

# THE JEWISH JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY

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VOLUME XXX : NUMBER 2 : DECEMBER 1988

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The Prophetic Tradition in Modern Israel  
IRA SHARKANSKY

American Jewish Converts to New Religious  
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Book Reviews

Chronicle

Editor: Judith Freedman

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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.

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# THE PROPHETIC TRADITION IN MODERN ISRAEL

Ira Sharkansky

**J**OHAN BURTON noted in 1986: 'One of the great insights of modern critical study has been that the great classical prophets were not clairvoyants providing their devotees with arcane information about the future or about the mysteries of the universe, but spokesmen for a moral and demanding God who addressed themselves to the state of Israeli society in their own day and uttered rebukes and warnings of immediate application'.<sup>1</sup> The present article considers contemporary manifestations in present-day Israel of the prophetic style which some well-known individuals and ordinary citizens have adopted when they fearlessly criticize official policies of the government and warn of the great dangers ahead if these policies are pursued.

The basic concern of the Old Testament prophets was the physical and moral preservation of the Jewish people in their land. They saw it as their sacred duty to denounce, in the name of God, impious or oppressive rulers and those whose sinful ways would be punished by divine retribution. The Lord would 'make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons and . . . the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant', according to Jeremiah (9:11). And according to Amos (5:3), the city 'that went out by a thousand shall leave by an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel'. Isaiah warned: 'Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed' (10:1).

Three well-known Israeli personalities with professional training in policy analysis have recently voiced their fears that the policies being pursued by the nation's leaders will have disastrous consequences for the country and they have strongly advocated a change of course without further delay. They do not claim to be 'spokesmen for a moral and demanding God' but they do predict great perils if their warnings are not heeded, in a style reminiscent of that of the Hebrew prophets. They are Yehoshafat Harkabi, Meron Benvenisti, and Emanuel Wald.

## *Yehoshafat Harkabi*

Yehoshafat Harkabi is a former head of intelligence in the Israeli Defence Forces. He is a graduate of the Hebrew University of

Jerusalem and of Harvard and is currently Professor of International Relations at the Hebrew University. In his book entitled *The Bar Kokhba Syndrome: Risk and Realism in International Politics*,<sup>2</sup> Harkabi warned of the dangers of following into the footsteps of Bar Kokhba who rashly engaged in suicidal rebellion and warfare against the Romans. He commented:<sup>3</sup>

It is as though God himself had said to the Jewish people, 'Since, in your anger at Hadrian's intention to erect a shrine on My holy mountain, you showed no compassion for the lives of My children in pursuing the Bar Kokhba rebellion, I have decreed that the Temple Mount not be in your hands.'

Just as Jeremiah had told the Judeans to accept Babylonian dominance<sup>4</sup> and not to rebel against a dominant power, so Harkabi warns that the present leaders of the State of Israel should not ignore the representations of the American government about the Occupied Territories. They should ignore instead the nationalistic and religious zealots and their unrealistic aspirations:<sup>5</sup>

The contention that without ruling the West Bank Israel cannot survive weakens Israel's very right to exist. Such a stance may conjure up and inject new life into the old anti-Semitic image of Jews' claiming for themselves exclusive rights. . . . Leaving the West Bank without sovereignty negates the current world order which is based on the sovereign division of territories.

Israel's modern zealots must be restrained before they imperil further the country's very existence:<sup>6</sup>

The existence of the Jewish people is not a given. . . . Our deeds and our blunders will have considerable impact not only on the fate of those who dwell in Israel, but in a large measure on the entire Jewish people. Having chosen statehood, our destiny is, to a considerable degree, in our own hands, more than at any other time since Bar Kokhba. This new situation demands not myths, but sobriety, much self-criticism, and severe critiques of the historical circumstances in which we find ourselves.

According to Harkabi, Israel must have more understanding of the American interpretation of the section in the Camp David Accords which deals with the Occupied Territories and of the demands of the Palestinians. These cannot be ignored. If they are, Harkabi predicts that sooner or later Israel will accuse the United States 'of an illicit intervention. It will be a painful process and will entail a major crisis'.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Meron Benvenisti*

Meron Benvenisti is a former deputy mayor of Jerusalem and holds a doctorate from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. On his return to Israel he dedicated himself to the West Bank Data Project, which is concerned with the Occupied Territories. His reports



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are published by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. He is harshly critical about the Jewish settlers in the Occupied Territories and he is reminiscent of the Old Testament prophets when he laments the decline in moral values which many of his countrymen now exhibit and warns that if they do not mend their sinful ways, disaster will follow. Benvenisti likens modern Israelis to medieval conquerors who plundered the lands they occupied.<sup>8</sup> He claims that 'Israeli authorities, in their quest to take possession of land in the territories, have been using every legal and quasi-legal means in the book, and are inventing new ones to attain their objectives'.<sup>9</sup> He predicted in his 1984 report that by these manoeuvres Israeli Jews would be able to settle on 40 per cent of the land in the West Bank and 31 per cent of the land in the Gaza Strip.<sup>10</sup>

Benvenisti accuses the new settlers of being parasites, in contrast to the earlier pioneers in the Holy Land who created productive agricultural units: 41 per cent of them commute to work outside their communities, while only 36 per cent are engaged in education or other public services.<sup>11</sup> According to him,<sup>12</sup> the national ethos of Israeli Jews

is deliberately reinforced and strengthened, not to instill renewed ideological motivation but to do just the opposite, to facilitate sheer consumerism and to exploit it. The consequences of distorted institutional and value systems may prove the heaviest price Israel pays for its West Bank policies. Those who conceived the new strategy, however, are not concerned with such matters. For them the ultimate value is securing the title over the whole of Eretz Israel.

When he reported upon the situation in 1984, Benvenisti seemed to believe that the cause of the Palestinians was all but lost and he dreaded the consequences which he thought would haunt Israel from the grave:<sup>13</sup>

A new equilibrium between nationalistic objectives and humanistic values must be found. Zionism cannot escape the fate of other great liberating philosophies. Its failure to adjust to changing realities may turn it into a dark force.

Meron Benvenisti's *The Sling and the Club: Territories, Jews and Arabs*<sup>14</sup> was published this year (1988) after the onset of the Arab uprising and the book is reminiscent of the Hebrew prophets. Benvenisti does not claim to be the Lord's spokesman but he does refer back again and again to his own earlier writings. Some of the quotations from his past publications extend over several pages. Benvenisti recalls his past condemnation of the right-wing Likud bloc's commitment to the proliferation of Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories but now has to concede that all major Israeli political groups, including his own Labour Movement, are united against Palestinian Arab aspirations. He sees a parallel between the present Arab uprising and the Yom

Kippur War of 1973: Israeli leaders misread the signs of Egyptian and Syrian preparations for battle then as they misread in 1987 the signs of very serious domestic unrest among the Arab population. Moreover, they blind themselves to the fact that the rebellion is *not* wholly engineered by the Palestine Liberation Organization and they therefore ignore, or seem to ignore, the deeply-felt grievances of the local Palestinians and by so doing make a solution even more difficult to reach.

*Emanuel Wald*

Emanuel Wald (who has a doctorate in public administration from Syracuse University) was a colonel in Israel's Defence Forces (IDF) and he was asked by the Chief of the General Staff to formulate plans for the IDF on the basis of his analysis of past performance in the country's recent wars. He has a place among those who are in the tradition of the Hebrew prophets by virtue of his denunciation of the most sacred cow of Israelis — their armed forces — and of the country's leaders as well as by his prediction of national disaster if his warnings are not heeded.

Israelis look upon the IDF as their shield against annihilation by their enemies. Most Jewish citizens are conscripted at the age of eighteen years and men remain active in the Reserve until their mid-fifties. They are aware of the cumbersome military bureaucracy and of some errors in their training and combat; but they are even more aware of past glories and victories against all odds. They recall with pride and admiration how a number of Arab armies were repelled in the war of liberation after the establishment of the State in 1948; how Sinai was captured in 1956 and again in 1967; how the IDF crossed the Suez Canal during the Yom Kippur War of 1973; the rescue of the hostages at Entebbe in 1976; and a number of other daring operations.

Wald, however, claims that the IDF are not what they used to be. After 1967, a marked deterioration set in, according to him, and the ruthless pursuit of military objectives has been replaced by a timorous attitude on the part of senior officers who are now more concerned about avoiding a course of action for which they might be blamed later: 'It seems that more than to win in war the officers were interested in not getting into trouble'.<sup>15</sup> He claims that the officer corps has deteriorated into a mediocre set of persons who will not indulge in self-criticism and therefore cannot learn from mistakes and adds:<sup>16</sup>

Mediocrity is a cancerous phenomenon: mediocre officers appoint subordinates who are even more mediocre than themselves, because those will not be able . . . to endanger their command. The mediocre subordinates come in time to rise in rank and appoint even more mediocre subordinates under them, and thus it goes. . . . An impotent system perpetuates itself: the bureaucratic syndrome spoils the officers and turns them into impotent

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bureaucrats. Officers have to be impotent because the system would spit them out otherwise.

Wald holds the members of the General Staff responsible for this state of affairs: each arm of the Defence Forces selfishly fights for a greater share of equipment, disregarding other claims which may well be of vital importance in an armed conflict, resulting in a fighting force equipped with too much of the wrong hardware, the cost of which has deprived important other services of much-needed resources. He claims: 'In the Lebanon war it was proved for the third time that the system of professionalism was bankrupt in everything that was associated with building and preparing infantry for war'.<sup>17</sup> He also ridicules the excuses given by commanders when they do not achieve their objectives: 'The glaring reluctance of field officers to take risks, which is the result of a flawed professionalism and a low motivation, is defended with the slogan that saving lives is more important than saving ammunition'.<sup>18</sup> Minimizing casualties is now the apparent objective in battles while in the past it was bold and well-planned manoeuvres which achieved success with the minimum loss of life.

Wald's assessment of the state of the Defence Forces did not fall on receptive ears. He resigned from the army when the Chief of the General Staff refused to schedule his report for discussion.

### *Prophets on the Outer Fringes of Israeli Politics*

Rabbi Meir Kahane and Professor Yeshayahu Leibowitz have had no formal training as policy analysts and in that respect they differ from Harkabi, Benvenisti, and Wald. Kahane and Leibowitz are on opposite sides of Israeli politics but they are agreed on their strong preference for a wholly Jewish state. Both of them are Orthodox Jews and they make frequent references to Jewish history and utter strong condemnations of the government's stand about the Occupied Territories.

Rabbi Meir Kahane became a public figure more than two decades ago in New York when he established the Jewish Defense League to protect old Jews who were attacked in the streets and in their homes in the Brooklyn area. In a reference to the European Holocaust, his organization's slogan was 'Never again!'. He later settled in Israel, became a parliamentary candidate, and was elected to the Knesset in 1984. He called his political party *Kach* — a Hebrew word with aggressive overtones which translates as 'Thus' or 'That's it' or 'Take it or leave it'. The party's symbol is equally belligerent: a raised fist on a background of the Star of David.

Kahane would prefer a totally Jewish State of Israel. If non-Jews must continue to live in the country, Kahane has formulated proposals for amending their status: they would have to pay a special tax; they would be forbidden to live within the boundaries of Jerusalem; they

would have no political role; they would have to be conscripted for non-military national service; they would not be allowed to mix with Jews in educational settings or in social gatherings sponsored by public bodies; they would be restricted to separate bathing beaches; they would be allowed to live in Jewish neighbourhoods only with the agreement of the Jewish local inhabitants; they would not be allowed to marry, or to have sexual relations with, Jews; they would not be allowed to teach, broadcast, or lecture about any religion other than Judaism; they would be expelled from Israel if they failed to comply with these provisions; and finally, they would be given compensation if they agreed to settle outside Israel. Not surprisingly, these proposals have been described as imitations of the racist laws promulgated by the Nazis against the Jews.<sup>19</sup>

Kahane, however, claims that he is observing Biblical injunctions<sup>20</sup> from Nehemiah (13: 23–25): ‘In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, and Ammon, and of Moab: And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews’ language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, . . . and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves’.

Yeshayahu Leibowitz, professor of chemistry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, takes a diametrically opposite view. He appears frequently on Israeli television, discoursing on the nature of Judaism, on Jewish-Arab relations, and on the personal attributes of the nation’s leaders. He is especially renowned for his view that the victories of the Six-Day War of 1967 were a catastrophe in disguise for they have burdened the Jewish State with the task of ruling a large and hostile Arab population. That task appeared to have no great difficulties at first and there was therefore a temptation to believe that the status quo could be maintained.<sup>21</sup>

Leibowitz condemns the religious and nationalistic Jews who advocate Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories or the absorption of these territories into Israel. According to him, it is impossible to sustain Jewish values in a bi-national state, especially when there is a Jewish army of occupation. In prophetic style, he warns of the consequences: continued Jewish-Arab conflict and a brutalization of the Jewish state by those who seek to dominate by ruthless force. Israel would then ‘become a state . . . with concentration camps for people like me, and externally it will sink into apocalyptic wars with the whole Arab world from Kuwait to Morocco’.<sup>22</sup> He claims that Israel is not a state that maintains an army but an army that maintains a state;<sup>23</sup> it has become a machine for violence.<sup>24</sup>

Leibowitz denounces the late Moshe Dayan, the hero of the Six-Day War and the architect of Israel’s policy in the Occupied Territories, as

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an adulterer and a thief. The fact that he achieved such prominence and adulation was a symbol of national decay.<sup>25</sup> Leibowitz also condemns the official rabbinate, which is empowered by the state to rule on matters of religious doctrine, and of Jewish marriage and divorce. He claims that the 'religious establishment' (by which he presumably means leading religious figures or politicians) is the pimp of the whore rabbinate<sup>26</sup> — thus emulating the prophets who used the metaphor of sexual licentiousness to condemn corrupt behaviour.

### *Ancient and Modern Jewish Prophecy*

Hosea and Amos lived in a period when their country was under threat of Assyrian destruction while Jeremiah witnessed the Babylonian domination of Judah and the siege of Jerusalem and advocated the unpopular course of surrender to the occupying power. The present-day State of Israel has been under constant threat of destruction by its declared enemies and its Jewish inhabitants have understandably acquired a siege mentality. The several victories of their armed forces gave Israeli Jews an exhilarating confidence in their political and military leaders and made some of them believe that they were again, after two thousand years of Exile and dispersion, under divine protection. But the problems of the territories occupied after the Six-Day War of 1967 are increasingly severe and the solutions advocated have given rise to bitter arguments and denunciations.

Amos Oz, the Israeli writer, recorded in the autumn of 1982 the conversations he had in towns, villages, and settlements with 'people of all sorts — workers, soldiers, religious zealots, new immigrants, ageing pioneers, young fanatics, dreamers, and visionaries', according to the blurb on the jacket of the English translation of his book. In a small Jewish settlement near the Biblical Tekoa, south of Bethlehem, he was reminded by a settler that the prophet Amos had been a farmer in that very site and had uttered 'these words: "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof . . . and I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them"'. The settler then added: 'Now, if you'd look at our community, . . . at all the settlements in the country, you'd see with your own eyes the fulfillment of the prophecy. Word for word. We've even planted vineyards here. You'd have to be completely blind, God forbid, not to see that this is the beginning of the Final Redemption'.<sup>27</sup>

Another settler, when asked whether she thought it fair that the country's Arabs should perform menial tasks for Jews, replied: 'Why not? Isn't that the way it is in the Bible? Weren't there hewers of wood and carriers of water?'. She rejected any possibility of achieving a

compromise with the *goyim* (non-Jews) and declared: 'Whenever we gave in to them we had troubles. That's the way it was in the Bible. King Saul lost his whole kingdom because he took pity on Amalek. The *goyim* are bound to be against us. It's their nature. Sometimes it's because of their religion, sometimes it's out of ideology, sometimes out of anti-Semitism, but, actually it's all God's will. God hardens Pharaoh's heart and then He destroys him. It's them or us'.<sup>28</sup> A third settler, when asked what he would do if he had to choose between Tekoa and another war, replied: 'We are forbidden to relinquish the Land of Israel. What the Lord, Blessed be He, gave us we may not give away as a gift'.<sup>29</sup>

In a farming village, Amos Oz is told that Professor Leibowitz's warning that Israel is in grave danger of becoming a Judeo-Nazi state is not an alarming prospect when the likely alternative is destruction: 'As far as I'm concerned, you can call the State of Israel by any pejorative you like. Call it Judeo-Nazi, the way Professor Leibowitz did. Why not? How does the saying go — 'Better a live Judeo-Nazi than a dead saint? . . . I'm not looking to the gentiles for admiration and I don't need their love. . . . I want to survive. And my intention happens to be that my children will survive, too. . . . If anyone raises a hand against my children, I'll destroy him — and his children — with or without your vaunted 'purity of arms'. . . . Throughout history, anyone who thought he was above killing got killed. It's an iron-clad law'.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, that same farmer advocated Biblical standards of morality and referred to divine retribution for transgressions when he said: 'Listen to what it says in Deuteronomy: "And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitudes because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the Lord, thy God." Doesn't it give you goose bumps?'.<sup>31</sup>

That man was not alone, among those whom Oz met, in referring to moral values and lapses. Another farmer who had been a policeman during the Mandate, said: '. . . I had this dream that when the Hebrew nation got statehood we wouldn't need police. Or prisons. We would be the Chosen People. Chosen People, never mind; I'll forget that, but why have we become a nation of profiteers? Of thieves? Of panhandlers and parasites? Not to mention the murderers and rapists and robbers. What's gone wrong with us? Maybe we lost our morality along the way'.<sup>32</sup> Amos Oz was told in Tekoa on another occasion: 'The People of Israel have been spoiled. Light-headed from so much affluence. Not willing to make sacrifices for the Redemption. Some of the people are go-getters, making money like crazy, running wild, and the rest are poor, failures, and they feel put upon. That's why the morale is low and there is so much decadence. It's frightening!'. The author, immediately after quoting this statement, is prompted to think of the words of the prophet Amos rebuking those in Bashan 'that are in the mountain of

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Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, 'Bring, and let us drink. . . . Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria. . . . I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein. . . .'<sup>33</sup>

Amos Oz was asked to give a talk to a community of settlers on the West Bank and in the course of a long speech told them:<sup>34</sup>

You people are convinced that to relinquish Judea and Samaria would endanger the existence of the State of Israel. I think that annexation of these regions endangers the existence of the State of Israel. That is the bottom line, but the controversy is at base one of principle; it is spiritual, part of the domain of belief and conviction, with perhaps even a theological dimension.

He went on to tell them that their fanatical stand would prove suicidal and added:<sup>35</sup>

The Jewish people has a great talent for self-destruction. We may be the world champions in self-destruction. Of course, one can accept all the destruction we have brought upon ourselves as the will of God, and justify it by saying, 'Because of our sins we were exiled from our land.' . . . But our talent for self-destruction is not God's will. . . . I will explain only one element of our gift for self-destruction: our characteristic demand for perfection, for totality, for squeezing our ideal to its last dregs or to die trying. All or nothing — 'to die or to capture the hilltop'. . . . Either instant Redemption or to hell with Redemption altogether.

This tendency to extremism among Israelis was confirmed in a recent study by an Israeli political scientist, Gadi Wolfsfeld, which shows that in a survey administered in nine countries — Austria, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States — the replies to questions concerning reactions to unfair legislation revealed that the Israelis were the least likely to follow a non-militant course, such as appealing to a political leader or initiating a petition.<sup>36</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Admonitions, protests, and solemn warnings addressed to establishment figures rarely fall upon receptive ears in Israel. The Occupied Territories are still occupied, in spite of the exhortations of well-known personalities such as Harkabi, Benvenisti, and Leibowitz. But there is, perhaps, some consolation to be derived from the fact that latter-day prophets are free to publish and broadcast their views and denunciations in present-day Israel without fear of retribution.

NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> John Barton, *Oracles of God. Perceptions of Ancient Prophecy in Israel after the Exile*, London, 1986, pp. 131–32.
- <sup>2</sup> Yehoshafat Harkabi, *The Bar Kokhba Syndrome: Risk and Realism in International Politics* (translated by Max D. Ticktin and edited by David Altshuler), Chappaqua, N.Y., 1983.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- <sup>4</sup> Jeremiah, 27: 6–17.
- <sup>5</sup> Harkabi, *op. cit.*, pp. 172–76.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 113–14.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 179–80.
- <sup>8</sup> Meron Benvenisti, *The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies*, Washington, D.C., 1984, p. 34.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58–59.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- <sup>14</sup> Meron Benvenisti, *The Sling and the Club: Territories, Jews and Arabs* (Hebrew), Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, 1988.
- <sup>15</sup> Emanuel Wald, *The Curse of the Broken Tools: The Decline of Israel's Military and Political Power (1967–1982)* (Hebrew), Shocken, Jerusalem, 1987, p. 78.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 123, 126, 139.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- <sup>19</sup> 'Laws Proposed by Member of Knesset Meir Kahane' (Hebrew) and 'Proposals of Kahane Compared to the Nazi Racial Laws' (Hebrew), undated texts privately communicated to me by Member of Knesset Mikhail Eitan.
- <sup>20</sup> Meir Kahane, *Know Your Judaism (in Truth): Lessons From the Sources* (Hebrew), Kach, Jerusalem, 1985.
- <sup>21</sup> Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *On Just About Everything: Talks With Michael Shashar* (Hebrew), Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, 1988.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24. Moshe Dayan had the reputation of being a womaniser and it was rumoured that he took personal possession of archeological artefacts which properly belonged to the nation.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- <sup>27</sup> Amos Oz, *In the Land of Israel*, translated from the Hebrew by Maurie Goldberg-Bartura, London, 1983, p. 71.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140–41.
- <sup>36</sup> Gadi Wolfsfeld, *The Politics of Provocation*, Albany, N.Y., 1988, pp. 20–27.



# AMERICAN JEWISH CONVERTS TO NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Charles Selengut

**S**TUDIES of new religious movements report a disproportionate number of Jewish converts.<sup>1</sup> Although Jews comprise only 2.5 per cent of the total American population,<sup>2</sup> various studies show that between fifteen to eighteen per cent of Hare Krishna devotees, six to eight per cent of Unification Church members, and nine per cent of Church of Scientology members come from a Jewish background.<sup>3</sup> Disproportionately high levels of Jewish membership are also reported in some lesser-known cult movements.<sup>4</sup>

Jewish writers and communal representatives have commented at length about the matter;<sup>5</sup> the predominant view among them is that the new religious groups are 'dangerous cults' which engage in 'brainwashing' and 'mind control'.<sup>6</sup> In a widely distributed publication entitled 'Countering a Clear and Present Danger', the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York City claimed:<sup>7</sup>

... no one is immune to the insidious activities of these groups. They have spread their net to ensnare the most vulnerable of our people: kindergarten children, high school and college students, senior citizens, and new immigrants — even the hospitalized . . . Many thousands of young Jewish men and women are members of over 2500 identified cult and missionary groups in the United States including the Unification Church, Divine Light Mission, The Way, Hare Krishna and Jews for Jesus.

Other Jewish critics assert that it is the psychologically maladjusted who join new religious movements and describe Jewish converts as people who are 'selling their souls for the security of slavery'.<sup>8</sup>

Sociological studies of cult membership have generally been reluctant to concur with the 'brainwashing' and 'mind control' accusations. They have sought to explain conversion as a consequence of a reaction to secularization and as a search for religious meaning, ritual experience, and 'the sacred'.<sup>9</sup> These studies have not, however, examined the Jewish religious background of the Jewish converts to new cults. To the best of my knowledge, no study has been conducted with special emphasis on the early Jewish religious socialization of the

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converts. The analysis offered by Jewish theologians and communal leaders tends to be impressionistic while the conclusions drawn in the general literature are based upon survey data or interviews with a very small sub-group of Jewish respondents.<sup>10</sup>

Religious background is surely a crucial factor which must be examined before arriving at an understanding of the reasons which attract converts to new cults. Conversions are usually a consequence of both pull and push forces;<sup>11</sup> but while researchers have gathered a great deal of data on the pull factor (that is, the attractions of the new movements), they have tended to pay much less attention to the push factor — to those elements in a convert's early religious socialization which could help to explain subsequent defection and conversion. My research has led me to the conclusion that conversion is not something *done* to the converts but an interactive process between a potential convert and a specific religious community.

### *Research Data*

During 1985 and 1986 I gathered data on one hundred Jewish converts to the Unification Church (popularly known as 'Moonies', after the founder of the Church, the Reverend Moon) and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). I conducted 70 in-depth interviews with the converts and in addition I administered 30 questionnaires to Jewish devotees in four Hare Krishna temples (in Denver, Boston, San Diego, and St Louis). Fifty-eight of my informants were members of ISKCON and 42 had joined the Unification Church. They ranged in age from twenty to thirty-five; there were 61 men and 39 women.

The interviews and the questionnaires aimed to discover in particular the details of family background and previous religious experience (for example — Sabbath and festival observance, synagogue attendance, religious education, and *kashrut*) as well as of the personal situation at the time of contact with the new religion and the extent of satisfaction with the new movement. I was also a participant observer in three Hare Krishna temple communities (in Philadelphia, Lake Huntington, N.Y., and Brooklyn) and in three Unification Church centres (New York City, Barrytown, N.Y., and Brooklyn). The posture I adopted then and also during the interviews was that of a 'non-hostile outsider'<sup>12</sup> who, though not in theological agreement with their beliefs, would strive to arrive at a balanced and unbiased opinion. The respondents were chiefly concerned that their new commitments should be taken seriously; it had to be understood that they held firmly to their present religious convictions. When they had been reassured on these points, they co-operated generously and seemed to speak very freely about their past life and their present experiences.<sup>13</sup>

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### *Social and Religious Background*

The Jewish converts were brought up in well-educated and often well-to-do families, representative of the bulk of American Jewry.<sup>14</sup> Eighty-six of the respondents had at least one parent with a first university degree while in the case of 58, both parents were graduates. The overwhelming majority of parents could be classified as belonging to the 'new class',<sup>15</sup> employed in the professions (teaching and research) or working as executives or managers. Only three respondents had fathers who were blue-collar workers or manual labourers. No specific question was asked about family income but general descriptions of the family life style revealed that the respondents came from a predominantly middle (or in some cases upper middle) class milieu. Other studies have shown that this is also the case with Gentile converts to new cults; and here it should be stressed that the over-representation of Jews among the converts to new religious movements which attract well-educated young persons may be partly accounted for by the fact that American Jews are over-represented in the middle and upper classes.

The respondents themselves had attended the more prestigious public and private colleges and universities; 57 had a university degree while 88 had attended an institution of higher learning for at least two years. Three had doctoral degrees in the arts, the social sciences, and legal studies.

Seventy-eight of the respondents said that their parents were formally affiliated with a synagogue while 94 said that their families held a Passover Seder<sup>16</sup> and 91 that candles were lit during the festival of Hanukkah. On the other hand, the families of only nine respondents attended a synagogue or temple at least once a week or once every two weeks; but almost all those affiliated to a synagogue used to attend religious services during the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (the Jewish New Year and the Day of Atonement). Indeed, I was told that even some of those who were not members of a synagogue attended religious services on these days. A majority of the male converts had a Bar Mitzvah celebration. Only six respondents stated that their parents had a kosher kitchen; but 62 had been enrolled in supplementary Hebrew or religious classes while three had attended an Orthodox Yeshiva day school during their primary education until the age of fourteen. Only these three respondents had parents who belonged to an Orthodox synagogue;<sup>17</sup> 45 said that their parents were Reform Jews; 35 said that their parents followed the Conservative movement; and the remaining 17 could not specify any particular affiliation, saying that they were 'just Jews'.

The typical new convert, then, grew up in a home that identified itself as Jewish, had attended religious services several times a year (for the High Holy Days and family celebrations), was familiar with some

Jewish rituals observed in the home, and had received some form of religious training. Even those whose parents were not affiliated to a synagogue or were not observant said that they had participated in some religious activity with members of their extended family or with friends. This general profile of religious behaviour and social background is not unlike that reported by Rela Monson<sup>18</sup> in a national survey of Jewish college students, nor does it differ from the statistical reports of American Jewish community surveys in several metropolitan areas.<sup>19</sup>

Nevertheless, nearly all (97) respondents claimed that their parents were not observant — even in the case of those affiliated to a synagogue. They described the Jewishness of their families as ethnic or cultural but not religious. A Hare Krishna devotee from the New York City area said:

My father was basically anti-religious. He thought religion was all superstition. My mother, however, would keep the Holy Days. She would cook for Passover, we'd recite the *Fier Kashos*, you know, the four questions and invite the whole family. But these celebrations lacked a conscious spiritual orientation. They weren't really religious.

Another respondent when asked 'What did you find attractive about Judaism?', replied: 'To tell you the truth, I never experienced the Jewish religion. All I had was family traditions. We did things but never really knew why we did them. It was all so sentimental. Our Jewish activities had nothing to do with God'. A convert to ISKCON who grew up in an ethnic Jewish neighbourhood in New York City and had attended an Orthodox-sponsored afternoon religious school, explained:

I was always looking for a living religion. In Jewish circles I could not find anybody who was living religion. We just learned this stuff about Jewish history and culture but it did not have anything to do with God . . . Frankly, I found my family hypocritical. When I was twelve, I asked my parents for a Kasher home, they said 'how cute' but never did anything about it.

Another Hare Krishna convert, who had joined his group nine years earlier and was working as an editor, was the eldest son of an affluent family and had grown up in an upper middle-class 'Jewish suburb'. He commented somewhat bitterly:

They [his parents] went through the motions of well-to-do suburbanities who were paying lip service to their traditions. I don't know if there ever was enthusiasm behind it. For years we did candle lighting at Hanukkah . . . There were other things like going to *Shul* [synagogue] on the High Holy Days. But they never had their hearts in it . . .

My parents used to belong to a Reform temple but not any more. I always got the feeling it was partially to satisfy the grandparents. There was never any discussion of Jewish themes at home. I think that's pretty typical of

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rationalist secularist Reformed Jews to whom their religion doesn't mean very much other than a kind of ethnic identification.

In at least one case, there was no reference at home either to the Deity or to religion. One prominent Unification Church member with a Master's degree in counselling said that his father

had a fundamental distrust of religion. When I first joined the Church and wanted to convey this to my father, I stopped and realized that the word God was not mentioned in our house. My parents, I realized, had exchanged God for education, that's really what they believe in.

Even the observant families who were affiliated to a synagogue do not seem to have instilled in their children any deep religious beliefs in Judaism. The religion they practised was essentially a 'folk religion',<sup>20</sup> with an emphasis on child-oriented and family activities like lighting Hanukkah candles and holding a Seder meal at Passover. It was an ethnic religiosity; there was no attempt to stress the religious significance of the rituals, the importance of Biblical texts, the clear definition of the sacred and the profane. The rituals were performed with little consideration of the Jewish understanding of the Almighty's role in history.

It is important to recognize that this type of folk religion is the common pattern of American Jewish religiosity. Marshall Sklare has shown in a series of studies on American Judaism that American Jews tend to selectively 'choose' those religious rituals which are child-oriented and do not conflict with the norms of contemporary culture.<sup>21</sup> Wocher has similarly chronicled the emergence of an American Jewish 'civil religion' where religious doctrine, belief, and law are replaced by common folk rituals and humanistic values.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, the religiosity of the bulk of American Jewry no longer consists of a set of transcendental beliefs and religious norms based upon revelation and religious doctrine but upon ethnic activism and civic involvement. The emphasis in such ethnic religious association is upon social and communal 'joining' and belonging but it is unrelated to an active theological quest. The behavioural religiosity and social background of the cult joiners were not, therefore, in any essential ways different from those of a cross-section of American Jewry. Indeed, when compared to a recent study of Los Angeles Jews, the families of the respondents showed higher levels of religious observance and synagogue attendance.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Conversion Process*

The claims in the anti-cult literature that conversions to new religious movements are forcibly made or occur after planned psychological 'mind control'<sup>24</sup> are not substantiated by the data in the present

study of Jewish converts. The majority of the respondents were involved in a variety of new religious or quasi-religious movements before their encounter with the Unification Church or the Hare Krishna movement. For most of them, the conversion represented only the last step in their difficult and long search for a set of ideological and religious beliefs. For the majority of the ISKCON devotees, the search had begun in the teen and college years; it took the form of wide-ranging reading of spiritual texts, college courses in religion, yoga and meditation exercises, and in some cases the acceptance of Christian beliefs.

The majority of ISKCON converts (46 out of the total of 58) had practised some form of yoga and/or meditation for at least three years before joining the Krishna Consciousness movement and a further three had accepted 'Jesus as the Lord and Saviour' (though they still considered themselves to be Jewish) before their conversion to ISKCON; 35 were vegetarians (a central requirement for Krishna Consciousness) before they were formally involved with the cult.

The spiritual journey of the Unification converts was different. Rather than pursuing an active interest in religious movements before joining the Unification Church, the Jewish Moonies had tended to become involved in political groups sometimes with distinctly Marxist goals. Five of them were members or active sympathizers of the Trotskyite 'Workers League' and three others were active members of other socialist movements. The majority were highly committed to and active in various social and political movements, such as consumer rights lobbies, social welfare reform, and the anti-nuclear movement. Nevertheless, even before their conversion, as many as 20 out of the total of 42 Jewish Unificationists had also participated in some form of religious or quasi-religious movement (such as Erhard Seminar Training (EST), or one of its variants, Life Force, Transcendental Meditation, yoga) and in two cases had joined the evangelical Christian Campus for Christ movement.

The converts were ultimately attracted to the theological beliefs as much as to the communal and religious life style offered by the Hare Krishna movement and the Unification Church. All Krishna devotees I interviewed at length or met casually during my visits to Krishna communities were much attracted to the central religious ideas of Krishna Consciousness — that all living creatures undergo a cycle of birth, death, and reincarnation and that the core religious obligation is to serve the deity, Lord Krishna, so that one will avoid rebirth and will return to the original blissful state of communion and oneness with the Godhead.<sup>25</sup> The reality of a highly personal God who rewards, punishes, and in every way responds to human subjects is at the centre of ISKCON theology.

The Unification converts, with their greater involvement in political movements, are attracted to Moon's theology of Messianism and world

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restoration. Unificationists believe that Moon represents the contemporary Messiah — the second coming of Christ — and was chosen by God to usher in the Messianic age and the restoration of humankind to its original state of purity and harmony. Moon's theology stresses the creation of one human global community without distinctions of race, nationality, or religion. This is to be achieved in great part through inter-racial, inter-religious, and international marriages arranged by Reverend Moon.<sup>26</sup> For the Unificationist convert, also, God is a personal being who communicates directly with the believer through Reverend Moon.

Both groups have a set pattern of religious rituals and prohibitions that are to be observed by all members. As already mentioned, the Hare Krishna community is strictly vegetarian — with no flesh, fish, fowl, or eggs permitted. All food eaten in Hare Krishna communities is first offered in an elaborate ritual to the deities (physical representations of the Gods in the Hare Krishna Pantheon) who occupy a central place in the Krishna temples. Devotees are required to chant the Hare Krishna mantra for a period of no less than two hours daily (and this activity is strictly monitored by local temple administrators) and they must also attend temple services at daybreak (usually at 4.30 a.m. in the American temples) and at the evening meeting at sundown. Celibacy is the highest religious status; marriage is permitted but highly regulated, with rigid guidelines for social and sexual relations. Participants in temple activities are also required to avoid western clothes and don the dhoti for men and the sari for women. All temple activities are also strictly segregated by gender: women and girls pray or chant in a separate room or in a separate section of the temple.

The Unification Church has less elaborate ritual requirements but its members also pray and meditate daily, concentrating on the figure of Reverend Moon, asking for his guidance, and praying for the success of his Messianic mission. In the Unification Church, religious activity means working directly or providing financial support for the programme of the Church. The special goal of the Unification Church is a one-world society under the leadership of Reverend Moon; any activity which the Church authorities recommend to help to bring about this world transformation is defined as religious activity. The authority of the Church leader is to be unquestioned because it is through his guidance that Messianic transformation will be achieved.

Communal life in both groups is intense, with regular prayer meetings, revival sessions, all-night study sessions, and secret rituals with movement leaders. Both the Unification Church and ISKCON have ongoing mutual-aid groups which provide moral support and, in some cases, financial help for members who are starting out in business<sup>27</sup> or are in serious financial difficulty. The separation between public and private life, so usual in contemporary modern societies, is

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absent in these cults. Work, religion, and family are not separate realms of activity but are all similarly dedicated to achieving the goals of the movement: spreading the doctrine, recruiting new members, and obtaining financial support so that the movement will prosper.

Both sets of respondents (the ISKCON devotees and the Unificationists) frequently referred to their feelings of unease and psychological discomfort before their conversion. They had no sense of community either with their Jewish milieu or with the wider society. Most of them said that they felt something was wrong with their life even if they had achieved some measure of conventional success in their college or in their place of work and even if they had pleasant relations with the members of their families; they felt that they should be doing something different but did not know what that 'something' ought to be. A former social worker commented:

I really did not fit in any place. I was not of the type who was just interested in material success and I did not want to find satisfaction in drugs or sex. I could not adjust to either cultural slot . . . Basically, I could not play the games everyone else was playing and feel comfortable; social games impressing girls, acting cool, pretending. I wanted to do something real but did not know what it was. Even though I was getting ahead in my career — promotion to an administrative job — I didn't think I was really doing anything important. I didn't think I made a difference.

Several respondents spoke of disturbing psychological symptoms. One said: 'Before I came to Krishna and started chanting I had no inner peace, I was always full of anxiety — just couldn't relax'. Another spoke of family conflicts: 'I was always fighting with my parents, nothing seemed to go right, I was tortured by my confusion. I couldn't stand up to my parents'. A Jewish Unificationist reported being repeatedly abandoned by her boyfriends while another was ill at ease in her Jewish circle because in her experience 'it just wasn't cool to be religious or pious' in that circle. A male Moonie said that he was quite popular at his college and had no special problems but added:

To tell you the truth, I was looking for a group that disapproved of premarital sex. I felt very uncomfortable, even guilty with the scene at University and when my best friend told me about the Unification Church and its life style I was immediately interested.

Affiliation with ISKCON or the Unification Church was claimed to have resolved outstanding moral dilemmas and to have provided an experience of the ultimate, of God, of absolute truth. It enabled the new converts to become full members of a community in which they were at ease both philosophically and emotionally. They spoke of 'coming home', of 'fitting right in', of knowing that this was what they had always been looking for. Some of them emphasized the moral values they had discovered in their religious quest. A convert commented:



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I have quit smoking, stopped all illicit sex, stopped all intoxication (pot, coffee, speed). I have a realization of the meaning of life. Everything pertaining to everyday life now has a different meaning and I look upon my actions with scrutiny. I don't just use my senses or mind to experience things but I now have a higher vision. I know who God is and I try to serve Him. I feel that I know the way my life can come to perfection.

Others spoke of the sense of confidence and certainty which came from their conversion experience:

When I joined ISKCON, my search for the absolute truth was quenched. All mysteries cleared up. No more guessing!

Krishna Consciousness satisfies me. Other religions talk about God. In ISKCON you know God in a personally fulfilling way.

My joining the Church was more of a surrender than a heroic commitment. I just gave up to that internal sense of responsibility. Once I heard the *Divine Principle*, I knew this was like a cure for cancer, it was the message we're all waiting for.

I had been travelling and searching for so many years. Finally when I joined the movement I actually felt that now I could take my life more seriously and actually dedicate myself to something worthwhile. That I could become purified. Finally there were answers to all the questions that I always had but no one answered.

These conversions have elements of both defection and discovery. The converts have rejected their secularized Jewish background in order to seek a firm religious anchor and moral values. Their odyssey is both of this world and other-worldly in that they wish to lead a holy mode of life within the mundane social order.<sup>28</sup> Given the religious history of these joiners, it would be incorrect to portray their conversion to the cults as a radical identity transformation.<sup>29</sup> They were not pious and involved Jews who, at one moment in time, converted to a strange and foreign religion. As we saw, they had arrived at their decision by a lengthy and anxious search. Whereas Catholics and Evangelical Protestants generally interpret their affiliation to new religious movements as a continuation or intensification of their early religious training and socialization,<sup>30</sup> the Jewish converts claim that these movements made them discover transcendental religion and the reality of a personal God — experiences which (they further claim) they could not obtain from Judaism. One respondent asserted: 'Judaism was so ethnic and nationalistic it wasn't religion'. A Krishna devotee, the son of Jewish Marxist-orientated parents commented:

Sometimes my parents or others ask me, 'If you wanted religion so badly, why didn't you get it from Judaism?' The fact that I did not experience a vibrant fulfilling Judaism led me to Krishna Consciousness where I have found spiritual satisfaction. This does not mean that Judaism does not offer it, but I never got it there.

*New Religious Movements and Jewish Identity*

The Jewish converts in this present study, then, do not so much reject the Jewish *religion* as make a break with family and Jewish secularism. The new religious movements speak openly and unabashedly about God or Divine Presence and about God's relationship with the faithful. They stress God's directives to humankind, God's demands for ethical and ritual observance, and the need for personal discipline and obedience to religious authority.<sup>31</sup> Above all, the new religions provide powerful Messianic visions that are to be realised only if the faithful, and others who can be converted, come together in devotion to these ideals. For the first time in their lives, these Jewish converts have experienced a sacralization of mundane reality.<sup>32</sup> All action, all experience, all relationships now take on a sacred dimension.

Before their conversion, the Jewish cultists had not had such a religious intensity of belief; as we saw, the Judaism of their families had been greatly affected by modernization and had been almost totally stripped of its sacred elements. It was a secular Judaism which had abandoned ancient Biblical beliefs and religious tradition. Further, this loss of the sacred dimension in American Jewish culture had created difficulties for the definition of Jewish identity.<sup>33</sup> Jewish religious activity, having lost its sacred imperatives, has become unattractive for many modern Jews. In contrast, cult communities provide for their members a satisfying set of firm principles and divine prescriptions by which to regulate their lives. The former 'ethnic Jew' is transformed into a devout believer.

Young Jews are also attracted by the professed (though by no means realised) universalism of cult movements; they are disenchanted with what they perceive as the parochialism of Judaism. Every convert in the present study expressed feelings of alienation from a Judaism which was seen as familial, particularistic, and ethnically distinctive. A Unificationist who had remained on friendly terms with his Jewish milieu said: 'It always bothered me that Judaism was only for the Jews; redemption should be for all people'.<sup>34</sup> The new cults resolve such feelings of discomfort by encouraging the converts to shed their Jewish identity: they need no longer be simply Jewish but can now become members of a universal faith open to all humankind — Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and others. Since every new convert, whether Jew or Gentile, surrenders a former religious or ethnic identity, membership of a minority group is also discarded. For young Jews who were uncomfortable with their marginal identity, this is a serious incentive for joining a new religious movement.

The new converts also reject what they perceive as an overly individualistic and acquisitive Jewish middle-class society where worth tends to be measured in materialistic terms. More than three-quarters of the respondents (78) defined their background in this fashion and

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claimed that its culture did not embody any spiritual values. They now believe that practical considerations stressing this-worldly goals are immoral and have no appeal for a person of true faith. The only way of knowing and doing the 'good' and the 'right' is in obedience to a religious authority whose goal is the total transformation and redemption of the human condition. This is a case of what has been called 'realities in conflict':<sup>35</sup> Jewish middle-class secularized parents are often shocked and bewildered by the passion and commitment of the new convert, the denial of self for the movement, while the new believers living in a blaze of sacred reality and aflame with their millenarian aspirations see middle-class culture as dreary and self-indulgent, concerned with transitory matters rather than with religious ideals. One ISKCON devotee stated:

My brother and I would always ask ourselves where did we come from? Here is this universe, how did it get here? What is behind the universe and behind that and that? What happens when you get there? But these questions never came up in my Jewish circles. Krishna Consciousness answers them clearly and in a non-sentimental way.

### *Apostasy and Secularization*

In contrast to the patterns of Jewish conversion to Christianity in the past centuries — which usually occurred either as a result of coercion or for economic or status goals — contemporary Jewish apostasy in the form of conversion to the new religious movements is in the case of this study's respondents a consequence of the breakdown of religious faith and meaning among secularized American middle-class Jews. There is no doubt that various cults practise extensive proselytizing and resocialization techniques<sup>36</sup> but such activities would not succeed if they did not find fertile ground. Conversions, as has been emphasized in this paper, are *interactive* processes between religion seekers of one sort or another, and a religious group or leader. The respondents in this study, with a single exception of a person who grew up in an observant Orthodox Jewish home, were the children of parents who identified themselves as Jews but who were not regularly practising Jews and appeared to have only superficial beliefs. The new Jewish apostasy from the evidence gathered in this study and in other research<sup>37</sup> is not a forced apostasy but the consequence of a perceived absence of religious activity in childhood and young adulthood socialization and family gatherings.

In a recent review of the literature, Gary Tobin of the Brandeis University Center for Modern Jewish Studies concluded: 'No matter which way you look at it, a greater proportion of Jews are less formally religious than Catholics or Protestants'. He pointed out that American national polls show that while 72 per cent of Protestants and 81 per

cent of Catholics belong to a Church, only 44 per cent of Jews are affiliated to a synagogue.<sup>38</sup> Sandberg, in a study of Los Angeles Jews,<sup>39</sup> reports that only 29 per cent are so affiliated while a full 25 per cent classify themselves as atheists, agnostics, or secularists. Jewish rituals which require little time commitment — the Passover Seder or the lighting of Hanukkah candles — remain popular but religious activities which entail regular performance are observed by increasingly smaller numbers of Los Angeles Jews.<sup>40</sup> He concludes:<sup>41</sup>

There is more emphasis on organizational and philanthropic obligations than on religious devotion and traditional religious discipline among the Jews of Los Angeles. A decline is evident in ritual and attendance, as Jews selectively observe seders, Sabbath candles lighting, fasting on Yom Kippur, and attendance at High Holiday services. Religious obligations that take the least time and effort are the most likely to be observed, and there is much support for passive and symbolic practices such as owning a menorah or Bible, or placing a mezuzah on a door frame.

The pervasive secularization of American Judaism, however, is not to be seen only in low rates of regular synagogue attendance and of ritual observances as well as in high rates of inter-marriage,<sup>42</sup> but perhaps more importantly in the removal of religious elements from religious rituals themselves. The data in this study reveal that there is a *double secularization* process: *general secularization* as evidenced in the diminution of Jewish religious identification and activity and *internal secularization*<sup>43</sup> as evidenced in the loss of religious and sacred elements within the context of religious and synagogue life itself. The respondents in the present study claimed that even the 'religious activities' of childhood and young adulthood — bar or bath mitzvah, the Seder, lighting Hanukkah candles, and synagogue attendance — were essentially for them non-religious cultural experiences. For these young converts, as for large numbers of other American Jews, contemporary religious ritual has lost its sacred dimension and the latter has been replaced by ethnic and familial activity. This development is particularly alarming because Jewish religiosity is to a large extent centred on home and familial rituals.<sup>44</sup> The data in this study confirm the view that dependence on a Jewish civil or cultural religion — deprived of traditional theological elements — may endanger the maintenance of Jewish self-identification in plural societies. Before their conversion, the Jewish respondents in this study (like many of their young correlative religiousists) had not been technically speaking religiously inactive; but they had engaged in religious activities without theological conviction, in the manner of their parents.

### *Conclusion*

We must remain alert, when analysing the results of research on religiosity and secularization, not to place too much reliance on

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superficial indicators of religiosity, such as church or synagogue attendance and affiliation, or celebration of festival days. The process of disenchantment with, and alienation from, a religious community can and does occur while lip service is being paid by members who have ceased to believe. A method must be devised to discover the extent of 'inner experience' and 'subjective meanings' of religious behaviour.<sup>45</sup>

The hundred respondents in the present study had not found a solid religious anchor in the rituals of their families' cultural or ethnic Judaism or in the synagogue services they had attended. They wanted to have faith and to lead a life imbued with profound religious and moral values in company with like-minded other young persons. Their religious search eventually led them to join new religious movements after abandoning the Judaism they had known and found devoid of spirituality and commitment.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival, and Cult Formation*, Los Angeles, 1985, p. 401; Larry D. Shinn, 'The Many Faces of Krishna' in Joseph H. Fichter, ed., *Alternatives to American Mainline Churches*, New York, 1983, pp. 113-35; John Saliba, 'Christian and Jewish Responses to ISKCON: Dialogue or Diatribe', *ISKCON Review*, vol. 1, 1986, pp. 76-103.

<sup>2</sup> See David Singer and Ruth Selvin, eds., *American Jewish Yearbook*, New York and Philadelphia, 1987, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> Stark and Bainbridge, op. cit., pp. 398-404.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Gordon J. Melton, 'The Origins of Contemporary Neo-Paganism', paper presented at the meeting of the Popular Culture Association, Detroit, 1981; and Ted Nordquist, *Ananda Cooperative Village*, Uppsala, 1978.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, James Rudin and Marcia Rudin, *Prison or Paradise: The New Religious Cults*, Philadelphia, 1980; Dov Aharoni Fisch, *Jews For Nothing: On Cults, Intermarriage and Assimilation*, New York, 1984; Yehudah Fine, 'Interview', *Update*, vol. 8, no. 4, December 1982, pp. 55-67; and Shea Hecht and Chaim Clorfene, *Confessions of a Jewish Cult-Buster*, New York, 1985.

<sup>6</sup> Maurice Davis, 'Jewish Youth Target of Cults, Parents Warned', *White Plains Journal News*, 19 February 1982.

<sup>7</sup> This publication is undated and was distributed in New York City area synagogues and Jewish community centres during 1984-86 by the Jewish Community Relations Council and its affiliate organization, Task Force on Cults and Missionaries.

<sup>8</sup> Moshe Dann, 'Deprogramming and Teaching Kids Judaism', *The Jewish World*, 16 July 1983.

<sup>9</sup> See Joseph H. Fichter, 'Youth in Search of the Sacred' in Bryan Wilson, ed., *The Social Impact of New Religious Movements*, New York, 1981, pp. 21-43; Larry D. Shinn, *The Dark Lord: Cult Images and the Hare Krishnas in America*, Philadelphia, 1987, pp. 140-43; Stark and Bainbridge, op. cit., pp. 398-402;

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and E. Burke Rochford Jr., *Hare Krishna in America*, New Brunswick, NJ, 1985, pp. 87-122.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Stark and Bainbridge, op. cit., pp. 400-04; and Shinn, 'The Many Faces of Krishna' in Fichter, ed., op. cit. See also Saliba, op. cit., pp. 82-86, for a review of Jewish responses to ISKCON.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Meredith B. McGuire, *Religion: The Social Context*, Belmont, CA, 1987, p. 74.

<sup>12</sup> See Lewis Carter, 'The New Renunciates of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 26, no. 2, June 1987, pp. 148-73.

<sup>13</sup> See Charles Selengut, 'Understanding Alternative Realities' in Beth Hess, Elizabeth Markson, and Peter Stein, eds., *Sociology*, New York, 1984, pp. 374-75.

<sup>14</sup> See Rela Monson, *Jewish Campus Life*, New York, 1984, pp. 9-13.

<sup>15</sup> See Alvin Gouldner, *The Future of the Intellectuals and The Rise of The New Class*, New York, 1979.

<sup>16</sup> It should be pointed out that with the exception of three respondents, all those I interviewed insisted upon the ethnic and cultural nature of their Seder. Without further questioning on my part they claimed that in their experience the Seder was an ethnic, not a religious, celebration.

<sup>17</sup> Only one of these three families could be classified as observing Orthodox *halakhah* (religious law); the other two were affiliated to an Orthodox synagogue but did not follow an Orthodox life style.

<sup>18</sup> Monson, op. cit., pp. 14-24.

<sup>19</sup> See Michael Rapoport and Gary Tobin, *A Population Study of the Jewish Community Federation of Metrowest New Jersey*, Orange, NJ, 1986, pp. 150-65.

<sup>20</sup> See Charles Liebman, *Aspects of the Religious Behavior of America's Jews*, New York, 1974, pp. 274-76.

<sup>21</sup> See Marshall Sklare, *America's Jews*, New York, 1971, pp. 110-35.

<sup>22</sup> See Jonathan Woocher, *Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1986, pp. 63-104.

<sup>23</sup> See Neil Sandberg, *Jewish Life in Los Angeles: A Window to Tomorrow*, Lanham, MD, 1986, p. 179.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Ronald E. Enroth, *Youth Brainwashing and The Extremist Cults*, Grand Rapids, MI, 1977; and Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman, *Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Changes*, Philadelphia, 1978.

<sup>25</sup> For a presentation of Hare Krishna beliefs, see A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, *The Science of Self Realization*, Los Angeles, 1977.

<sup>26</sup> See Eileen Barker, *The Making of a Moonie: Choice or Brainwashing*, Oxford, 1984, pp. 70-94, for a presentation of Unification beliefs.

<sup>27</sup> The understanding is that the profits will be used to support the activities of the movement while providing a livelihood for members.

<sup>28</sup> See Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, New York, 1967, pp. 24-28.

<sup>29</sup> See McGuire, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>30</sup> See Stark and Bainbridge, op. cit., pp. 398-402; and Shinn, *The Dark Lord . . .*, op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>31</sup> See James Davison Hunter, 'The New Religions: Demodernization and the Protest Against Modernity' in Bryan Wilson, ed., *The Social Impact of New Religious Movements*, New York, 1981, pp. 1-20.

<sup>32</sup> See Berger, op. cit., p. 25.

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<sup>33</sup> See, for example, Charles Liebman, *The Ambivalent American Jew: Politics, Religion, and Family*, Philadelphia, 1983, pp. 23–37; and Jacob Neusner, *Israel In America: A Too Comfortable Exile*, Boston, 1985, pp. 106–15.

<sup>34</sup> It should be pointed out that normative Judaism teaches that redemption is for all people. Here I am reporting the interpretation of a Unification respondent which was not atypical of the general view of the converts about this matter.

<sup>35</sup> See Berger, *op. cit.*, 1966, pp. 135–50.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Barker, *op. cit.*, pp. 121–49.

<sup>37</sup> See Shinn, *The Dark Lord . . .*, *op. cit.*, pp. 174–76. Even some Jewish critics of cults acknowledge the sincerity of the spiritual search; see, for example, Rudin and Rudin, *op. cit.*, pp. 105–14.

<sup>38</sup> Gary Tobin, 'Becoming Less Religious', *The Jewish News (NJ)*, 18 February 1987, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> Sandberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–73.

<sup>40</sup> Sandberg, *ibid.*, states that of the 29 per cent of Los Angeles Jews who are affiliated to a synagogue, 40 per cent report lighting Sabbath candles, 18 per cent observe some of the rules of *kashrut*, and 90 per cent attend High Holy Days services. Among those unaffiliated to a synagogue (71 per cent of the Jewish population) nine per cent reported lighting Sabbath candles, two per cent adhered to some rules of *kashrut*, and only three per cent attended High Holy Days services. Twenty-five per cent of the affiliated were reported to attend synagogue regularly; no figures are given for the synagogue attendance by the unaffiliated but Sandberg notes that it is surely less frequent than that of those affiliated to a synagogue.

<sup>41</sup> Sandberg, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

<sup>42</sup> See Lawrence Sternberg, 'Focus on Intermarriage' in *Brandeis University Center for Modern Jewish Studies Research Notes*, vol. 1, no. 1, May 1988.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Karel Dobbelaere, 'Secularization: A Multi-Dimensional Concept', in *Current Sociology*, vol. 29, no. 2, Summer 1981, pp. 116–25.

<sup>44</sup> See Hayim Donin, *To Be A Jew*, New York, 1972, pp. 121–41.

<sup>45</sup> See Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber*, New York, 1946, pp. 55–58; and Thomas P. Wilson, 'Normative and Interpretive Paradigms in Sociology' in Jack Douglas, ed., *Understanding Everyday Life*, Chicago, 1970, pp. 45–57.

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PUBLIC AUDIT AT THE  
WORLD ZIONIST  
ORGANIZATION AND THE  
JEWISH AGENCY FOR  
ISRAEL, 1947-1984  
Asher Friedberg

THERE have been some theoretical and comparative studies of state audit recently;<sup>1</sup> but so far little research has been published, to the best of my knowledge, on the subject of the institutionalized public audit of national and international voluntary organizations. The purpose of the present paper is to examine the structure and patterns of activity of public audit at the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and the Jewish Agency for Israel (JA). That audit began its operations in 1947, the year before the establishment of the State of Israel.

The Zionist Organization (ZO) was founded in Basle, Switzerland, in August 1897 and in 1960 officially became the World Zionist Organization. The words 'Jewish agency' were used in the 1922 Mandate for Palestine. The Council of the League of Nations stated in Article 4 of the Mandate:

An appropriate Jewish agency shall be recognised as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine and . . . to assist and take part in the development of the country.

The Zionist Organization . . . shall be recognised as such agency. It shall take steps in consultation with His Britannic Majesty's Government to secure the co-operation of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish national home.

The Zionist Organization functioned as a 'Jewish agency' until 1929. In that year, the 16th Zionist Congress decided to establish an expanded Jewish Agency in order, according to the preamble of the JA's constitution, 'to give adequate representation to non-Zionists to enable them, jointly with the Zionist Organization, to participate in the privileges and responsibilities of the Jewish Agency'. (There was to be

parity between the Zionists and the non-Zionists at the JA but the former became the dominant element in practice.) The Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency became two separate bodies although they were headed by the same president. The activities of the ZO were mainly in the Diaspora while those of the JA were mainly in the Holy Land.

The supreme body of the WZO is the Zionist Congress, which has 657 delegates. It elects two governing bodies: the Zionist General Council (163 members) and the Zionist Executive (36 members and associate members). The Congress usually convenes every four years while the General Council has annual meetings between Congresses. The governing bodies of the Jewish Agency are the Assembly, the Board of Governors, and the Executive. The Assembly has 398 delegates who meet annually and decide on basic policies; the Board of Governors has 74 members who manage the JA's affairs between annual Assembly meetings; and the Executive (19 members) of the JA deals with day-to-day matters.<sup>2</sup>

The activities of the JA are mainly financed by general fund-raising and special campaigns. In the financial year 1984-85, the sources of the \$408 million proposed budget were: United Israel Appeal contributions—\$237 million; Project Renewal campaign—\$48 million; Keren Hayesod—\$34.5 million; Government of Israel grant—\$33.5 million; U.S. Government grant—\$12 million; Israel Education Fund—\$10 million; two other appeals—\$15 million; and other income—\$18 million.<sup>3</sup> The activities of the WZO are mainly financed by an allocation from the Jewish Agency; the WZO's proposed budget for the financial year 1984-85 was \$59.5 million.<sup>4</sup>

It is generally recognized that the WZO and the JA occupy a singular and most important position within the framework of public administration in Israel.<sup>5</sup> The structure of public audit is based on two fundamental assumptions: first, the complete independence of the auditing body from the institution whose activities it audits; and second, the right of those who contribute funds to the institution, and of those who benefit from its activities, to be given regularly reliable and independent reports about the management and expenditure of the funds received from the public.

The activities of the WZO and the JA can be considered from several aspects. *Legally*, the WZO and the JA and the WZO's National Funds — 1) Keren Hayesod (Foundation Fund), which is one of its major fund-raising institutions, and 2) Keren Kayemet Le-Israel (the Jewish National Fund), which is concerned with the acquisition, development, and afforestation of land in Israel — each have their own constitution, which is that of a voluntary international body devoid of coercive power. A special law governing the status of the WZO and the JA was enacted in 1952 by Israel's parliament, the Knesset, stipulating: 'The

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State of Israel recognizes the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel as authorized agencies which will continue to operate in the State of Israel for the development and settlement of the country, for the absorption of immigrants from the Diaspora, and for the co-ordination in Israel of the activities of Jewish institutions and associations active in these spheres'.

*Politically*, although the WZO and the JA are empowered by the State of Israel to carry out a wide range of national activities, they are not subject to the usual constraints and accountability of a state administration but have a great deal of autonomy and flexibility. *Economically*, the WZO and the JA and their associated bodies — Funds, enterprises, and about 50 companies — have enormous power in Israel. *Administratively*, the WZO and the JA have a complex organizational structure, with many departments and divisions both in the Diaspora and in Israel, and there are problems of co-ordination and communication between the various sectors.

### *The Development of Public Audit*

The Zionist Organization had considered as early as 1925 the necessity of establishing a framework for public audit.<sup>6</sup> It decided at the 15th Zionist Congress in 1927 that this would be advisable 'so as to control all those Zionist institutions which are connected by revenues and expenditures with the Zionist Organization, which are dependent on the Organization, or are accountable to it'.<sup>7</sup> The resolution stipulated that the auditing body must be independent and detailed the manner in which the auditor or comptroller was to be appointed and the reporting procedures. The comptroller would be responsible only to the Zionist Congress. Statutes were drafted in compliance with that resolution and they were ratified in 1935 at the 19th Zionist Congress. However, no appointment was made until 1947.

1947-1951. The 22nd Zionist Congress was held at Basle in December 1946 and in 1947 Dr Emil Shmorak was appointed for a period of four years as Comptroller until the following Congress (which convened in 1951). His duties were to be carried out in accordance with the 1935 statutes, but there were problems arising from the interpretation of some passages in the statutes — apart from the usual difficulties which auditors tend to encounter in the course of their examinations of accounts of revenues and expenditures. Dr Shmorak's term of office immediately before and after the establishment of the State of Israel was a period when the WZO and the JA were engaged in special activities. It is not surprising that the Comptroller found it difficult, in the circumstances, to obtain detailed accounts and receipts or justifications for secret expenditure. Senior personnel at both the WZO and the JA rejected the notion that they must be accountable to their own

Comptroller and a serious confrontation occurred in the course of which the then WZO and JA treasurer, the late Levi Eshkol, quoted the injunction from Deuteronomy (25:4): 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn'.<sup>8</sup> Dr Shmorak submitted a critical audit report in 1951 but both the WZO and the JA rejected many of its findings. The report was leaked to the press and aroused a great deal of serious public debate.<sup>9</sup> The Zionist Congress drew up and ratified new statutes concerning the Comptroller's powers and duties and Dr Shmorak was not reappointed at the expiry of his term of office.

*1952-1962.* In May 1952, Shmuel Rappaport, a veteran Zionist, was appointed as Comptroller. He set out to calm the troubled waters and to establish a mutually acceptable framework of auditing procedures. He pointed out that the common aim must be to ensure that the WZO and the JA function as efficiently and economically as possible and that the knowledge that there was a public audit could only have a salutary effect. However, he was disappointed in his hopes. In the report he submitted to the 24th Zionist Congress in 1956, he deplored the fact that some of his recommendations had not been seriously considered, that they had had 'neither sequel nor results'.<sup>10</sup> The report noted that there were two distinct categories of shortcomings in the administration of the WZO and of the JA; some were easily remediable without recourse to the top executive bodies (specifically, shortcomings of a technical nature concerning bookkeeping, inventories, etc.) while others necessitated a drastic reappraisal of the efficiency, economy, and moral standards of the audited bodies.

Matters deteriorated further, however, and when the Comptroller submitted his report for 1956-60 to the 25th Zionist Congress (which met in December 1960-January 1961), the WZO and the JA were faced with further criticisms. The Comptroller deplored the fact that major recommendations in his 1956 report had been ignored.<sup>11</sup> His 1960 report also severely criticised the JA's investment of funds in large enterprises — to no avail, because the Jewish Agency passed no resolution to alter its investment policy. Mr Rappaport retired in 1962 in the midst of a public uproar about his difficulties with his employers. An Israeli newspaper published a long article under the headline 'The Agency Comptroller: "My Office is Paralysed. I Am Considering Whether to Continue"'.<sup>12</sup>

*1962-1971.* Mr M. B. Meiry succeeded Mr Rappaport as Comptroller and immediately set about devising new statutes for the public audit of the WZO and the JA; he modelled them on Israel's State Comptroller's Law of 1958. The Zionist General Council, at which the JA was represented, adopted the new statutes at its meeting of March 1963.<sup>13</sup> It was also decided that the audit institution would henceforth be known as the Control Office and that the Comptroller's independence vis-à-vis the audited bodies must be absolute. He alone would appoint

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or dismiss the members of his staff and the budget of the Control Office had to be a special budget which must be determined by the Permanent Budget and Finance Committee of the Zionist General Council. The Comptroller would be empowered to scrutinize the activities of whole departments of the WZO and the JA in Israel as well as in the Diaspora; the National Funds; and companies and enterprises not only owned but also supported by the WZO or the JA. He must ensure that all activities relating to ownership of property, financial expenditure, and bookkeeping be carried out in accordance with legal requirements and with due regard to principles of economy, efficiency, and moral integrity.

The new statutes also required the WZO and the JA to submit to the Comptroller all essential documents — such as budgets, financial reports, bank statements, receipts, etc. — and to extend to him their full co-operation. He alone was responsible for the planning and organization of the audit; and he must submit annual reports to the Executives of the WZO and the JA, who must respond to his findings within two months and discuss them at a meeting of the Zionist General Council's Permanent Budget and Finance Committee. (The status of that committee corresponds to that of the finance committee of the Knesset.) The Comptroller would then publish his report together with the observations of the WZO and the JA Executives and the conclusions of the Permanent Budget and Finance Committee, subject to some restrictions.<sup>14</sup>

The adoption of these new statutes in March 1963 helped to create a climate of co-operation between the Control Office and the WZO and the JA. The Comptroller submitted his report each year and the Executives of the WZO and the JA in their observations showed a readiness to respond constructively to many of the criticisms and suggestions he made. The discussions and conclusions of the Permanent Budget and Finance Committees of the WZO and the JA were duly appended to the annual reports. Publication of the Comptroller's report was followed by a press conference almost every year until 1971, so that the basic principle of public audit was implemented: the rendering of an independent report to the public about the activities and expenditure of organizations which derive most of their funds from the public.

*1971-1984.* In June 1971, the Jewish Agency was reconstituted and its Assembly and Board of Governors drew up new statutes for public audit at the JA which severely restricted the functions and power of the Comptroller. For example, there was no clause about his autonomy and independence; neither was there a clause about his duty to check whether there had been compliance with legal obligations and standards of moral integrity — in contrast to the public audit statutes still in force at the WZO. These restrictions on the Comptroller's

independence and powers of scrutiny aroused much criticism from the press.<sup>15</sup> Nine years later, in 1980, some of the deleted clauses were partly reinstated<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, as early as 1973 the Jewish Agency amended its statutes on public audit to stipulate that the Comptroller was authorized to investigate complaints submitted to him by a member of the public against a body or person subject to his audit. The WZO similarly amended its statutes in 1974. The Comptroller, Mr M. B. Meiry, retired in 1984 and was succeeded in his post by Mrs Renana Gutman.

From the setting up of the public audit office in 1947 until 1971, fifteen reports were published on the public auditing of both the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency. However, it should be emphasized that not all the reports submitted were published. Since 1972, the WZO and the JA have received separate reports; the WZO published eight of them until 1984 while the JA published only five during the same period (1972–84).

#### *Effectiveness of Public Audit*

One of the most important functions of public audit is to discover existing shortcomings and to recommend ways of rectifying the situation. Unfortunately, the WZO and the JA have not always been ready to follow the advice they had paid to receive. This may have been so for one or more of the following reasons.

1) The World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel are closely linked to political parties. The sociologist S. N. Eisenstadt, when analyzing the patterns of continuity of the Israeli political system, pointed out in 1967 that most political parties 'tried to maintain several "federative" arrangements and especially the allocation of "fixed" resources and manpower within the framework of both the state and the Jewish Agency. . . . There thus existed an unadmitted, unofficial, and yet very real, agreement within the Jewish Agency on the proportionate division of new settlers between the settlements of different parties'. He added that the allocation of moneys raised by the United Jewish Appeal and by Keren Hayesod to various party funds was admitted more openly and that this 'applied especially to so-called "constructive" funds — usually used for housing and help in absorbing new members'.<sup>17</sup>

The political parties are still the most dominant factors in the WZO and the JA, whose organizational structures are based on the relative power of the political parties, with a consequent risk of impairing the efficiency of their activities. Mr Yosef Almogi, who was chairman of the Executives of both the WZO and the JA in 1976–78, described the structure of the WZO as 'obsolete and extravagant'.<sup>18</sup> In his report to the WZO for 1977–78, the Comptroller had made a specific recom-

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mendation about elections to the Zionist Congress: 'The principle of direct and equal elections to the institutions of the Congress should unequivocally be laid down as a public principle'. That would have entailed an amendment to the constitution of the WZO. The Organization Department of the WZO rejected that recommendation and pointed out that the Comptroller was questioning the merits of a section of the WZO constitution which was based on decisions of the Zionist General Council.<sup>19</sup>

2) Both the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel have branches in various countries throughout the world; these are theoretically subordinated to the centre in Israel and must follow the directives of their head office. In practice, however, many of these branches try to retain a great deal of autonomy. Difficulties can also occur in view of the existence of local legal and administrative frameworks involving different work methods. In some cases, the branches have a proportion of dedicated and well-meaning voluntary workers who are influential in their local communities and who help to raise funds but who are unprofessional in the way they report back to the WZO and JA offices. For example, they may not keep detailed accounts of the small sums they are given for their out-of-pocket expenses. It is not surprising that, under such circumstances, these unpaid workers may feel aggrieved about auditors who require precise information and/or receipts about small amounts of money but who ignore the value of the many hours of effort expended on behalf of the WZO or of the the JA, for whom they perform valuable services.

3) The members of the Permanent Budget and Finance Committees, as well as of the sub-committees, of the WZO and the JA are unpaid and while some are Israeli residents, others live in various countries; they convene several times a year and on special occasions — for example, after an audit report is submitted. Moreover, these committees have only an advisory role and the conclusions they reach about the audit reports are in turn submitted to the plenums of the WZO's Zionist General Council and of the JA's Board of Governors — which are not bound by the statutes to act on their respective committees' recommendations. This is in contrast to the situation in the Knesset, where its special State Audit Committee convenes almost every week during the Knesset's sessions (and sometimes several times a week) and discusses the State Comptroller's reports.

### *Conclusion*

No significant changes have occurred since 1984 in the functions of the WZO and JA Comptroller, who has to operate the audit of both bodies according to two different sets of statutes. There have been adverse comments in the Israeli press about the matter.<sup>20</sup> It is to be

hoped that the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel will seriously consider the advisability of reverting to the practice which obtained in the several years preceding 1971, when the audit reports of their Comptroller were regularly published each year and the WZO and the JA were seen to be accountable to the public from whom the bulk of their revenue is derived.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See B. Geist, ed., *State Audit: Developments in Public Accountability*, London, 1981.

<sup>2</sup> See Organization Department of the World Zionist Organization, *Structure of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency*, Jerusalem, 1985.

<sup>3</sup> See Budget Division, Finance Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel, *Budget for the Year 1984/5 (1.4.84-31.3.85)*, Jerusalem, 1985.

<sup>4</sup> See Budget Division of the Finance Department of the World Zionist Organization, *Budget for the Year 1984/5 (1.4.84-31.3.85)*, Jerusalem, 1985.

<sup>5</sup> See Ira Sharkansky, *Wither the State? Politics and Public Enterprise in Three Countries*, Chatham, New Jersey, 1979, pp. 23-24, 77-79.

<sup>6</sup> See Emil Shmorak, *The Setting-up of the Control Office* (Hebrew), a memorandum submitted to the General Zionist Council in 1947, p. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> See the newspaper *Ma'ariv* (Hebrew), 10 August 1951.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, *Ha-aretz* (daily Hebrew newspaper) and *Ma'ariv* of 31 August 1951.

<sup>10</sup> See 'Report of the Audit Institution to the 24th Zionist Congress' included in the *Report of the Zionist Executive to the 24th Zionist Congress* (Hebrew), Jerusalem, 1956, p. 462.

<sup>11</sup> See 'Report of the Audit Institution to the 25th Zionist Congress' included in the *Report of the Zionist Executive to the 25th Zionist Congress* (Hebrew), Jerusalem, 1960, p. 473.

<sup>12</sup> See *Ma'ariv*, 6 March 1962. Other newspaper comments on the matter were published in the Hebrew press of 8 March 1962: *La-Merchav*, *Haboker*, *Al-Hamishmar*, and *Hatzofe*.

<sup>13</sup> See the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel, *Statutes of the Comptroller and the Control Office*, Jerusalem, 1963.

<sup>14</sup> Paragraph 21 of section G of the Statutes specifies that at the suggestion of the Comptroller or of the Executive, or at their own initiative, the chairman of the Zionist General Council together with the chairman of the Permanent Budget and Finance Committee are authorized to decide that some sections of the Report, or of the Executive's comments, or of the Permanent Budget and Finance Committee's conclusions, shall not be published.

<sup>15</sup> See *Ha-aretz* of 29 October 1971 and *Yediot Acharonot* of the same day. The *Ha-aretz* article was the second in a series headlined: 'The Jewish Agency: Paradise of Disorders'.

<sup>16</sup> For example, in the revised statutes, sub-clause (c) of clause 18 stated that the Comptroller's annual reports were to be published 'after consultation with the Committee Chairman and the Legal Advisor of the Jewish Agency'. On



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the other hand, sub-clause (a) of the same clause 18 stated that the 'documents of the Comptroller and his reports shall be released only upon the written approval of the Board of Governors'.

<sup>17</sup> S. N. Eisenstadt, *Israeli Society*, London, 1967, p. 333.

<sup>18</sup> Yosef Almogi, *Total Commitment* (Hebrew), *Yediot Acharonot* edition, Tel Aviv, 1980, p. 321.

<sup>19</sup> See the Report of the World Zionist Organization's Comptroller, *Annual Report no. 21 for the Fiscal Year 1977-78*, Jerusalem, 1978, pp. 93, 111.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, *Ha-aretz* of 11 March and 27 June 1985, 24 June 1986, and 19 February 1987.

# FIRST ANNUAL OXFORD SYMPOSIUM ON JEWISH FOOD

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18 June 1989

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# THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN JEWRY

(Review Article)

Israel Finestein

STEVEN M. COHEN, *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?*, Jewish Political and Social Studies Series (edited by Daniel J. Elazar and Steven M. Cohen), xii + 140 pp., Indiana University Press for the Center for Modern Jewish Studies of Brandeis University, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1988, \$27.50.

STEVEN COHEN is Professor of Sociology at Queen's College of the City University of New York. His *American Modernity and Jewish Identity* (New York and London, 1983) was a notable contribution to the expanding literature on the impact of modernity on Jewish identification in the United States. Jacques Gutwirth, reviewing the book in this Journal (volume 27, no. 1, June 1985) quoted Cohen's conclusion that 'the balance sheet, then, on the impact of modernity upon Jewish identification points neither in the direction of rapid assimilation, nor toward sustained and assured group continuity' and that the impact 'is clearly complex and does not submit to sweeping generalization'.

The present volume shows that the author is still wary of reaching definitive conclusions about the future of American Jewry but now tends to take a cautiously optimistic view of the survival of American Jewry. The study is based on a questionnaire survey of 4,505 Jewish households in Greater New York ('the five counties of New York City — Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island — and the three suburban counties of Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester') conducted in 1981 under the direction of the author and of Paul Ritterband. The questionnaire focused on 1) 'the religious upbringing and current religious identity of respondents' spouses as well as how many of their three closest friends were Jewish'; 2) the 'variety of ritual practices currently observed by the respondents and by their parents when they (the respondents) were growing up. These ranged from the widely-observed Passover Seder and Chanuka candle-lighting to the less frequent practices of fasting on the Fast of Esther and refraining from handling money on the Sabbath'; and 3) on communal involve-

ment: the 'variety of attachments to organized Jewish life, including organizational and synagogue membership, charitable donations, Israeli travel, denominational affiliation, and reading Jewish newspapers' (p. 19).

The survey was funded by the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York and by grants from the City University of New York Research Foundation. That combination of financial sponsorship indicates not only the sociological interest which prompted the study but also the practical bearing of such scientifically-conducted enquiries on communal planning, on the determination of communal priorities, and on the allocation of resources.

Professor Cohen is fully aware of the inevitable limitations of a survey based on questionnaires and repeatedly (and rightly) warns against sweeping generalizations on the basis of the replies of his respondents. However, he has had the advantage of being able to compare his findings with those of the great number of other researchers in the field of American Jewish studies, as his extensive list of references shows. Two broad schools of thought have emerged in the debates about the secularization and survival of American Jewry. On the one hand, there are those who are strangely labelled 'assimilationists'. Strangely, because these are not the advocates of assimilation but, on the contrary, those who warn against the grave dangers of assimilation, which they see as the road to an eventual almost total disappearance of a sizable and identifiable Jewish community in the United States. The other school of thought is that of the 'transformationists' who refuse to be alarmed by such trends as the decline in ritual observance, intermarriage, and a diminution of enrolment in Jewish schools and classes. They argue that assimilatory developments represent not an erosion of Jewish identity but rather a transformation, a kind of progressive change in the substance and style of Jewish life in America. For them, Jewish identity has simply divested itself of some of its traditional characteristics but acquired others and there is no imminent danger to the survival of American Jewry. That is the view put forward by Calvin Goldscheider and Alan Zuckerman in *The Transformation of the Jews*, published in 1984.

In 1968, Dr Gerson Cohen (past Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America — the rabbinical seminary of Conservative Judaism) addressed the Hebrew Teachers College in Boston on 'The Blessing of Assimilation in Jewish History'; the lecture was published by the College in that year. His subject matter was the danger of excessive inward-lookingness on the part of Jews and the wisdom of openness to the wider world, subject to the retention of Jewish roots and personal attachment to the sources of Jewish distinctive identity. He pointed out that this philosophy was at the basis of the Jewish Emancipation movement in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth

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centuries and, according to Steven Cohen, cited 'several examples in Jewish history where openness to outside influences and friendly relations with non-Jews were crucial for cultural vitality and political influence' (p. 9). The transformationists can point to a parallel situation in the United States where American Jews have energetically campaigned to obtain their government's backing for the State of Israel and also to give prominence to the issue of Soviet Jewry in the dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union; they boast that it is largely through their efforts that Israel receives diplomatic and economic support and that more than a quarter of a million Russian Jews have been allowed to emigrate in the past two decades. They can also show that although the numbers of school children in Jewish religious classes may have fallen, there are increasing numbers of scholars engaged in Jewish studies in America, both in the universities and in traditional yeshivot or other religious study centres. In this context, Steven Cohen quotes Charles Silberman (p. 16) who asserted in 1983:

We are, in fact, in the early stages of a major revitalization of Jewish religious, intellectual, and cultural life — one that is likely to transform American Judaism. For when young Jews freely choose to be observant, they do so with a seriousness, vitality, imagination, and elan — and equally important, with a fund of Jewish knowledge — that are wholly new to American Jewish life.

However, assimilationists usually deplore the decline of religious observance and condemn the consumption of forbidden foods and the abandonment of Sabbath ordinances as infringements of divine commandments. They also argue that the Passover *seder* so popular among secular Jews is in danger of becoming an ethnic cultural remnant and of eventually disappearing — indeed, that in the ultimate analysis Jewish secularity as a way of life is a contradiction in terms.<sup>1</sup>

Three of the areas considered in some detail in Steven Cohen's study are religious education, the family, and intermarriage. He reviews critically the findings of earlier studies about the merits of various types of Jewish religious instruction (for example, Jewish day schools, afternoon classes, and Sunday school) and the effect they have on reinforcing Jewish identification. Researchers have tended to conclude that the greater the number of hours of Jewish schooling, the greater will be the lasting impact on the pupil. But Professor Cohen points out that the credit is not to be given exclusively to the schools: it is of crucial importance to bear in mind parental beliefs and attitudes since it is the more observant parents in the first place who tend to send their children to the more intensive Jewish schools and who continue to influence their offspring in later life. The data gathered from his 1981 survey also show that, contrary to previous reported findings, part-time religious education is not ineffective but 'has at least the potential to

enhance the adult Jewish identification of its alumni. And, in the larger context of this study, evidence of the part-time schools' effectiveness undercuts the generally gloomy prognosis for Jewish continuity often advanced by assimilationist theoreticians' (p. 95).

The author acknowledges the centrality of the family in the context of what he calls 'Jewish continuity' — Jewish survival. It is within the family home that many traditional Jewish rituals take place. The fact that nowadays a considerable proportion of young Jewish adults live away from the parental home and have not yet settled with a spouse and children in their own home has led assimilationists to fear that they will become estranged from the Jewish community. Additional sources of concern are the declining Jewish birth rate (which is evident in all but the Orthodox denominations); an increase in the proportion of one-parent families; a decline of parental authority (which is in sharp contrast to the respect that was almost automatically shown to parents in earlier generations); intermarriage; and dispersion from the old and close-knit Jewish neighbourhoods. Devoutly Orthodox Jews, on the other hand, have children who usually stay at home until they get married (to observant spouses) and found another Jewish family, and they tend to live in a Jewish enclave and to have few relations with Gentiles; but the Orthodox segment accounts for only a small proportion of American Jewry and cannot alone be a source of hope for assimilationists who are concerned with the total scene. The author points out that the transformationists 'would argue that the basis for Jewish cohesion and distinctiveness is simply shifting, and that many assimilationists are bemoaning declines in the particular forms of Jewish distinctiveness they value most highly' (p. 17).

Some of the Jews who have taken a Gentile spouse want to stress that they have not shed their Jewish identity and may participate in a greater number of religious rituals than had been their custom before their marriage; they may also persuade the Gentile spouse to convert to Judaism. The majority of American Jews are now more tolerant of couples who intermarry. It is indeed argued that to reject them would result in their irretrievable loss to Gentile society. The 1981 survey revealed that the rate of mixed marriages in Greater New York rose markedly in the 1960s but decreased in the 1970s and that about three-quarters (73 per cent) of Jewish women in mixed marriages raised their children as Jews, while most mixed couples reported participating in some Jewish festival observance. In cases of intermarriage where the Jewish partners have unquestionably divested themselves of their Jewish identity, the transformationists argue that these individuals were already alienated and that their decision to take a Gentile spouse 'merely hastens the loss to the Jewish population of many who were destined to leave that population in any event' (pp. 25–26).

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In America, the impact of the modern open society upon traditional Judaism has been momentous. Both the assimilationists and the transformationists are agreed that in comparison with earlier generations, present-day American Jews are generally less observant, that there is a much higher rate of intermarriage, and that there is more dispersion away from Jewish neighbourhoods. On the other hand, the transformationists point out that there is now less pressure on minority groups to conform to the mores of the wider society; the old notion of America as a giant melting pot has been discarded in favour of pluralism and ethnicity. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and its embattled survival have given Diaspora Jews great pride. The hostility which many Third World countries and which some segments of the American Black community have shown to Israel has reinforced the cohesiveness of American Jewry, which felt bound to come to the defence of Israel. Anti-Zionism often disguises the endemic antisemitism in Gentile societies and both only serve to enhance the sense of international Jewish kinship.

American Jews, unlike their European Jewish brethren, did not have to struggle for emancipation and, unlike the case in tsarist Russia, they have always been able to move freely and to settle where they wished. The state schools which they attended did not have compulsory Christian instruction and in this context it must also be remembered that there has never been an established church in the United States. American Jews did not have to convert to Christianity in order to achieve positions of authority. Steven Cohen quotes Charles Silberman in this context (p. 15):

... Judaism is not about to disappear in the United States. To the contrary, the overwhelming majority of American Jews are choosing to remain Jews — some kind of Jews, if not necessarily the kind their grandparents or great-grandparents were. To be sure, an open society makes it easier for Jews to give up their Jewishness; but it also reduces the temptation to try; for Jewishness no longer is perceived as a burden, still less an embarrassment.

The findings of the 1981 survey lead Steven Cohen to believe that Jews in the Greater New York area 'are neither much more nor much less Jewishly involved than their elders or predecessors' and to agree with a moderate version of transformationism. He cautions, however, that survey findings are based on quantitative research and that they should be supplemented by careful qualitative observation (p.125). Meanwhile, it would be interesting to see whether a survey comparable in scale in a large conurbation of a European country — for example, the United Kingdom or France — would yield results about the local Jewish population which would be also comparable to Professor Cohen's findings for Greater New York.

### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> See Israel Finestein, 'The Secular Jew: Does He Exist and Why?' in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 29, no. 2, December 1977, pp.185-95.

# **THE IMPACT OF THE SIX-DAY WAR**

## **A TWENTY-YEAR ASSESSMENT**

**Edited by Stephen J. Roth**  
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The tension preceding the Six-Day War, Israel's dramatic victory and her continued role as an occupying power, together led to the social, political, ideological and religious transformation of Israeli society. The Palestinians, both in Israel and in the West Bank, found themselves facing a radically new situation. The defeat of the neighbouring Arab countries led to the 1973 war and from there to some new alignments in the Arab world and to the peace with Egypt. Jews outside Israel have also been profoundly affected; the most remarkable manifestation of this was the Jewish renaissance in the Soviet Union. The super-powers were drawn more into the Middle East conflict and it became a central issue in the United Nations. The twenty years' occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has added an entirely new dimension to the Arab-Israeli problem.

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IBRAHIM WADE ATA, *The West Bank Palestinian Family*, xiii + 166 pp.,  
Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1986, £25.00

The blurb informs us that the author was 'born of Palestinian-Lebanese stock', and that he 'emigrated to Australia where he became an Australian citizen'. His origin comes through loud and clear: the book is sympathetic to the Palestinian cause right from the dedication 'to the Palestinian family on the occupied West Bank for their endurance and sacrifice' (p. vi). After such a beginning, one would expect a detailed analysis of the impact of the Israeli occupation on the contemporary Palestinian family in the West Bank. Instead, the results of the author's questionnaire study seem to show that the West Bank family is very much like other Middle Eastern families. In his concluding remarks, the author admits that he is little perplexed about this outcome (p. 137):

... the preceding data and discussions show that certain changes in the family structure in the West Bank are taking place. . . Yet, in a number of other areas of behaviour, e.g., decision making and sex roles, tradition continues to prevail. To what extent has the Israeli 'intervening' variable perpetuated polarized feelings and attitudes between parents and children is a subject to be probed further. Evidently, the mere exposure to the Israeli culture is hardly an adequate explanation for the changes that continue to occur with the family.

I cannot endorse these conclusions. The Israeli occupation has had an enormous impact on the West Bank family, and the author's own data could be shown to prove it. But given his particular theoretical stance, that certain characteristics are typical of the 'traditional' Middle Eastern family, he could not see that these are produced by the contemporary conditions. The search for familiar culture patterns is essentially non-sociological; this research procedure only locates and lists patterns, without linking them to a social context and without trying to explain them. I argue that such patterns as male dominance, a clear-cut sexual division of labour, the seclusion of women, large families, relatives as preferred marriage partners, are all interconnected aspects of the West Bank population's adaptation to steadily growing Israeli control. If behaviour patterns in other parts of the Middle East resemble those found in the West Bank — and there is a great variation in behaviour patterns — then this may be due to similar conditions. Let me amplify this argument, as it may shed some light on recent developments in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

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Since the Israeli occupation in 1967, after the Six-Day War, the economy of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has undergone several profound changes. During the first ten years of Israeli rule the economy developed rapidly, because it both gained access to the Israeli economy and at the same time maintained ties with the economy of Jordan and of the Persian Gulf states. In the late 1970s all that changed. Israel's demand for labour from the occupied areas rose steadily. Each year the proportion of the local labour force working in Israel grew by one per cent, so that in 1988 half the labour force of the Gaza Strip and 40 per cent of that of the West Bank were employed in Israel. Demand drove up the workers' wages, the larger part of which was brought back into the occupied areas. But reinvestment of the funds became increasingly difficult. The withdrawal of many able-bodied men depleted the locally available labour force, and caused local industries, crafts, and agriculture to stagnate. Those employed in Israel became unskilled and semi-skilled workers irrespective of their educational achievements and skills (p. 40). The devaluation of schooling is a major reason why pupils and university students are prominent among the demonstrators against Israeli rule.

Women were practically excluded from the labour force because, in a pervasive wage labour situation, they remain behind and take charge of household affairs. Their skills and qualifications also remained unused (p. 41), their labour unremunerated and unrecognized. A clear-cut sexual division of labour emerges wherever a high proportion of people become migrant labourers: therefore, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip men go out to work while women stay at home (p. 80). The author attributes these and other developments to 'culturally rooted norms' (p. 48), thus precluding an alternative interpretation that could relate them to the prevailing social situation. For instance, the statement that the mean number of children in the surveyed families was 4.9 (p. 52) is not considered of any special significance, although it is twice as high as that in Israeli families. This situation of the Arabs is conducive to a high birth rate, because children are valuable assets to people living in an environment fraught with political and economic insecurity. For the same reason, people tended to invest their earnings in Israel in buildings plots, on which they built houses large enough to accommodate their children's families so as to keep them close at hand. On the land they could also grow some vegetables and fruits to complement their food supply in an emergency. While the flow of money from Israel increased steadily, very little of it was invested in new enterprises. Local industry and crafts were not fostered by the Israeli bureaucracy. And then, of course, it became difficult to recruit labour at wages competing with those paid by Israeli employers.

The labour migration to Israel is no longer adequately controlled by the Israeli authorities. Their stated intentions throughout the years of

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occupation were to restrict the flow of labour from the occupied areas into Israel, and they instituted various controls. These included the requirements to take out a work permit, and to return home after work (that is, not to stay overnight near the place of work). The employers were required to pay the migrant labourers wages equal to those paid to Israeli workers, but to deduct 30 per cent of the wages for transfer into a welfare fund run by the Ministry of Labour, which has not hitherto redistributed to the workers the large amounts that have accumulated in the fund. These arrangements did not function as intended; the Israeli economy became accustomed to the cheap and docile labour of Arabs from the occupied areas, and the demand for workers increased steadily. In 1988, an estimated 120,000 men from the occupied areas work in Israel; only about 60,000 of them are legally employed and thus appear in the official statistics. Even legally-employed men usually work in better conditions and obtain higher wages than those recorded (for tax purposes). The employers do all they can to keep them at their jobs. This situation has increased the flow of money into the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, at a time when there are few ways to invest it. Even the vitally important land for the construction of homes is no longer easily available: Israel has appropriated land for the Jewish settlers (1.7 per cent on the West Bank — not 55 per cent as claimed by the author on p. 45, or 45 per cent as claimed on p. 18 — and 3 per cent in the Gaza Strip) and for military purposes, and has imposed severe controls on building.

These developments are either not discussed in the book or mentioned cursorily. They could have provided the framework for a more incisive analysis.

EMANUEL MARX

ELIEZER BEN-RAFAEL, *Status, Power and Conflict in the Kibbutz*, x + 166 pp., Avebury/Gower Publishing Company, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 3HR, 1988, £22.50.

Sociologists have known for some time that social inequalities exist in the Israeli kibbutz and that the egalitarian ideal is not quite so extensively visible in practice as some people still seem to expect it to be. The basic observation that differences of status exist between kibbutz members has been confirmed by a number of studies and is not in itself in dispute; the question is, what is to be made of this fact? Is the kibbutz, as Yonina Talmon-Garber first argued in the 1950s, so fundamentally egalitarian (because of the rotation of top positions, for example) that differences of prestige and authority are in effect structurally unimportant? Or is the very existence of social stratification (the power exercised by the elite, for example, or the inferior

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status of women) proof of the inadequacy of formal kibbutz ideology to account for empirically observable reality? Of course, the scope for argument here about how to interpret kibbutz life also depends on the definitions being used: does stratification mean the existence, for example, of bounded social groups in some form of conflict with each other, or does it mean a general but systematic inequality regardless of whether conflict or some other kind of social change actually comes about? Do the groups divided up by inequalities represent 'real' social classes or merely accidental, statistical categories?

While debates of this kind continue at the abstract level (often, it must be said, in somewhat provincial terms), the outside world pokes fun: recent scandals in the Israeli press about the financial activities of the kibbutz movement in the Israeli stock exchange, and reports of its attempts to set up a bank in New York, seem to indicate clear shifts away from the pioneer ethos. It could be argued, on the other hand, that the kibbutz was merely trying to protect its capital. But then why do outsiders insist on the patently outdated yet classical model of primitive, anti-capitalist kibbutz egalitarianism as the yardstick with which to pass judgement — not without a touch of *Schadenfreude*, one suspects — just so as to point up its shortcomings that are then all too self-evident? It may be that the whole institution is wrongly perceived, or, in short, that an obsessive worry about inequality on the kibbutz is a preoccupation of the outsider otherwise anxious to try to defend his conception of the uniqueness and continuing legitimacy of this aspect of early Zionist society.

The value of Eliezer Ben-Rafael's *Status, Power and Conflict in the Kibbutz* lies in his clear documentation of the insider view: that kibbutzniks themselves are in fact all too aware that social differentiation has developed amongst themselves, and indeed that (as Ben-Rafael argues) the more deeply the question is probed the greater the resemblances between the kibbutz and any modern Western society. Between 1981 and 1983, a series of seven research projects was conducted, involving interviews with a total of 627 kibbutzniks from 29 kibbutzim. Nearly all (97 per cent) of these randomly selected interviewees — Ben-Rafael states his assumption that all kibbutzim are to be considered as identical for this purpose — believed that different social layers may effectively be distinguished on the kibbutz. Most of his respondents believed in fact that there are three or four such layers, with the widest and most cohesive stratum in the middle or lower-middle section of this hierarchy. This is indeed pretty much what one would expect to find in many non-kibbutz societies. Unfortunately, however, such beliefs do not lend themselves to easy measurement (as one would measure socio-economic status in the outside world, for example). This is not only because of the absence of salaries on the kibbutz but also because the kibbutzniks themselves declared that

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social status was not principally a matter of material advantages but rather to be understood in terms of prestige, authority, and social influence generally. Ben-Rafael accordingly devotes the bulk of his book to the presentation of technical arguments regarding the details, and analytic implications, of the measurement procedures that he devised for the purpose.

Perhaps his principal formal conclusion concerns the pluralist quality of stratification in the kibbutz: the four social strata derive both from awareness of the importance of traditional achievement categories (education, talent, and experience) and also from attributes that do not derive from work performance as such (male gender, seniority by age, and social backing or networks). Productive work is more highly valued, as far as social status is concerned, than work in a service branch of the kibbutz (for example, as a plumber or a cook). But work of whatever kind combines also with public activity, or membership of one of the central kibbutz committees, so as to contribute, in various permutations, to the perceived 'importance' of an individual. Moreover, new criteria have been emerging over time, particularly in connection with the value now attached to higher education. Gone are the days of the kibbutz attempt at the 'proletarianisation of the Jewish people': for the past twenty years, younger kibbutzniks returning from college armed with professional agricultural or entrepreneurial qualifications are finding it much easier to rise in social status than the system would have originally allowed. It may be that this trend should be taken in conjunction with the growing instrumentalization of the kibbutz by its members, who now increasingly seem to evaluate the institution in terms of its capacity to satisfy their individual needs. In one particularly interesting chapter, Ben-Rafael analyses forty-three cases of recent conflicts (always an important area of study to ascertain the direction of social change); they show a marked thinning out of ideological disputes and a heavy preponderance of arguments leading towards a broadening of the individual freedom and privacy of kibbutz members.

The evident capacity of the kibbutz to be flexible and make compromises may yet threaten its future identity. Ben-Rafael darkly hints in one or two places that status differences may eventually lead to serious group conflict. It is true that the spirit of democracy remains strong — even the most powerful members of the elite take their turns in performing communal chores, for example — but elsewhere the spirit of capitalism grows stronger still. Pensions are now being paid on retirement, a revolutionary development inasmuch as money is being used to confirm status; and the growth in the external resources of individual members, a process which began with the receipt of German war reparations, is providing new economic inequalities unrelated to kibbutz ideals of merit or work output. The consolidation of the

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kibbutz's economic position always was an end in itself in any case, but the present expansion of entrepreneurship (for example, in the provision of tourist services) has developed so far beyond the former *ad hoc* accommodations offered within the framework of the egalitarian ideology that these new problems are seldom recognized on the kibbutz for what they are; they seldom receive public discussion, for example. Moreover, it is not only that the kibbutz has become a socially differentiated and stratified community, frequently racked by interpersonal and interclique struggles over power and privileges; the deterioration in the pioneer ideal of equality for women now shows itself in the withdrawal of women from competition for work-related prestige and their consequent return to family-oriented preoccupations and demands for kibbutz resources. The arguments today are not about principles of social order but rather about changes which can help members live as individuals, or individual families, within this social order. In effect, the kibbutz is now a modern form of society, much like any other, where membership has become a matter of free choice.

For the general reader, Ben-Rafael is undoubtedly at his best, and most readable, in the penultimate chapter where he considers future developments and hence is obliged to rely on his own general understanding of the kibbutz rather than on his statistical information. (The publisher's press release states that the author 'was a Kibbutz member for twenty years'.) For the book is principally a write-up of the quantitative interview data, with few pretensions at a more general coverage of the sociology or ethnography of the kibbutz. Thus, although he cites an extensive bibliography (reaching out even to the *Journal for Nervous and Mental Disease* for an article on kibbutz humour), there is no cross-cultural treatment of hierarchy or specific analysis of the socialist literature. (For a wider, comparative perspective see 'Hutterites and Kibbutzniks: A Tale of Nepotistic Communism' by Pierre L. van den Berghe and Karl Peter in *Man*, vol. 23, no. 3, 1988.) And although Ben-Rafael declares at the end of the book that 'the strongest expression of the kibbutz's confrontation with the impacts of stratification is the rediscovery of cultural and ideological activities', he devotes no more than a single page to this subject and has nothing at all on values or on the Jewish sociology of work. Nor has he quite covered all the relevant data: hired workers were left out of the research (which he acknowledges on p. 23 as a serious omission) and so were foreign volunteers (who receive no mention). Still, despite such shortcomings, the author has certainly produced enough material to substantiate his claim that the kibbutz 'definitely belongs to the model of contemporary Western society, which it has always regarded as its antithesis'. This may indeed be analytically tenable, but will it become registered in new kibbutz values, and if so, how? The abolition of private ownership of the means of production does not — as any Eastern European would

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confirm — bring about an end to social stratification or cause for conflict, not even when positions of authority are rotated or publicly controlled. So whither now, one wonders, the search for identity on the kibbutz?

JONATHAN WEBBER

DAVID KRANZLER, *Thy Brother's Blood: The Orthodox Jewish Response During the Holocaust*, with a Foreword by Isaac Lewin, (Artsroll Judaiscope Series), xii + 338 pp., Mesorah Publications, Brooklyn, New York, 1987, \$15.95 (paperback, \$12.95).

This book defends Orthodox Jewry in the period of the Holocaust against the charge that it was inept about the way it faced the formidable task of saving Jews from the Nazi clutches. On the contrary, the book argues, it was the Orthodox who made *hatzalah*, the saving of Jewish lives, the chief priority. 'How many of the Six Million', the jacket blurb exclaims, 'would have been saved if the economically and politically inconsequential Orthodox had carried the day? That question tortures the reader'.

The book makes for painful yet necessary reading but it must be said that the documentation, so vital in establishing the case, is less than adequate. Dr Lewin, in his Foreword (p. xii) tactfully acknowledges the inadequacy: 'For the first time, a trained historian has attempted to do justice to the extraordinary efforts of the valiant few Orthodox personalities throughout the world. Yet, for all his labor, Dr Kranzler has not said the final word. He himself is completing, I am informed, a more detailed scholarly work in this field. Moreover, as I peruse my own collection of documents, remnants of that tragic period, I realize how much work must still be done to bring to light the Orthodox rescue efforts during the most tragic period of Jewish history.'

The book suffers less than others in the Artsroll Series from an uncritical assessment, in which only the vast virtues of the Orthodox heroes are recorded — never their faults or weaknesses. Yet the hagiographical note is frequently sounded — especially appropriate, perhaps, given the grim nature of the topic and the tremendous courage displayed in risking life in order to save life.

LOUIS JACOBS

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JEHUDA REINHARZ, ed., *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses* (no. 6 of The Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry series), x + 498 pp., published for Brandeis University Press by University Press of New England, Hanover, New Hampshire, and London, 1987, \$54.00 or £32.75 from Trevor Brown Associates, Suite 7b, 26 Charing Cross Road, London w.c.2, England.

One of the contributors to this important collection, Todd M. Endelman, comments that Jewish responses to antisemitism are now a central issue in the study of modern Jewish history along with emancipation, Haskalah, religious reform, Zionism, and antisemitism itself. He goes on to argue, however, that the research is predominantly concerned with organizational or communal responses to the relative neglect of those of the ordinary Jew. The value of the present volume is threefold: it brings together in a focused manner much of the current work in the field; it provides a survey of a variety of responses; and it demonstrates the need for systematic analysis while laying an historical foundation for such an analysis.

What it does not do is to effectively shift the interest of scholarly endeavour towards the personal responses to antisemitism of ordinary Jews. A start is made, however, but it is a very difficult task — as Endelman concedes in his contribution on conversion. Leaders and organizations, unlike ordinary Jews, leave records and controversies surrounding the Holocaust which have concentrated research on communal responses. Perhaps an even greater neglect (and one at least equally difficult to resolve, if only because it is reliant on research on individual as well as communal responses) is the relative absence of theoretical and comparative frameworks for analysis. Michael R. Marrus in his contribution on the Jewish leadership in France rightly warns that there is a danger in abstraction of ignoring the human dimension. At the same time, however, there is a need to generalize about the nature and characteristics of responses and remedies; to identify gaps in our knowledge — for instance, Gentile responses to antisemitism; and to reflect upon and learn from the lessons for the defence against antisemitism.

Both the need for theory and the difficulties of theorizing about responses are apparent in the organization of this book. The twenty-two essays are consistent in the high quality of their scholarship. They are grouped uneasily into three geographical sections (Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, the Western Hemisphere and the Arab World) and thematically into a section on The Holocaust. They range from an essay on Martin Buber to one on the novels of Michal Bursztyn, from a study of the rural exodus of Alsatian Jews, 1791–1848, to antisemitism in Argentina, from the Warsaw underground press to the use of courts by American Jews. How do we make sense of this



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wealth of research on organizations and movements, leaders and communities, reflections and strategies, power and authority, attitudes and behaviour, and collective and individual actions?

Ben Halpern provides a suggestive model. In brief, an equilibrium between antisemitism and tolerance that is acceptable to both Gentiles and Jews is necessary for the survival of a Jewish community in a Gentile society. This equilibrium will vary according to the particular historical epoch and the different societies at the time. He then compares and contrasts the pre-modern equilibrium when the Jewish position in society was based on sacral religious grounds with the modern Jewish position in society defined in secular, civil terms. Halpern concludes his stimulating Introduction with a warning of the need to establish a new equilibrium point as a consequence of the Holocaust and the rise of the state of Israel.

While such an approach is helpful in charting the historical interaction of antisemitism and response, Stuart A. Cohen constructs a conceptual framework to facilitate understanding of the range of responses of Anglo-Jewry. This is done through the identification and examination of three issues or co-ordinates: perceptions of the environment; the types of antisemitism to which it was felt necessary to respond; and the differing responses of the various sections of the Jewish community. But Cohen counsels caution about his methodology because Britain is unusual in regard to the relative absence of cataclysmic occasions upon which to measure and examine responses and because a monolithic Anglo-Jewish response cannot be identified. But it can be argued that response is not only a matter of reaction to crisis (which is also clear from other essays in the volume) and that for the purpose of comparative analysis Britain could be taken as a reasonable approximation of an acceptable equilibrium point between antisemitism and tolerance. Moreover, an analytical framework should allow for a consideration of a pluralism of respondents and responses.

ROBERT BENEWICK

DAVID SORKIN, *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780-1840*, Studies in Jewish History series (general editor, Jehuda Reinharz), 255 pp., Oxford University Press, New York and London, 1987, n.p.

Since its emergence from the confines of literary and intellectual history, *Haskalah* has been a fertile and much-discussed subject within Jewish historiography. It is seen today as an ideology of Jewish transition from traditional to modern society, especially in Germany and later in Eastern Europe. There have been two general approaches to *Haskalah* in German Jewry. One of them is typified by Azriel

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Shohat's *Beginnings of the Haskalah Among German Jewry* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1960) which fully documents how far German Jews departed from traditional norms in their dress, language, cultural interests, and religious conduct many years before the onset of the *Haskalah* as an ideology, around 1760. On the other hand, Jacob Katz — who does not dispute the evidence presented by Shohat and by others like him — has argued that modernization required a conscious *Haskalah* ideology of change and that this occurred during the 1750s, at the beginning of Moses Mendelssohn's career. Todd M. Endelman, from his viewpoint as a historian of eighteenth-century British Jewry, claims that modernization did not require an ideology and that moreover such an ideology was not necessarily expressed in philosophy but also took the form of modern Jewish institutions.

The latest contribution to this active field comes from David Sorkin, a young American scholar now resident in Britain. He links *Haskalah* with *bildung*, that German conception of deliberately cultivating one's moral and intellectual character. *Bildung* became the cultural and quasi-religious ideal for a large proportion of the German educated class, including intellectuals, clergymen, and the upper civil service. Although *bildung* may be considered as the ideology of a rising social class, it remained centred on individual self-development and lacked political thrust. However, *Haskalah* as the Jewish equivalent of *bildung* — the claim which Sorkin makes — could not be merely the accomplishment of talented individuals; the author stresses that *Haskalah* aimed to advance all Jews to the point where rulers would realize that the Jews had earned the 'civil improvement' of their status. He examines in detail how Mendelssohn and David Friedländer and the sympathetic Gentile Dohm regarded the connection between *Haskalah* as *bildung*, Jewish usefulness to the state, and Jewish rights. To be sure, Mendelssohn — that first and greatest Jewish exemplar of *bildung* — argued for Jewish rights on the basis of natural right and the state's exclusion from the sphere of religion. Thus, he rejected the linking of rights with *bildung*, which Friedländer, Dohm, and others espoused. In the event, Jewish rights became a real possibility only years later, during the Napoleonic domination of Germany.

Dr Sorkin scrutinizes the changes, called in his book's title 'transformation', which German Jewry underwent between 1780 and 1840. During that period, they assimilated culturally and absorbed the ideals of *bildung* which were urged upon them by the German-language *Sulamith*, successor to the Hebrew *Ha-Me'asseph* of the *Haskalah*, and by 'sermons of edification' which new-style rabbis delivered in impeccable German. In spite of their efforts, however, German Jews had obtained only incomplete emancipation and had achieved hardly any social integration by 1840. The outcome of cultural assimilation combined with social separation was a permanent Jewish sub-culture. Sorkin

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claims that the very existence of this sub-culture was ignored by German Jews, who preferred to think of themselves as fully German. From this sub-culture emerged a galaxy of German Jews who distinguished themselves in several cultural, literary, and scientific spheres; and it is hard to accept that not one of the many sharp-witted and self-critical German Jews thought it to be a matter worthy of public notice and comment.

Many of the author's ideas are challenging, but a few questions do arise. By making *Haskalah* not only the Jewish *aufklärung* (Enlightenment) but also the Jewish version of *bildung*, some of the main *Haskalah* themes appear to be neglected. The *maskilim* wanted to remake all of Jewry, not just to cultivate themselves. Many of their number were deeply concerned with Jewish culture as such, and not only with adapting it for cultural assimilation. Moses Mendelssohn's German translation of the Pentateuch was intended in part to open European culture to observant traditionally-educated Jews and it was sharply criticized for that. But can it be said that the great Hebrew commentary, the *Biur*, composed by Mendelssohn and his collaborators, merely aimed to bring *bildung* to the Jews? If Wessely's tract of 1781, *Divrey Shalom ve-Emet* (*Words of Peace and Truth*) expressed a *Haskalah* idea of *bildung*, that can hardly be said of his long epic poem, *Shirey Tipheret* (*Songs of Glory*). The *maskilim* sought to promote and renew Jewish culture in Hebrew, at least before German cosmopolitan culture turned to nationalism at the close of the eighteenth century. Most of them were not attempting to further cultural assimilation directly. The present reviewer is inclined to think that the parallel between *Haskalah* and *bildung* is taken too far. Moreover, too little attention is devoted to the social class basis of Jewish *bildung*.

It is striking and suggestive to read of the roots of *Haskalah* in *mussar*, the centuries-old tradition of pious self-criticism and reflection. But *mussar* and *Haskalah* prescriptions for correcting Jewish social ailments differed so completely that it is hard to accept that the two movements were connected, however remotely. The 'Orthodox *Haskalah*' (eighteenth-century rabbis who were conversant with the new sciences) also does not seem to have emerged from *mussar*. Nevertheless, the association of *mussar* with *Haskalah* merits further study. It might start from Dr Sorkin's argument that the decline of the traditional ideal of the fusion of morality with pious learning, the rise of secular knowledge, and the educational example of the Dutch Sephardim combined to bring on *Haskalah* — 'a radicalization of ideas and impulses present in Jewish society for some eighty years' (p. 54).

There is no doubt that Dr Sorkin has presented his ideas with learning and originality. He is thoroughly familiar with a massive quantity of Hebrew and German sources, as well as with the overflowing secondary literature. The *Transformation of German Jewry*,

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1780-1840 is not easy reading, nor is it a book for beginners, but it fully deserves the close study and discussion it is bound to receive from scholars.

LLOYD P. GARTNER

GERSHON WEILER, *Jewish Theocracy*, xiv + 332 pp., E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1988, 70 guilders (or \$35.00).

After examining, with philosophical acumen, the idea of a Jewish theocracy from Josephus (who first coined the term) and Philo through Maimonides, Abravanel, and Spinoza, Weiler argues that it is impossible for a modern, democratic state to be the kind of theocracy it would have to be if governed by the Halakhah, the traditional system of Jewish law. He rightly points out that the Halakhah was largely produced at a time when Jews had no autonomous state so that the Halakhic discussions regarding political institutions, as in Maimonides' great Code, are purely theoretical and idealistic and hence impractical so far as the current situation in the State of Israel is concerned. Moreover, Halakhic authorities, believing — as they do — that they are administering the very will of God, can brook no opposition on the part of non-Halakhically orientated governments. Consequently, all the attempts to have the 'Land of Israel' governed by the 'Torah of Israel' are bound to fail. (This, he remarks, is the real heart of the struggle between the religious and the secularists in Israel.) The authority vested in the government of a secular, democratic state, is simply incompatible with that vested by the divine law in the Jewish sages bent on applying Halakhic norms.

Weiler's conclusion (p. 211) is forceful though tentative: 'It is not part of my suggestion that the constitutional arrangements of Israel, evolved over four decades, be abruptly disposed of by way of legislative *fiat*. The democratic nature of the state makes this in any case impossible. The legislative act must be the final aim and that is obviously a fair distance away. What I am suggesting is that more thought should be given to the problem, that more effort should be invested in understanding the nature of *halakha* and of the historical circumstances out of which it grew, that there should be an end to the intellectually lazy expedient of blaming the rabbis for the constant friction that there is in Israel between the religious and others, that there should be a more widespread understanding of the problem in all its complexity. Once this groundwork has been done, it will perhaps be possible to proceed, with the required measure of consensus, to the separation of religion and state in Israel, which in the specific circumstances of the country means that the state will cease to take interest in the enforcement of *halakha*.'

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For all his acuteness, Weiler seems to be using a sledgehammer to crack a nut. It is surely widely acknowledged today that such ideas as freedom of conscience — the freedom to practise religion or not to practise it — are the result of comparatively recent thought and are not envisaged in the Halakhic system. The real problem, one would have thought, is how a compromise can be effected that guarantees and safeguards the Jewishness of the State of Israel without encroaching on personal liberties. Weiler doubts whether such a compromise can ever be achieved since, for him, it is much a case of either/or. He is undoubtedly correct if the Halakhah is seen as a closed system; but it is surprising that he makes hardly any mention of the possibility of understanding the Halakhah in more dynamic terms.

Weiler is also too selective and, occasionally, inaccurate when quoting from the works of the Halakhists. Thus it is hardly satisfactory to quote (p. 209) the opinion of a single rabbi, in a Halakhic journal, to the effect that, according to the Halakhah, nationalization of property is tantamount to robbery, even if compensation is paid. And a number of Halakhists have argued that, for instance, the question of whether the Occupied Territories should be surrendered for peace (pp. 208–09) must be left to the statesmen, politicians, and other experts, on *Halakhic* grounds — just as the question of whether a Jew may eat on Yom Kippur is left to the decision of the doctors. The famous debates recorded in the Talmud between the *Houses* of Hillel and Shammai are not (p. 139) between Hillel and Shammai themselves.

The whole subject is extremely complex. This book will prove helpful in delimiting the issues involved.

LOUIS JACOBS

JACK WERTHEIMER, *Unwelcome Strangers: East European Jews in Imperial Germany*, Studies in Jewish History series (general editor, Jehuda Reinharz), ix + 275 pp., Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford, 1987.

Before the First World War, when a Jew left the empire of the tsars and moved westward — as millions did — the authorities of the country to which he was admitted usually left him alone to make his way for better or worse. If he sought to become a citizen — as many of his brethren did — it was a fairly simple matter, governed by open, objective criteria. In contrast, neither letting immigrants free to engage in lawful pursuits nor allowing them ready naturalization was the rule in the German Reich. The authoritarian, bureaucratic character of imperial Germany, as well as its festering antisemitism, are most clearly revealed in the treatment of Eastern European Jewish immigrants. Regardless of how long he had dwelt in Germany, every one of them was subject to

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expulsion by order of the officials of the German states, in whose hands the control of immigration and naturalization was vested. In many of these states, as Jack Wertheimer reveals in his scholarly study, naturalization was made almost impossible to acquire.

The right to expel was regularly used, especially by Prussia, which urged other German states to follow its example. As a rule, states close to the Russian border, including Prussia and Saxony, were more severe towards immigrants than were states further west. No immigrant, of course, could expect any assistance from the Russian government, whose citizen he remained, against oppression from Germany. On the other hand, Jews from Austria-Hungary were more secure and found naturalization more readily available; this was because Austria-Hungary had trade agreements under which its Jews could live and do business in Germany. Jews from Galicia, for example, played a central role in the fur trade which the German government sought to promote.

Theoretically, it would have been easier to close the border to keep out Eastern European Jews — this 'unwanted element' as they were called by von Puttkamer, Prussian Minister of the Interior — than to admit them and then to harass them. The difficulty was that Polish Christian labourers were desired as workers in Germany and that German maritime interests sought to capture as much as they could of the vast transatlantic traffic, so that the border had to be open. Jews were hastened across the country to the ports of Bremen and Hamburg and very few of them decided to stay in Germany. Those who did numbered no more than about 70,000, out of a total of at least two and a half million who had emigrated, and as a group were probably more prosperous than the average emigrant and therefore hoped to be allowed to remain in Germany.

These circumstances explain why Jack Wertheimer's study starts, unlike any work on Jewish immigration known to this reviewer, with a detailed analysis of German governmental policy. The government was all-powerful and expulsion was a whip which officials could use against the newcomers at any time; it is probable that the threat drastically limited their development as a distinctive group. The author notes that there was an 'unusually impoverished organizational life' (p. 179) among the Jewish immigrants in Germany, in contrast to what obtained in other countries where they had settled. All Jews were required by law to belong to the *gemeinde* and to pay its taxes; but the main beneficiaries of its charitable and educational provisions were probably the new immigrants. The *gemeinde* was also their sole political outlet. In several towns, native German Jews were alarmed by the possibility that the Eastern Europeans, sometimes in alliance with the Zionists, might outvote them in *gemeinde* elections and they attempted to obtain the necessary government consent to debar Eastern European alien Jews from voting. Wertheimer provides interesting details of

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some bitter *gemeinde* quarrels over that issue. However, the government disapproved of such efforts to disenfranchise the newcomers who, in the event, did not actually gain control of any Jewish community. The author does not address himself to the question of why the state authorities declined to allow disenfranchisement. Perhaps they were interpreting the law impartially; on the other hand, perhaps they were implying that in their eyes all Jews were foreign and natives and immigrants could stew together.

Wertheimer does revise the conception of a contemptuous German Jewry icily detached from the Eastern Europeans in their midst. He prefers the term 'ambivalence' to describe the attitude of the native residents, observing that after initial hesitation they regularly tried to help the immigrants who were threatened with expulsion. Without a separate organizational life, except for the special case of Russian university students, and without maintaining a distinctive Yiddish culture, the Eastern European Jews assimilated culturally perhaps more rapidly and thoroughly in Germany than they did in any other country. At the same time, they provided German Jewry with a high proportion of its religious functionaries. It is curious to note that of the three rabbinical schools, it was the liberal *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentum* in Berlin which had the highest proportion of Eastern Europeans. Perhaps that was just because the *Hochschule's* religious outlook and course of study differed entirely from anything which was available in Eastern Europe. It must also be noted that it was the higher fertility of the newcomers which boosted the sagging birth rate of German Jewry.

Steven Aschheim's *Brothers and Strangers: East European Jews in German and German Jewish Consciousness* (published in 1982) showed imaginatively what Eastern European Jews represented to the German, and the German Jewish, spirit. Wertheimer's study deals with the hard facts of life, including demography, economic activity, government policy, and community politics; but we learn comparatively very little about the personal lives and thoughts of the immigrants themselves. His research has been intensive, to say the least, and has produced data from twenty archives in West Germany, Israel, and the United States. In addition, he has incorporated in his book extensive statistical tables which must have required a great deal of time to compose. Unfortunately, the writing is leaden, replete with academic qualifiers and ponderous sentences unenlivened by a sharp verb or colourful adjective. It is possibly house style which omits the pagination of articles cited from periodicals, but some readers would like to know whether they are being referred to a contribution of four or of forty pages.

Wertheimer's Jewish immigrants lived in a German society whose political and economic history he knows well. Since they constituted only a small proportion of the worldwide Jewish migration, the author

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frequently draws useful comparisons between Eastern European Jews in Germany and those who settled in other countries. These important virtues, together with his comprehensive research, overcome stylistic shortcomings and qualify *Unwelcome Strangers* as an important contribution to German Jewish history and to our understanding of Jewish migration.

LLOYD P. GARTNER



## CHRONICLE

The Community Research Unit of the Board of Deputies of British Jews has compiled statistics of synagogue marriages and of burials and cremations under Jewish auspices in 1987. The overall decline since 1982 in the number of synagogue marriages continues: the total for 1987 was 1046 compared with 1097 in 1986. The Orthodox group solemnized 800 unions in 1987 (Central Orthodox: 659; Right-wing Orthodox: 98; and Sephardi: 43), 67 fewer than the total of 867 in 1986. The Progressive group solemnized 246 marriages in 1987 (Reform: 184 and Liberal: 62), 16 more unions than in 1986 when the total was 230; but it is worth noting that the increase was entirely the result of a greater number of Reform synagogue marriages — 184 in 1987 against 160 in 1986 — while the number of Liberal synagogue marriages decreased from 70 in 1986 to 62 in 1987. There was a decline in the number of marriages under the auspices of all three branches of the Orthodox group: for the Central Orthodox, from 699 in 1986 to 659 in 1987; for the Right-wing Orthodox, from 122 in 1986 to 98 in 1987; and for the Sephardim, from 46 in 1986 to 43 in 1987.

Nearly three-quarters (766 or 73.2 per cent) of all synagogue marriages in 1987 were solemnized in London and the rest (280 or 26.8 per cent) in the provinces. In London, there were 462 Central Orthodox, 78 Right-wing Orthodox, and 32 Sephardi unions (totalling 572 for the Orthodox group) and 141 Reform and 53 Liberal marriages (totalling 194 for the Progressive sector). In the provinces, there were 197 Central Orthodox, 20 Right-wing Orthodox, and 11 Sephardi unions (totalling 228 for the Orthodox group) and 43 Reform and 9 Liberal marriages (totalling 52 for the Progressives). Thus, 71.5 per cent of all Orthodox synagogue marriages took place in London and the remaining 28.5 per cent in the provinces while 78.9 per cent of all Progressive synagogue unions were solemnized in London and the remaining 21.1 per cent in the provinces.

There were 4486 burials and cremations under Jewish auspices in 1987, representing an increase of 48 over the 1986 total of 4838. The Orthodox group had 3605 burials while the Reform and Liberal sector had 881 burials and cremations. Nearly two-thirds (65.7 per cent) of the funerals occurred in London and the remainder (34.3 per cent) in the provinces. The Community Research Unit's report stresses in this context that it must be remembered that the figures refer to the area in which the burial or cremation took place and that people are not always buried or cremated in the district where they had lived immediately before their death.

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According to the Geneva-based Intergovernmental Committee for Migration, Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union last October showed the highest number for any month since 1980, with 2,473 allowed to leave. Only 78

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of the émigrés went to Israel after leaving the Vienna transit centre. The Committee stated that in 1988 Moscow had allowed 14,288 Jews to leave by the end of October and that 1,232 of these had gone to Israel.

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The Public Council for Soviet Jewry in Israel is reported to have stated that 1,795 of the citizens who were allowed to leave the Soviet Union in the first ten months of 1988 on Israeli visas were not Jews. Most of them were Pentecostals while the rest were Estonians, Ukrainians, or members of other minority groups; they had no intention of emigrating to Israel and most of them hoped to settle in the United States.

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The May 1988 Report of the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization states: 'As part of the project on the Teaching of Jewish Law in Law Schools, . . . a one-day meeting was held in Miami, Florida, within the framework of the annual meeting of the Association of American Law Schools (January 6-10, 1988). The meeting . . . was attended by more than 20 professors who teach Jewish Law in American universities. . . . Proposals regarding the preparation of teaching materials, including a case book, a glossary of professional terms, and a teachers' guide, were discussed.'

The Report also states that a group of nineteen university rectors from Latin America, Spain, and Portugal came to the International Center in Jerusalem last February within the framework of a visit organized by the Central Institute for Cultural Relations Israel-Iberoamerica, Spain and Portugal. It was the second visit of a representative group of rectors from Latin American and Iberian universities. They came from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Peru, Portugal, Santo Domingo, Spain, and Venezuela. The Report comments that the Center has intensified efforts to ensure the participation of scholars from those regions in the summer workshops and to advance university teaching of Jewish Civilization in those countries.

A new programme in Jewish Studies has been launched in Mexico under the auspices of the Universidad Iberoamericana and the International Center. It has two options: 'a program of specialization in Jewish Studies at the post-graduate level, and a diploma in Jewish Studies intended for persons who, although without a university degree, have equivalent knowledge or experience. . . . The program in Jewish Studies comprises 12 courses and will be developed during a period of two-and-a-half years. Three of the courses are in history, methodology, and philosophy. Four courses deal with fundamental socio-cultural, political, and cultural processes in contemporary Jewish life; three elective courses can be chosen from subjects relating to specific areas of contemporary Jewish life, such as the social and economic structure of the Jewish people; the social structure and political system of the State of Israel; the community of nations and the Jewish people; Ashkenazi culture: Yiddish and Yiddish literature; the impact of Sepharad on Jewish history; Biblical values and modernity. Thirty-eight students have registered in the program.'

The Report of the International Center also notes that the University of Kent, in England, 'is offering an LL.M degree in Jewish and Islamic Law, to

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be acquired in one full-time academic year, or in two part-time academic years. The program requires three courses — Jewish Law in Legal History, Introduction to Islamic Law, and Religious Law in Modern States. . . . The degree is open to graduates in Law, Jewish Studies, Islamic Studies, and other relevant disciplines’.

The International Center commissioned a survey about the teaching of Jewish Civilization in European universities. The survey reported on the availability of courses in Jewish Studies ‘in Western Europe (Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands), in Central Europe (Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Switzerland), in the Mediterranean countries (Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain) and the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden). University faculties or departments of arts, humanities, foreign languages, Semitic languages, Oriental languages, and theology were approached. Questionnaires were sent to faculty members teaching subjects related to the survey. One hundred and eighty six lecturers at 118 institutions of higher learning replied to the survey’.

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The Spring 1988 issue of *Tel Aviv University News*, received in London last June, states that the School of Dental Medicine of the university and the College of Dentistry of New York University ‘have signed a statement of intent encouraging mutual activities of exchange between the two universities. This will include faculty, student and administration exchange programs, and support and encouragement of joint research and publication programs’. Tel Aviv University and the State University of Maryland at College Park have entered into an official agreement ‘of academic cooperation to facilitate cultural and scientific cooperation between both institutions’; in the academic year 1987–88, 30 Maryland students were registered in Tel Aviv University’s Overseas Program.

The Autumn 1988 issue of *Tel Aviv University News* states: ‘Tel Aviv University has concluded cooperation agreements with the Polytechnic University of Madrid and the University of Groningen, Holland. Both agreements pledge the parties to promote teaching and research activities and deepen understanding of economic, social, and cultural issues in their respective countries. These goals are to be accomplished through joint research programs, the organization of conferences and symposia, and the exchange of scholars and students. Joint activities with Madrid will centre on the Faculty of Engineering, while the pact with Holland emphasizes the fields of mathematics, chemistry, biology, and semitic languages. Tel Aviv University has cooperation agreements with 45 universities in North and South America, Europe, and the Far East’.

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An official delegation from the Soviet Academy of Sciences, led by the Academy’s Vice-President, attended the Landau Memorial Conference on Frontiers of Physics which was held at Tel Aviv University last June. Lev Landau was one of the most prominent Russian physicists and had been awarded the Nobel prize for physics.

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A Chair in International Economic Relations has been established at Tel Aviv University. The Rector of the University stated: 'the Chair will finance economic research and teaching in two related areas: trade theory and macroeconomics', according to the Autumn 1988 issue of *Tel Aviv University News*. That publication also reports the inauguration of a Chair in Ibero and Latin American Studies which, it is hoped, will 'help to expand the recently renewed contacts between the Spanish and Jewish peoples'.

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More than 600 Jewish and Christian delegates from 24 countries attended last July in Oxford the largest conference on the Holocaust ever convened. It was entitled 'Remembering for the Future'. The participants included scholars from several disciplines (who submitted 280 written contributions), survivors and children of survivors, and teachers. There were about two dozen workshops on various aspects of the Holocaust. An American university teacher who attended the Conference stated that there are now about one thousand college courses in Holocaust studies in the United States.

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The September 1988 issue of *Ends and Odds*, a publication of the Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations at Selby Oak Colleges in Birmingham, reports on the 1988 Lambeth Conference. It states: 'The bishops of the world-wide Anglican communion meet once every ten years, at what is known as the Lambeth Conference, under the chairmanship of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Resolutions passed at Lambeth are not binding on member churches, but carry great influence'. A 'dialogue document' of the Lambeth Conference is quoted in part, focusing on the section dealing with 'the teaching of contempt', 'the systematic dissemination of anti-Jewish propaganda by Church leaders, teachers, and preachers. Through catechism, teaching of school children, and Christian preaching, the Jewish people have been misrepresented and caricatured. . . . The biblical call for love towards one's neighbour impels us as Christians to self-examination and repentance for our prejudice, and persecution of God's covenant people. In order to combat centuries of anti-Jewish teaching and practice, Christians must develop programmes of teaching, preaching, and common social action which eradicate prejudice and promote dialogue, and sharing among the biblical peoples. The Christian response to persecution and holocaust must be that of our Jewish neighbours: Never again!'

The Centre's July 1988 *Newsletter of Theology and Dialogue*, in the *Ends and Odds* series, states that there were 43 participants at a Symposium of Christians, Jews, and Muslims last May and June in Sankt Augustin, near Bonn, West Germany. They came from Austria, Canada, Egypt, France, both East and West Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States, the Vatican, and the West Bank. The overall theme of the symposium was 'Understanding the Other's Beliefs and Concerns'.

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Nearly two thousand (1,910) West Germans were interviewed last spring in an opinion poll carried out by the Wickert Institute. Twenty-six per cent said that they would oppose the marriage of their children with a Jewish spouse while 42 per cent said that they would oppose the marriage of their children to a Turkish person. Twelve per cent said that they would not wish to live in the same house as Jews, nine per cent said that Jews were sexually dissolute, four per cent stated that Jews were 'harmful to the people's well-being', and three per cent said that Jews were members of an 'impure race'. On the other hand, 70 per cent said that they would have no objection to a Jew heading the country's government and 93 per cent stated that they would hide a Jewish person in their home if a new Hitler came to power and called for an all-out war against 'the world Jewish conspiracy'.

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A survey carried out by the Allensbach Institute of Demoscopy (supervised by the Research Centre on Antisemitism of West Berlin Technical University and sponsored by the Anti-Degamation League of B'nai B'rith of New York) has revealed that nearly eight per cent of West Germans are 'vehemently antisemitic' while a further seven per cent have 'clear anti-Jewish prejudices'. About 2,300 persons (male and female) aged over 16 years were interviewed; a third of them (33 per cent) said that Jews had too much influence in the world; 28 per cent said that Jews were greedy and the same proportion opposed further restitution payments; 13 per cent were opposed to any contact with Jews and a further 13 per cent wanted all Jews to emigrate to Israel. (The figures overlap because many respondents answered more than one question in the affirmative.)

A survey of 2,000 Italians in all walks of life between the ages of 14 and 79, carried out by a leading opinion poll institute, has shown that 17.5 of the respondents were sympathetic towards Jews while 10.6 per cent expressed dislike. The most tolerant groups were teachers and students. The findings about attitudes to Jews were almost identical with those revealed by an earlier survey conducted by the same institute in 1986. On the other hand, whereas in 1986 a quarter (26 per cent) of the respondents had said that they disliked Arabs, in 1988 the proportion dropped to 17 per cent.

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The Summer 1988 issue of *Patterns of Prejudice* (vol. 22, no. 2), published by the Institute of Jewish Affairs in London, reports that a Swiss woman, Anna de Haries, provided in her will for the creation of a Berne foundation to award scholarships in medicine and the arts. One of the articles of the foundation's 1931 statutes specified that the scholarships were for the benefit of needy students, 'irrespective of their nationality but with the exclusion of Jews'. According to Berne University, no applicant had ever been disqualified on the basis of that clause. However, when the clause came to the notice of the Jewish community of Berne, the Director of Justice of Canton Berne was asked to take steps to annul the clause. 'The Executive Council (Government) of the Canton immediately accepted the proposal, considering the exclusion of Jews as 'most repulsive and, according to law, contrary to good morals'. It referred the matter to the Canton's Large Council (parliament), which constitutionally

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has a supervisory authority. The Council confirmed the annulment and also stipulated that in future, foundations with racist provisions should not be accepted.'

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*Christian Jewish Relations*, a quarterly publication of the Institute of Jewish Affairs in London, reproduces in its Summer 1988 issue (vol. 21, no. 2) a declaration issued in Berlin last May by the Protestant Church of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Association of Protestant Churches of the Democratic Republic of Germany for the fiftieth anniversary of the pogrom of 9 November 1938. The declaration stated:

'9 November 1988 marks 50 years since the German Reich, at the order of the National Socialists in power, set fire to synagogues; Jewish places of worship were desecrated; Jewish shops and homes were pillaged; Jewish fellow-citizens were ill-treated, displaced, killed.

'What happened in the month of November 1988 was carried out in public, took place before the eyes of everyone. The persecution was directed towards all Jews. The race-madness displayed its humanity-despising brutality. No-one could have denied all knowledge of it. Those who planned and implemented these crimes were able to count on the majority of our people being either compliant, indifferent and looking the other way, or silent out of fear. Christians too — with a few exceptions — kept silent.

'... we are also conscious of the fact that both theology and the Church were involved in the long history of alienation and hostility towards the Jews. The Church failed to see the deep inner connection between Judaism and Christianity. ...

'In recent years theological and historical research has opened our minds to that which is unifying and common to the faiths of Christians and Jews. ...

'... We must strive to expel any everyday figures of speech of our language that cause offence to Jews. The same should apply for the language of church prophecy. But our foremost duty should be to disseminate and to deepen — in particular for the younger generation — truthful information about Judaism — Jewish religion, history, and culture as well as the Jewish state. ...

'Recognition should also be given to efforts concerning the rescue and dignified preservation of relics from the rich heritage of the Jewish-German past.

'We would like to assure our fellow Jews who live with us despite the disastrous past, that they do have a homeland here. Furthermore we advocate that the State of Israel should find, together with her neighbours, a secure peace within just borders.'

The Central Committee of German Catholics also issued a similar declaration entitled: 'Fifty Years On — How Does One Speak of Guilt, Pain, and Reconciliation?'

\*

The Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations of Selly Oak Colleges (Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LQ) has a diploma course in the study of Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations which is 'validated by

## CHRONICLE

the University of Birmingham'. The course requires either two years of part-time study or one year of full-time study. A prospectus is available on request from the Centre.

\*

The University of Uppsala in Sweden held a conference on 'Jewish life in Scandinavia'. The contributions included papers on the Jewish populations of Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden; on Jewish migration patterns; and on antisemitism. The conference proceedings will be published.

\*

*La Rassegna Mensile di Israel* is a quarterly publication of the Unione delle Comunità Israelitiche Italiane. It has published a special issue (volume LIV, nos. 1 and 2, January–August 1988), entitled *1938: le leggi contro gli ebrei*, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the fascist anti-Jewish legislation of Italy. This special issue has been compiled with the collaboration of the Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea; there are fifteen contributions by various authors and a section of some 150 pages reproducing various anti-Jewish statutes and decrees, from 1938 to 1945.

\*

The Institute of Jewish Affairs (11 Hertford Street, London W1V 7DX) regularly published Research Reports. The 1988 Reports include the following: 'The Diplomatic Performance and Status of the Palestine Liberation Organization'; 'Recent Trends in Soviet and East European Relations with Israel'; 'French Politics and the 1988 Presidential Elections'; 'Israel and the Southern Enlargement of the European Community'; 'The Uneasy Triangle in the Eastern Mediterranean: Israel's Relations with Turkey and Greece'; 'The United States–Israel Strategic Relationship in the Reagan Administration'; 'A Guide to the Israeli General Election 1988'; 'The 1988 American Presidential Election'; 'The Arab Lobby in the United States'; 'Antisemitism in Japan'; and 'Israeli Perspectives on the Israel–South African Relationship'.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

(Books listed here may be reviewed later)

- Almog, Shmuel, ed., *Antisemitism Through the Ages* (Studies in Antisemitism Series, edited by Yehuda Bauer), translated from the Hebrew text of *Sin'at Yisrael ledoroteha* (published in Jerusalem in 1980) by Nathan H. Reisner, xi + 419 pp., published for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem by Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1988, £14.95 or \$24.95 (paperback), £32.00 or \$55.00 (hardback).
- Brearly, Margaret, *A Christian Response to the Middle East and the Palestinian Question*, 7 pp., published by the Anglo-Israel Association, 9 Bentinck Street, London W1, paperback, n.p.
- Don, Yehuda, *Industrialisation of a Rural Collective. An Analytical Appraisal of the Israeli Kibbutz*, vii + 130 pp., Avebury/Gower Publishing Company, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 3HR, 1988, £19.50.
- Flacks, Richard, *Making History: The Radical Tradition in American Life*, xiii + 313 pp., Columbia University Press, New York, 1988, \$35.00.
- Greenberg, Simon, ed., *The Ordination of Women as Rabbis: Studies and Responsa*, Volume XIV in the Moreshet Series (Studies in Jewish History, Literature, and Thought), ix + 225 pp. (pp. 188–215 in Hebrew), A Centennial Publication of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1988, \$19.95 (paperback, \$11.95).
- Jimack, Michael, ed., *Occasional Papers on Jewish Social Services*, no. 2, published by the Central Council for Jewish Social Services, 221 Golders Green Road, London NW11 9DW, 1988, £2.00 (paperback).
- Josephs, Zoë and members of the Birmingham Jewish History Group, *Survivors. Jewish Refugees in Birmingham 1933–1945*, vi + 217 pp., Meridian Books, 40 Hadzor Road, Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands B68 9LA, 1988, £7.50 (paperback).
- Loewenberg, Frank M., *Religion and Social Work Practice in Contemporary American Society*, xiii + 176 pp., Columbia University Press, New York, 1988, \$22.00.
- Roth, Stephen J., ed., *The Impact of the Six-Day War. A Twenty-Year Assessment*, xix + 316 pp., Macmillan Press in association with the Institute of Jewish Affairs, London, 1988, £35.00.
- Wagenaar, Willem A., *Identifying Ivan. A Case Study in Legal Psychology*, xii + 187 pp., Harvester Wheatsheaf, 66 Wood Lane End, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 4RG, 1988, £14.95.
- Wertheimer, Jack, ed., *The American Synagogue: A Sanctuary Transformed* (A Centennial Publication of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America), xviii + 433 pp., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, £32.50.



## BOOKS RECEIVED

- Wolfsfeld, Gadi, *The Politics of Provocation: Participation and Protest in Israel* (SUNY Series in Israeli Studies, edited by Russel Stone), xii + 210 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, 1988, \$44.50 (paperback, \$14.95).
- Zeitlin, Irving M., *Jesus and the Judaism of His Time*, ix + 204 pp., Polity Press, Oxford, 1988, £25.00.
- Zenner, Walter P., ed., *Persistence and Flexibility : Anthropological Perspectives on the American Jewish Experience* (SUNY Series in Anthropology and Judaic Studies, edited by Walter P. Zenner), x + 298 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, 1988, \$49.50 (paperback, \$16.95).

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

- FINESTEIN**, Israel; M. A. (Cantab). Queen's Counsel and former Senior Crown Court Judge; President, Hillel Foundation and Vice-President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Chief publications: 'Anglo-Jewish Opinion 1828-1858' in *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, vol. xx, 1964; 'An Aspect of the Jews and English Marriage Law During the Emancipation: The Prohibited Degrees' in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. vii, no. 1, June 1965; 'Jewish Immigration in British Party Politics' in Aubrey Newman, ed., *Migration and Settlement*, 1971; 'Early and Middle 19th-Century British Opinion on the Restoration of the Jews: Contrasts with America' in Moshe Davis, ed., *With Eyes Towards Zion* (Volume II), 1986; and 'Some Modern Themes in the Emancipation Debate in Early Victorian England' in Jonathan Sacks, ed., *Tradition and Transition: Essays Presented to Chief Rabbi Sir Immanuel Jakobovits*, 1986.
- FRIEDBERG**, Asher; Ph.D. Lecturer, Political Science Department of Haifa University. Chief publications: *A Phenomenon Called Emigration. Annotated Bibliography* (Hebrew), 1984; 'The Emigrants Between Pulling and Pushing Forces' (Hebrew) in *Kivunim*, no. 25, 1984; 'Characteristics of Public Health Audit in Israel' in *Studies in State Audit* (Hebrew), no. 40, 1986; editor, *State Audit in Israel: Theory and Practice* (Hebrew), 1987, and co-author, 'Jewish Emigration from Israel' in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. xxx, no. 1, June 1988.
- SELENGUT**, Charles; Ph.D. Professor of Sociology at County College of Morris (Randolph, NJ), Adjunct Professor of Religion at Drew University (Madison, NJ), and Executive Officer of the Eastern Sociological Society. Chief publications: 'Eschatology and the Construction of Alternative Realities' in J. Bettis and S. K. Johannessen, eds., *The Return of the Millennium*, 1984; co-author, *Contemporary Society: A Classical Approach*, 1987; and co-editor, *Seeing Society*, to be published in 1989.
- SHARKANSKY**, Ira; Ph.D. Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Recent publications: *What Makes Israel Tick? How Domestic Policymakers Cope With Constraints*, 1985 and *The Political Economy of Israel*, 1987.

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