986 was 943.

*

Bar-Ilan University in Israel announced last December that it is publishing a new journal entitled *The Journal of Social Work and Social Policy in Israel*. 'This new academic journal, to be published in the English language, will present scholarly papers from authors in Israel and abroad dealing with all aspects of social work and social policy, theory, research, and practice, relevant directly or indirectly to the State of Israel and its unique problems, needs, and contributions.' Those wishing to contribute or subscribe to the journal should write to the *Journal*, School of Social Work, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan 52100, Israel.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Books listed here may be reviewed later)

Clark, Anna, *Women's Silence, Men's Violence. Sexual Assault in England 1770–1845*, viii + 180 pp., Pandora Press, London and New York, 1987, paperback, £5.95.

Cohen, Arthur A. and Paul Mendes-Flohr, eds, *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought. Original Essays on Critical Concepts, Movements, and Beliefs*, xix + 1,163 pp., Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1987, n.p.

Cohen, Steve, *It's the same old story: Immigration controls against Jewish, Black and Asian People, with special reference to Manchester*, 44 pp., Manchester City Council, Manchester, 1987, £1.00, available by post from the Town Clerk's Department, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 2LA, England.

Davis, Moshe, ed., *With Eyes Toward Zion — Volume II. Themes and Sources in the Archives of the United States, Great Britain, Turkey and Israel*, xxvi + 408 pp., Praeger, New York, Westport, Ct, and London, 1986, $42.95.

de Lange, Nicholas, *Judaism*, ix + 156 pp., Oxford University Press, first published in 1986, Oxford and New York, 1987, paperback, £4.95.

Elazar, Daniel J., *Israel: Building a New Society*, xi + 287 pp., Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1986, $29.95.

Goldberg, Harvey E., ed., *Judaism Viewed from Within and from Without. Anthropological Studies*, x + 352 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1987, $44.50 (paperback, $16.95).

Samuel, Raphael, Barbara Bloomfield, and Guy Boanas, eds, *The Enemy Within. Pit Villages and the Miners' Strike of 1984–85* (History Workshop Series), xxiii + 260 pp., Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1986, £6.95.

Shaw, John W., Peter G. Nordlie, and Richard M. Shapiro, eds, *Strategies for Improving Race Relations. The Anglo-American Experience*, xiv + 226 pp., Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1987, £25.00.

Smith, Anthony D., *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, xviii + 312 pp., Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986, £25.00.

Stock, Ernest, *Partners & Pursestrings. A History of the United Israel Appeal*, xiv + 242 pp., University Press of America, Lanham, Md, 1987, paperback, $13.75 (hardback, $26.50).

Weinberg, Meyer, *Because They Were Jews. A History of Antisemitism*, xviii + 282 pp., Greenwood Press (represented in Europe by Westport Publications, London), New York, Westport, Ct, and London, 1986, £35.99.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

EL-DOR, Judith; M.A. High School counsellor in Israel.

KOHNO, Tetsu; Professor of English at Hosei University, Tokyo. Chief publications: in English, 'Tasting a Watermelon by its Peel: A Report on the Field Trip to the Hasidic Community in Brooklyn, New York City' in *Bulletin of the Hosei University Faculty of Liberal Arts*, no. 28, 1977 and 'American Jewry Observed' in the same *Bulletin*, no. 54, 1985; in Japanese, 'The American Pluralistic Society and Jews' and 'A Selective Bibliography on American Jewry' in *Chuo Hyoron*, June 1980; 'The Jewish Community in America' in *Eigo Seinen* (*The Rising Generation*), *Jewish–American Literature Special Number*, 1983; and 'The Particular and the Universal in the American Jewish Intellectual Scene' in *Amerika Kenkyu* (*The American Review*), no. 20, March 1986.

LIPMAN, V. D.; C.V.O., D.Phil. Honorary Research Fellow, University College London and Vice-President, Jewish Historical Society of England. Chief publications: *Social History of the Jews in England 1850–1950*, 1954; *A Century of Social Service: The Jewish Board of Guardians*, 1959; editor, *Three Centuries of Anglo–Jewish History*, 1961; *The Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 1967; and co-editor (with Sonia L. Lipman), *The Century of Moses Montefiore*, 1985.

SHAFFIR, William; Ph.D. Professor of Sociology, McMaster University. Chief publications: *Life in a Religious Community: The Lubavitcher Chassidim in Montreal*, 1974; co-editor, *Fieldwork Experience: Qualitative Approaches to Social Research*, 1980; co-editor, *The Canadian Jewish Mosaic*, 1981; co-author, 'The Professionalization of Medical Students: Developing Competence and a Cloak of Competence', *Symbolic Interaction*, vol. 1, no. 1, Fall 1977; and 'Ritual Evaluation of Competence: The Hidden Curriculum of Professionalization in an Innovative Medical School Program', *Work and Occupations*, vol. 9, no. 2, May 1982.

YOGEV, Abraham; Ph.D. Senior Lecturer at the School of Education and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of Tel Aviv University and Chairman of the Department of Educational Sciences. Chief publications: co-author, 'High school attendance in a sponsored multi-ethnic system: The Case of Israel' in Alan C. Kerckhoff, ed., *Research in Sociology of Education and Socialization*, vol. 6, 1986 and co-author, 'Ethnicity, Meritocracy and Credentialization in Israel: Elaborating the Credential Society Theses' in Robert V. Robinson, ed., *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, vol. 6, 1987.

SOVIET JEWISH AFFAIRS

The only scholarly journal in English on the position of Jews in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

SOVIET JEWISH AFFAIRS is important for everyone concerned with: Soviet studies, international relations, human rights, Jewish affairs.

Published 3 times a year with 104 pages. Articles in recent issues include:

F.J.M. Feldbrugge	The new Soviet law on emigration (1987)
Lukasz Hirszowicz	The 27th Soviet Party Congress (1986)
Benjamin Pinkus	National identity and emigration patterns of Soviet Jewry (1985)
Michael Shafir	Literary antisemitism in Romania (1984)
Wolf Oschlies	Bulgarian Jewry since 1944 (1984)

Book reviews and annotations and a Chronicle of Events in each issue.

TO: THE INSTITUTE OF JEWISH AFFAIRS, 11 HERTFORD STREET, LONDON W1Y 7DX

OR SUITE 418, 1 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10016, USA

Annual subscription: individuals £12/$20, institutions £16/$25
I wish to subscribe to SOVIET JEWISH AFFAIRS for one year ☐

I enclose cheque/money order for _____
Please bill me ☐

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Signature _____ *Date* _____