EDITORIAL ESSAY:
CHANGING AGENDAS IN THE SOCIOLOGICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY OF DIASPORA JEWS

Barry A. Kosmin

Abstract

In this paper I reflect on the changes in Jewish society around the globe that I have observed during the four decades since 1972 when I first began working as a scholar and researcher in Jewish social science. The focus is on why and how in the Jewish Diaspora and even in Israel the output, research agendas and concerns of Jewish sociology and demography have changed over this period and, in particular, over the past two decades. The changes have come about as a result of political and social forces as well as the influences of academic fashion and imbalances in disciplinary recruitment. Since the United States is by far the largest diaspora Jewish population centre, has the most sophisticated and best resourced communal organizations as well as the largest concentration of academics working in the field much of the focus of this essay will be on developments affecting research on American Jewry.

Introduction

One cannot approach the study or analysis of the condition of the Jews without a keen sense and awareness of history: no people or nation was so buffeted by the wars and revolutions of the first half of the 20th century. Observing 1912 from the vantage point of 2012 we can only marvel at the amazing changes in the condition and situation of the Jews geographically, socially, economically and demographically. This transformation means that almost all Jews today reside on a different continent and speak a language different from their grandparents and great-grandparents a century ago. Neither of the most obvious causes of this upheaval — the tragedy of the *Shoah* and *kibbutz galuyot,* the triumph of Zionism — had been expected in 1912. Together they resulted in the

dissolution of the majority of the diaspora communities and the reconstitution of World Jewry in North America and Israel.

There is no argument that the Jewish people's concerns and collective agenda has changed along with their changed circumstances. In the 1970s the Jewish collectivity was still very much concerned with migration and oppression. There were "captive" communities in the USSR and "communities at risk" in Syria and Ethiopia requiring rescue. The Soviet Jewry movement united Jews of all shades of political and religious opinion and academic studies and research were prominent in the political struggle and subsequently in planning the migration process. For example, the Council of Jewish Federations distributed *The Class of 1979: The "Acculturation" of Jewish Immigrants from the Soviet Union* (Kosmin, 1990) to all the members of the U.S. Congress as part of the lobbying effort to get refugee resettlement grants.

Sadly, this situation has altered due to a history of cutbacks in support for social research over the past two decades, reflecting a wider macro-trend — erosion of interest and support for international and national Jewish organizations. National bodies have lost power and authority to local and "parochial" ones as the need felt among the Jewish public for standardization and homogeneity in Jewish life has attenuated.

Since the 1980s American Jewry has been transformed internally in response to the burgeoning of varieties of "Jewishness" and new ways of being and "doing" Jewish. This is marked by an efflorescence of new and refurbished organizations, institutions, and communities each trying to cater to a niche market. The community at both national and local level has moved from a department store to a boutique approach to meet the Jewish identity needs of its motley constituencies. The Jewish public and donors have narrowed their agendas and concerns over time. Jewish peoplehood is no longer a major focus of loyalty and attention. The Jewish sense of common destiny and solidarity has weakened as the areas of agreement and consensus have eroded just as political and religious differences have amplified.

In reaching this situation, Jews have subscribed to the fashion in the Western world to become pluralistic and multicultural. Compared to 1972 in most countries today Jews are less united and are more likely to perceive themselves as members of different sub-communities. This trend only projects wider socio-economic trends such as the decline in broadcasting and the rise of narrowcasting alongside the decline in communitarianism and the rise of individualism and the sovereign consumer. Judaism, or rather Judaisms, divide rather than unite the Jewish population. Throughout the Jewish world polarization has increased as religious extremism and secular indifference have both grown at the

expense of the middle ground. For example, in Britain the membership of the mainstream Orthodox communities declined by 31 percent between 1990 and 2010. In the same period the middle-of-the-road United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism in the U.S. similarly lost ground, overtaken by both Orthodoxy and Reform. More significantly most American Jewish households are now religiously unaffiliated. Symptomatic of this fissiparous tendency is the success and triumphalism of *Haredim* in Israel and elsewhere; they are the most sectarian, clannish and localized of Jews in outlook and lifestyles.

In this new 21st century environment many people appear to see little point in aggregating artificially Jews who do not recognize each other's Jewish status or legitimacy. Each grouping looks after its own interests and constituency. At the same time these increasingly diverse groupings of Diaspora Jews seem to agree on one point: they consider themselves secure and in little need of mutual support. Moreover, the State of Israel no longer appears to be much concerned with them now that their potential for providing large numbers of immigrants has lessened. Certainly its Ministry of Education through the educational curriculum and textbooks shows no interest in making its schoolchildren aware of their existence.

Jewish Social Research

It is not just that the Jewish situation has changed but the ways we examine and analyze the changes that have occurred and are still occurring have changed, too. Some trends are constant. For example, given the obvious importance for communal and family welfare it is both surprising and telling that the study of the economics of the Jews has always been a major lacuna in the field. Presumably the fear of offering data that could be used by antisemites has constrained such study because of the detrimental experience associated with the works of economic historians such as Marx (1844) and Sombart (1911) and their followers. The exceptions, which trend to prove the rule, have been the work of Barry Chiswick and the Hartmans on the American Jewish labor force and occupational patterns (Chiswick, 2007; 2008; Chiswick and Huang, 2008; Hartman and Hartman, 1996; 2009).

It is probably necessary to state boldly that Jewish social studies are probably more removed from the mainstream of social science and more ghettoized than they have been in the past. The record of recent decades has been one of discontinuity and marginality. Yet in the 1970s many of the world's leading social scientists were Jews whose reputations rested on a broad range of interests. Yet they were often also social scientists of

the Jews. One thinks of Roberto Bachi and Shmuel Eisenstadt in Israel, Seymour Martin Lipset, Herbert Gans, Nathan Glazer, and Sidney Goldstein in the U.S., Maurice Freedman, Morris Ginsberg, Henri Tajfel and Sigbert Prais in Britain. These scholars both encouraged Jewish social studies and made it "respectable" academically.

In many ways this situation marked the successful fulfilment of *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums* tradition. In those years the Jews as a collectivity were of scholarly interest beyond just their own constituency. The Jewish experience was often seen as central to the study of sociology and social psychology especially regarding modernization, ethnic relations and immigrant groups. However, in the past two decades as the historic "Jewish Question" seems to have been settled, at least in the eyes of most gentile academics, and Diaspora Jews have undergone *embourgeoisement* — upward social and economic mobility. They are no longer seen as a "disadvantaged" or "under-represented" minority and have largely vanished from current mainstream concerns with "gender, race, ethnicity and class" and "post-colonial studies." They have also been largely excluded from the new arena of "diaspora studies" which tends to ignore "white" and western "trans-national" populations. This omission seems politically motivated and similar to the attempt to reconstitute contemporary antisemitism merely as anti-Zionism. The upshot is that Jewish studies today are "ghettoized" and widely regarded as parochial, seen to have little value in formulating paradigms and theory in the social sciences. [1]

A significant change in Jewish research has been the rise in the influence and extent of qualitative research in anthropology and ethnography at the expense of quantitative research. Over the past decade especially there has been a decline in the prestige of demography and of interest and output in allied disciplines such as migration, urban studies and the social geography of the Jews. Concomitant with these trends has been an emphasis on micro-studies or case studies favoring sub-populations and small groups rather than macro-studies inclusive of all sections of contemporary Jewry.

This has had some unforeseen consequences. One example is provided by political science. In an age of democracy and globalization, studies of political opinion and voting behaviour in political science are no longer much interested in a numerically small group like the Jews and this is true of the United States, Britain, France, Latin America or the Former Soviet Union. At present, even where there is a focus on the politics of Diaspora Jews, it is more often than not on Jewish communities operating as the "Israel lobby" and such studies are more often to be found in international relations journals than in politics journals.

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A major result is that much of current research has become narrowly focussed. Each local federation or synagogue denomination, each identity or interest group — women, elderly, Russians, students, or gay and lesbian Jews — sponsors or undertakes its own studies. Overarching national studies and comparative studies inevitably lose out. Where numbers are smaller, "narratives" and qualitative studies fill the void vacated by hard statistics and social facts. Ethnographic and qualitative studies are easier to "manipulate" than statistics. They are also less objective and their data less verifiable and when numbers and proportions do not count, selection bias is difficult to prove. These studies tend to bear out the old criticism of the anthropologists' bias towards valorization of their "favourite tribe." To put it poetically, there is also a fashion to focus on the exotic and erotic. Therefore, some groups are over-researched and others neglected because of fashion or political bias.

In general, the tendency is to advantage religion, especially easily observable and identifiable Orthodox communities. Orthodox women seem to be a particularly popular topic with women academics. In contrast, Reform or secular Jewish men have been neglected. It was only when the Posen Foundation made available a grant to the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry (ASSJ) did a special issue of *Contemporary Jewry* on Jewish secularism (Vol. 30:1, 2010) emerge. As guest editor, I do not wish to undermine the importance of the topic nor question the quality of the peer reviewed papers but it illustrates the problematic of a field dependent on external funding and "soft money".

This absence of secure funding as well as tenure track career opportunities in universities has resulted in turn in a lack of submissions to peer reviewed journals in the field. The annual *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* sponsored by the Hebrew University has effectively become a journal of modern history and the *Jewish Journal of Sociology* and *Contemporary Jewry* have both struggled for submissions. Since the ASSJ has fewer than 200 members worldwide, many retired, this is unsurprising.

The trend has been for academic Jewish studies at the tertiary level to become centred on the humanities and in departments of Jewish studies with the focus largely on history and religion. In fact, the main academic investment by the Jewish community and its philanthropists has been the establishment of chairs in Holocaust Studies. This has both a practical and a psychological outcome: Jews are portrayed as a people of the past rather than of the present. The careerist trajectory in academia has only intensified this trend as it necessitates training historians and religionists for where the jobs are. The outcome is a lack of academic teaching posts for social scientists concerned with the Jews and a consequent dearth of

research. This, in turn, means a lack of peer reviewed social science articles and a marked failure to establish degree courses in Jewish social sciences in both Europe and North America. One result of the absence of Jewish sociologists can be observed when the media and community organizations search for academics to comment on contemporary social trends among Jews today they most often turn historians such as Jonathan Sarna and Jack Wertheimer in the U.S. or David Cesarani in Britain.

Institutional and Resource Constraints on the Field

Jewish occupational patterns are a very good bell weather of change in the labour market (Kosmin, 1979). One factor in the reduction of Jewish involvement in the social sciences has been the decline in the relative social status and financial rewards of university teaching in most North Atlantic countries even as the higher education "industry" has expanded in size. In addition, the policy of affirmative action in academia and the preference for hiring hitherto "historically under-represented" minorities by western universities has reduced career opportunities for Jewish men (Chiswick, 2008). Those who in a past generation would have been university professors now find employment in high-tech industries or as financial analysts on Wall Street or the City of London.

The entire edifice of quantitative social science has been attacked by 'post-modernist' and 'progressive' ideas and criticized as being 'positivist', 'empiricist', and 'politically incorrect'. Against his backdrop there has inevitably been a toll on Jewish social science with the result that there has been a reduction in the number of quantitatively trained scholars. Moreover, an unplanned by-product of the feminization of the field has reinforced this trend because women are less likely to study statistics at the post-graduate level. For example, of the hundred or so local Jewish community demographic surveys that have been undertaken in the U.S. over the past three decades, only one — Bethamie Horowitz in New York 1992 — has had a female principal investigator. In fact, the pool of leading "demographers", as the local community leaders refer to them, in 2012 is almost exactly identical to what it had been in 1990 – Bruce Phillips, Steven M. Cohen, Ira Sheskin and Jack Ukeles. There has been no concerted effort by the Jewish foundations or community organizations to recruit, educate and train a new generation of researchers.

For some time after 1986 the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) assumed the leadership mantle of American Jewish social science research in terms of initiatives and output through its own enlarged Research Department and its co-sponsorship of the North American Jewish Data Bank at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, both of

which I headed. The output of its *Occasional Papers* series reflected the communal and federation's planning agenda of the time, particularly migration, philanthropy, family and marriage patterns, and Soviet Jewish integration. CJF's most important contribution to the field and the national community was the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) with its pioneering computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) methodology (Kosmin *et al.,* 1991). The reputations and the experiences of the voluntary chairman of the National Technical Advisory Committee (Sidney Goldstein, the Director of the Brown University Population Studies and Training Center) and its vice-chairman (Joseph Waksberg, a former Associate Director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census) assured the quality and standing of the product. Both were experienced practitioners who knew how to design and administer studies, thereby managing to convince the lay-leadership. The project had a sustained academic publication record through the seven volume State University of New York Press series, *American Jewish Society in the 1990s* (edited by Barry A. Kosmin and Sidney Goldstein). Special issues of the *Journal of the Jewish Communal Service* and *Contemporary Jewry*, as well as a conference volume (Gordis and Gary, 1997) augmented these volumes.

Unfortunately this model of supervision leading to an academic publication series was not maintained for the 2000-01 NJPS. The problems and controversies surrounding that survey led yet one more Jewish communal organization to vacate the research business and the field of national surveys. The problems occurred because the United Jewish Communities (UJC) insisted on carrying out a proprietary, custom-made survey and rejected an objective, university-based repeat of 1990.

Why the reluctance to replicate the NJPS's successful methodology of 1990 and its independent status? First, because of institutional politics UJC was annoyed that CJF had not "properly" exploited NJPS 1990. In a spirit of collegiality the findings of the 1990 survey were made available to "rival" Jewish religious, communal and philanthropic organizations (Kosmin, 1992a). This did not occur with the 2000 survey because UJC (later the Jewish Federations of North America) resented these "free riders". Second, religious politics played a major role. The professional and lay leadership of the old CJF operated with remarkable integrity and objectivity. They gave the team of social scientists complete autonomy and academic freedom to report the 1990 NJPS data as found. As frequently happens in social research, the results gored some people's oxen. The much heralded *Ba'alei Teshuvah* movement of the 1980s and the much hyped growth of Orthodoxy (who constituted just 7 percent of U.S. Jews) turned out to be of little statistical significance. Instead the results headlined in 1990 were a 52 percent rate of intermarriage among

people born and raised Jewish and a drift away from religious and communal affiliation among large sections of the Jewish public.

These uncomfortable facts were incontrovertible and their release led to the customary response: "Kill the messenger." The 1990 NJPS achieved high standing in the wider American social science establishment yet vested communal interests shamelessly attacked it for supposedly exaggerating the rate of intermarriage and counting the wrong types of Jews. Their institutional needs demanded a decline in the rate of intermarriage and they wished to see a higher proportion of Orthodox and traditionalists in the American Jewish population. It was also condemned at the time by Steven M. Cohen who openly preferred "a leaner and meaner" American Jewish community (Cohen, 1996).

Thus, during the late 1990s a political battle ensued over communal policies and funding priorities between the proponents of outreach programmes like Birthright Israel, which aims to recapture the alienated fringe, and those who favoured investment in "in-reach" to the loyal core, mainly by increasing federation subsidies for Orthodox day schools. Once the fundraisers of the United Jewish Appeal (UJA) had purged most of the social workers of CJF from the new United Jewish Communities' structure, the proposed NJPS 2000 study was reengineered to meet the demands of "in-reach." This meant changes to both the analytical framework and the survey methodology. At the same time, it involved new restrictive definitions of the Jewish population to be interviewed and counted. Finally it meant using a flawed stratification system that focussed the interviewing on geographical areas with "known" concentrations of Jews.

The 2000-01 NJPS brought its sponsors little satisfaction. It was plagued by cost over-runs, lost data and disagreements among experts in the field over methodology and the validity of its conclusions, including the number of Jews in America. In part, its problems arose because it took place in an intellectual vacuum that ignored the historical and international comparative framework that should underpin all major scientific social studies of the Jews. Its sponsors also failed to recognize that the essence of science, especially as applied to national baseline data collection, is replicable data with consistently applied standardized and detailed classification rules.

A dissatisfaction with research involvement led CJF's successor organization, the UJC, later the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), to downsize and effectively dismantle the CJF Research Department. It also decided against another NJPS in 2011 but not before registering ownership of the title so that others could not claim it. The North American Jewish Data Bank was sent peripatetically from CUNY

to Brandeis University and onward in 2004 to the University of Connecticut. Due to derisory funding and paucity of academic interest the Data Bank will cease to have a university connection and will revert to full JFNA control in 2013. This move will lower its standing as an objective resource in the eyes of many scholars.

The beleaguered NJPS 2000 also failed to produce important policy issues for the communal agenda. Despite a project budget of over $6,000,000 and due to the wastage of resources on poor fieldwork, there was no coordinated publishing programme. The 1990 national survey had highlighted the issue of intermarriage and despite some puerile and ignorant attempts to deny the accuracy of the high rate reported it engendered a wide and lively debate among academics, planners, lay and religious leaders at meetings and conferences. All sectors of the community recognized the significance of the findings for Jewish identity and continuity. The policy responses they formulated led to a communal emphasis on continuity programmes, outreach, day schools, camping and other forms of Jewish education to offset assimilation. These solutions varied according to their authors' ideology but they had a common concern and purpose.

Beyond the specific issues relating to Jewish social research and national surveys in the U.S., a major weakness of Jewish sociology globally over the entire period has been the absence of any institution with a critical mass of academic researchers and teachers capable of training a new generation of scholars. For a time in the early 1990s it appeared that the Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York which was anchored by the Data Bank might fulfil this role when prominent researchers Egon Mayer, Paul Ritterband, Sam Heilman, Barry Kosmin, Bethamie Horowitz and Ariela Keysar were gathered but funding was not secured to maintain the Center's personnel or to support the post-graduate students. Around the same time a similar attempt at Brandeis University's Cohen Center led by Gary Tobin also failed due to lack of resources.

However, Brandeis University has recently renewed its ambitions to fill this lacuna by creating a critical mass of social scientists of the Jews through the establishment in 2005 of the Steinhardt Social Research Institute directed by Leonard Saxe, a social psychologist, together with units such as the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute on women's studies.

During the last half of the 20th century, Diaspora communities were also the focus of research in Israel so perhaps even more serious and surprising has been the evisceration of the once very prominent and prestigious Institute of Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University, which was specifically founded by Moshe Davis in 1959 to focus on the

study of diaspora communities. The institute, particularly its Division of Demography headed by Roberto Bachi, was closely linked to the Zionist movement and cause and was the heir to the pre-war applied social research traditions of YIVO and the WZO established by scholars such as Arthur Ruppin and Jacob Lestchinsky.

The saga of British Jewish sociology illustrates a similar pattern of a field poorly resourced, subject to ebbs and flows in communal support and interest and marked by a lack of university involvement and teaching posts. The unique contribution of British Jewry to Jewish sociology is its time series based on the continuous collection of life cycle event data. This tradition of collecting data on Jewish marriages and synagogue membership statistics under the communal auspices of the Board of Deputies of British Jews goes back to the Presidency of Sir Moses Montefiore in the 1850s. It was enhanced by the statistical work of Joseph Jacobs during the period of upheaval and political crisis consequent to the mass immigration of 1881-1905. With the establishment of the Statistical and Demographic Research Unit under the leadership of Sigbert Prais and Marlena Schmool during the 1960s, the analysis of population statistics was professionalized and extended to births (circumcisions) and mortality statistics in order to estimate population size and trends. Between 1974 and 1985 under my directorship several multi-purpose community studies (Hackney, Sheffield, Redbridge, Barnet) were undertaken, inspired by the American model and aimed at assisting community welfare services. For political and financial reasons (Alderman, 1992) the Board reduced its research activities but much of its research agenda was re-adopted by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research in 1995. JPR's new agenda included a series of population and opinion surveys and applied studies of education, welfare, and culture. Yet, once again, this expanded programme became unsustainable when financial support was reduced after 2005 although with the support of the Pears Foundation, two national studies have been carried out since 2010 (on Israel and Jewish students) and a further nationwide study along the lines of the 2002 London/Leeds work is due for launch in 2012 (Becher *et al.,* 2002; Waterman, 2003).

It was symbolic of an historic watershed when the journal *Soviet Jewish Affairs* became *East European Jewish Affairs* (*EEJA*) in 1991. The World Jewish Congress (WJC) was the original sponsor of the journal in 1971 for in that period the large Jewish communal organizations recognized the importance of intellectual content to advancing their political agendas and so took the leadership in supporting social science research. But the WJC off-loaded its Institute for Jewish Affairs (IJA) and its successor the London-based think-tank the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) was unable to obtain the funding to support *EEJA* or its

companion journal *Patterns of Prejudice* and transferred both these journals to commercial publishers. A similar pattern occurred in the U.S. in the case of the American Jewish Committee (AJC). Between 1950 and 1980 it employed a large staff of researchers and established research institutes that sponsored important and influential sociological and political research. However, in recent years its research activities have atrophied due to the absence of support and interest among the lay leadership. The most symbolic act was AJC's decision in 2008 to cease publication of the century-old book of communal record the *American Jewish Yearbook*.

This cycle of expansion and contraction of research activity due to fluctuations in communal support and interest can be observed across a wide spectrum of countries – the U.S., Britain, Canada, South Africa, Australia, Israel and even Argentina. This pattern obviously needs an explanation. Jewish communal organizations whether international, such as the World Jewish Congress, the World Zionist Organization, European Council of Jewish Communities, or national, such as the various Boards of Deputies, Council of Jewish Federations/JFNA, American Jewish Committee, Canadian Jewish Congress, AMIA (Argentina), CRIF (France), are all dependent on voluntary donations and thus on the eccentricities of major donors. Without the support of the philanthropist Mandell Berman of Detroit, who had an interest in social science, the NAJDB would not have been established and the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey would not have happened. The World Jewish Congress and its two arms, the IJA and Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, were dependent on the good offices of Dr. Nahum Goldmann and his ability to harness German government reparation funds. The Institute of Contemporary Jewry depended on donors, WZO and Israel Government funding and this has gradually dried up.

The State of the Art: National Data Collection

The availability of data obviously affects what sociologists and demographers can produce. In many countries, governments do not collect basic census data on Jews so researchers have to fund their own data collection, a very expensive procedure for a "rare" population. Canada, Australia, South Africa and the U.K. since 2001 are in the fortunate position of having a question on religion (Canada also has an ethnic question) in the national census. The census data are both stimulus and anchor for supplementary demographic and sociological studies specific to Jews as was the case in South Africa (Kosmin *et al.*, 1999). Even though in theory the census coverage of the "population at risk" may be

subject to both false positives and false negatives the tendency in practice is towards an undercount of Jews. Nevertheless, the sheer volume of data on individuals and households provided by a national census provides robust and revealing information that can be compared directly with other populations (Graham *et al.*, 2007; Graham, 2011).

The value of the national census in revealing new and important information on Jewish populations was revealed by the 2001 U.K. Census, with its voluntary religion question (Kosmin, 1998). The results provided a clear example of the need to avoid making assumptions about contemporary Jewish populations. The national total reporting Jewish was 268,000, very close to the Board of Deputies of British Jews' 1995 national estimate of 285,000 (Schmool and Cohen, 1998). Since one must assume an undercount for refusals and "No Religion" responses, it immediately appears that the official community underestimated its constituency. Nevertheless, one might expect that the characteristics of the Jewish religious population should be well known to Jewish communal authorities in a geographically bounded country like Britain with low rates of both Jewish immigration and regional migration and a relatively centralized synagogue system with a long history of synagogue membership counts. Yet the census revealed Jews were much more widely spread than community leaders had thought and were found in all but one of Britain's local government areas. More central to my argument is the fact that 14 percent of the reported Jewish population did not live in areas with previously known concentrations of Jews. Whereas the Board of Deputies estimated 8,350 Jews living in peripheral rural areas, the Census recorded 38,470, off by a factor of nearly five (Graham, 2003).

This British Census example strengthens my argument against the highly stratified sampling design used for NJPS 2000. My criticism was a direct result of my assessment of the problems associated with the 1970 NJPS (Massarik and Chenkin, 1973). I firmly believe we have to adopt simple and straightforward equal-probability sampling strategies in dealing with a largely unknown population. Making assumptions about where Jews reside by relying on the administrative records of Jewish communal organizations is a sure formula for failure. Both the 1970 and 2000 studies ran out of money because they made ill-informed — and thus costly — assumptions about the geographical distribution of the population. In the absence of a reliable sampling frame based upon a national census, a truly scientific approach to national surveys makes no *a priori* assumptions, thereby giving every unit in the universe equal probability of inclusion. This was the approach adopted for both the 1990 NJPS and AJIS (American Jewish Identity Survey) 2001, where all

telephone households in the continental United States constituted the universe sampled (Mayer *et al.*, 2001).

The 2001 U.K. Census data also suggest why we must cast our net socially as much as geographically wider in our data collection in order to understand the social processes that Jewish communities are undergoing in the contemporary world. Scotland, with its own independent government census operation, incorporated *two* religion questions in its 2001 census, one relating to the past and other to the present:

What religion, religious denomination or body were you brought up in?
What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?

The wording could be interpreted as biased toward eliciting membership rather than merely religious identification and the proportion stating "No Religion" (27 percent) was much higher in Scotland than the simpler *What is your religion*? version used in England and Wales (14 percent). However, for Jewish purposes the Scottish findings provide insights into the processes of identification in a small English-speaking nation with well-documented synagogue membership statistics: 1,952 household membership units in 2001 in 11 congregations of which 10 were modern Orthodox (Schmool and Cohen 2002).

Whereas 6,448 persons were currently Jewish, 7,446 persons had been raised as Jews indicating that there had been considerable "churning". Secessions from Judaism far exceeded accessions — 1,785 (exits) versus 787 (entrants). Nevertheless, the number and proportion (12 percent) of entrants (converts) far exceeded the number the community had considered or officially processed. The Ever-Jewish population, which includes Jews by upbringing and converts, totalled 8,133 (7,446 + 787) persons, whereas the permanently or Always Jewish population numbers only 5,661. This means the Ever-Jewish population exceeded the Always Jewish population by 30 percent.

Apostates (the loss to other religions) was 10 percent of the raised Jewish population. The Secular or Cultural Jewish population, which I define as those who reported No Religion or Refused the current question, was about 18 percent. Equivalent statistics for Jews by Religion in the United States provided by the CUNY American Religious Identification Survey 2001, estimate adult accessions or "in-switchers" at 171,000 persons, or 6 percent of the current adult Jewish by religion population, whereas secessions from Judaism are estimated at 291,000 — though in this case the majority went into the No Religion (JNR) category (Kosmin, *et al.,* 2001). Somewhat surprisingly, these comparative statistics seem to suggest a lower rate of churning in the United States than in Scotland,

though the ratios among the sub-categories and the overall trajectories are similar in direction. The Scottish information on the dynamics of identity (a "movie" rather than merely a "still photograph") is essential for understanding and reassessing the social dynamics of contemporary diaspora societies. It also demonstrates the inadequacy of the one-dimensional "quick fixes", such as those championed by Leonard Saxe, who advocates reliance on meta-analysis focusing on synthesizing data from more than 150 existing nationwide studies conducted by the government, other agencies and national polling organizations, to replace NJPS type surveys (Tighe, *et al.*, 2011).

Since biblical times we have known that counting any population constitutes a political act. And as in electoral politics, when your side does not have the votes a useful electoral strategy is to reduce the size of the electorate by disqualifying your opponents' supporters – i.e., suppressing the vote. Similarly one way for certain narrow sectors within the Jewish community to claim greater authority and increased resources from communal fundraising is to increase artificially their share of the population by reducing its overall size. This can be achieved by failing to count adequately "marginal" Jews such as the intermarried, the secular, the unaffiliated and those living outside the large metropolitan areas.

This issue applies most obviously with sample surveys (Ritterband *et al.,* 1998). Any attempt to oversample one segment automatically undersamples another. In measuring the Jewish population much depends on how one responds to "Who is a Jew?" The more *halachic* the definition the less the pluralism manifested by the enumerated. Of course, there is a corollary: the more exclusive the definition the smaller the size of the population. A preference for Jewish pluralism means more Jews and more pluralism. However, the extent of the social transformation means that we have gone beyond the old retort that it's not really a "Who is a Jew?" question or even "Who is your rabbi?". The decisions are made by the mass of sovereign individuals, potential consumers of Jewish services as to whether they wish to self-identify.

In a modern, free society the wider the boundaries and the more inclusive the group the greater the sheer numbers and the diverse sorts of persons involved (Kosmin, 1992b). The more fringe Jews that are recognized as potential members of one's institution or organization, the greater the variety of Jewish types and the less traditional it will appear in "normative" or "historical" terms. This is particularly true for Jewish demography today due to intermarriage. Should we exclude self-reported Jews on the basis of ancestry or birth who follow other religions — BuJews, Messianic Jews and all those who claim two religions and/or syncretistic forms of Judaism, numbering in the millions (see

http://www.americanreligionsurvey-aris.org/reports/AJIS2008.pdf).
(For example, in 2001 AJIS we estimated half a million Christians with a
Jewish mother.)

Today, the largest and fastest growing group of Jews (37 percent of
the total U.S "Core" Jewish population in 2008) is the non-religious
segment. These "Jewish Nones" or cultural Jews are largely missing from
the organized Jewish community and, in particular, Jewish education. This
is obviously a serious threat to the long-term demographic, social and
economic viability of American Jewry and is a constituency that needs to
be served educationally. However, despite all the innovation in other
spheres thus far, there has been little effort to include this population. Yet
Jewish communities in Europe between the wars and in Latin America
today managed to do this successfully so there are models.

The State of the Art: Local .v. National Surveys

The downside of the recent trend towards narrow studies of particular sub-
populations of Jews is the tendency to fail "to see the forest because of the
trees." The primary example of this is revealed by the findings from local
area studies in the United States. Like studies of sub-populations
generally, local studies of particular geographical areas pose
methodological and analytic problems for an objective social science. A
persistent pattern in America is that local studies of Jewish populations
tend to contradict the findings of the large nationally representative
sample surveys (Kosmin and Goldstein, 1998).

For example, aggregation of local population estimates far exceeds
national survey counts (Sheskin, 2012). The cause of the discrepancy lies
in the technical realm of scientific rigour and precision since the
individual studies lack common techniques for sample selection and
common core questions addressed to interviewees. In contrast to NJPS-
AJIS type studies, local studies tend to be "quick and cheap" surveys yet
paradoxically, they provide "good news" from a communal or religious
perspective because these surveys simply tend not to be fully
representative of everyone born or raised as a Jew. As Jews are not
enumerated in the U.S. Census, the duty of counting them has fallen on
the Jewish community itself. Accordingly, local community demographic
studies in the US are sponsored and paid for by the local Jewish
federation, a fund-raising body with a network of local agencies providing
services to affiliated Jewish consumers. Clearly the federation has a duty
and an interest to pursue research with a practical policy and planning
agenda rather than a theoretical or academic one. The federations need to

know about their constituency of donors, other affiliated Jews and potential donors and affiliates. They are not very much interested in the views and opinions of former, self-denying and alienated Jews. Consequently, federation studies are generally focused on the core rather than the periphery of American Jewry. Nevertheless and paradoxically as stated above, since the mid-1990s aggregation of the local estimates has consistently exceeded by over one million the estimates provided by national studies of American Jews.

The focus on affiliated Jews in local studies is also reinforced by some very practical cost considerations. Sampling is more of a problem in conducting representative surveys of small or rare populations like American Jews than the survey itself. In the absence of a roster of all Jews from which to select a sample, complex procedures are used to screen the larger population to identify individual Jews. Comprising only 2 percent of all Americans, locating Jews costs as much as interviewing them. Not being research organizations the federations have to hire researchers and market research fieldwork companies commercially, which are entrepreneurial and economical in their approach. For them, trying to locate hard-to-find peripheral Jews and then trying to persuade them to participate in a communally sponsored survey is not a high priority. Thus local federation studies suffer from the "Casablanca syndrome" by just rounding up the usual suspects. For example, the 1989 Detroit study decided that it was too expensive to sample Jews fully in the peripheral counties, where the federation did not provide services anyway. In Columbus, Ohio in 1990 the federation decided that the student population of Ohio State University, though a permanent feature, was not really part of the local community and so not worth interviewing. In Cleveland in 1996 the poor Jews left behind in the inner City and on the "un-Jewish" west side of the metropolitan area were not properly sampled; only an affiliated sub-sample among them were interviewed. So the Cleveland sample consists of affiliated Jews in peripheral areas and unaffiliated Jews in dense Jewish neighbourhoods (Sheskin, 2001). Unaffiliated Jews living far from the synagogues and JCCs are also missing. Other local surveys even rely on distinctive Jewish surnames (DJN) to locate Jews, hardly a suitable procedure for assuring the representation of intermarried Jewish women though it does substantially reduce the intermarriage rate!

Also at issue is the screening question for inclusion in the survey. NJPS 1990 and AJIS had a four-question screener beginning with "What is your religion?" Anxious to save time and effort, local studies begin by saying they are a Jewish community project and then asking if anyone in the home is Jewish, which unsurprisingly tends to scare off many

marginal Jews. They make the survey even more unrepresentative by their unscientific selection procedure for the household respondent. Rather than select a random Jewish adult (e.g. by using the industry standard of selecting the person with the most recent birthday in the household) these studies tend to try to expedite the process by asking if anyone is immediately available to answer a few questions. The upshot is that the interviewee often ends up being the "most Jewish Jew" in the house — the synagogue attendee or Hadassah member rather than the alienated young adult son or daughter who will not interrupt their current activities to discuss Jewish matters.

In addition, local studies have to meet an interview quota in a short period, biassing the type of households they interview. Households with four or five people present are more likely to answer calls than single- or two-person households since there is more likely to be someone home. So these surveys exaggerate the number of traditional families, omitting divorcees, the unmarried, and the alienated elderly. In contrast, NJPS persisted with up to four calls on different days and hours in order to get replies from these hard to reach people.

So what is the proof that local studies tend to report biased results? The answer relates back to the causes of the over-counts of Jewish populations referred to above. First, local studies usually report Jewish households to be larger or roughly similar in size to non-Jewish ones even though we know that Jews marry later, have fewer children and live longer (alone) than other Americans. Second, they also find much higher proportions and total numbers of donors and synagogue members than the actual communal membership lists and charitable data show. Of course a higher proportion of local children are also receiving Jewish education, more people have visited Israel and the overall attitudes towards Judaism and Israel is highly positive and far above the national average. Their community performs far above average and also has far lower intermarriage rates. Additionally, the local survey reports that their intermarried are even likelier than usual to join synagogues and raise their children as Jews. This is music to the ears of local leaders and great news for the Jews — a credit to our "community", local federation director, rabbis, and the researchers. Happiness abounds though the evidence is misleading.

In contrast to all this, good national surveys interview and report upon the isolated elderly, young adults, the intermarried and apostates as well as the affiliated middle class suburbanites. Accordingly, they — even including NJPS 2000 — tend to produce a more sober and sobering report than local studies. In fact, extrapolation of the NJPS series numbers for synagogue members and UJA have produced figures very close to the real

numbers drawn from administrative records for the relevant years. That national studies produce thought-provoking data, especially when translated into percentages and "market penetration" is perhaps a cause of the increasing unwillingness to fund them.

There *is* a clear intellectual and practical case to be made on behalf of properly conducted local studies and segmented micro-studies as long as the researchers do not strain to generalize them to the macro-level. There is an obvious tendency for different types of Jews to cluster in certain localities or neighborhoods and the strictures of Shabbat travel for observant Orthodox and Conservative Jews has residential implications so the proportion in any given location of all or any of these varied types and combinations of Jews is very specific. But clustering is also true for other social characteristics and this is important for Jewish education policy and practice because schooling is delivered locally.

The State of the Art: Longitudinal Studies and the Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Methodologies

The search for cause and effect is the holy grail of social science since causal models should be the theoretical basis for empirically grounded social policy. The most widely acknowledged research design to move survey research beyond mere correlations and on to the direct investigation of causality is the longitudinal study of a panel or set group of individuals. Well-formulated and effective longitudinal studies have had great success as evaluation research projects in health and education studies and as effective tools for policy-making. However, research studies on Diaspora Jewry have relied on cross-sectional surveys, a photo sequence rather than movie approach.

There is one exception, the *Four-up* and *Eight-up* studies led by Kosmin and Keysar on the B'nai Mitzvah Class of 5755 (1994-95). The course of its development is worthwhile recalling because the methodological approaches and innovations stand as an important attempt to integrate and combine quantitative and qualitative methods into a longitudinal study. It shows the emergence of an integrated design combining open and closed questions and participatory discussions to produce statistical rigour alongside rich explanatory narratives. It also illustrates the challenges and opportunities caused by changes in communications technology and in the attitudes of the Jewish public towards participation in social research. This project led to numerous publications and presentations. (Appendix A constitutes a full bibliography of the reports.)[2]

EDITORIAL ESSAY - CHANGING AGENDAS IN THE SOCIOLOGICAL
AND DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY OF DIASPORA JEWS

This pioneering project launched in 1995 attempted to replicate the famous British longitudinal generational study sponsored by the BBC 'Seven Up' media series. The survey series followed the development of Jewish identity from ages 13 to 22 among a cohort of Americans and Canadians who grew up in Conservative synagogues. The first phase, the Bar-Bat Mitzvah Survey, was just one part of a larger project to study the whole Conservative Movement (United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism) in 1995. This was conducted under the auspices of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and directed by the historian Jack Wertheimer and was funded by the non-Jewish Pew Charitable Trust. It began as a study of a representative panel of over 1,400 young American and Canadian Conservative Jews. It consisted of CATI telephone interviews with 13 and 14-year-old boys and girls who had recently celebrated their rite of passage, the bar/bat mitzvah and, in a separate telephone interview, with their parents. It is noteworthy that the 1995 first wave collected data *directly* from the young people, unlike typical social surveys in which the parents report on their children. The first-phase findings provided an important baseline to understand the religious development of this cohort, generating rich data on family background, socialization of the youngsters, and their aspirations for the future.

In order to determine the impact of the high school years, the youth panel was re-interviewed in 1999 in the *Four-Up* study when they were 17 to 18. To track changes, the High School Survey (again conducted by telephone) included many questions repeated from 1995, as well as asking new questions pertaining to high school students. The High School Survey had a very high level of cooperation and response (89 percent) from teenagers to a survey that offered no incentives for participation.

In 2003, the same cohort of young people was interviewed once more at 21 and 22 in the Wave 3 *Eight-Up* College Years Project study. Interviewees were in their junior and senior year of college. This wave integrated both quantitative data collection (a third-wave telephone survey) as well as two types of qualitative data collection with insights from the students. This qualitative material was collected to flesh out the telephone surveys. Several in-depth focus group sessions were conducted on college campuses, which were complemented by online bulletin board "chat room" sessions that took place over six days with some of the students who had also been interviewed by phone. Online research is ideal for contemporary college students who are widespread geographically. It allowed hearing the voices of students in remote colleges in the U.S. and Canada and even allowed for the participation of students who spent a semester abroad. It is also convenient for a generation that spends much time online. The online sessions generated a wealth of thoughtful remarks

far beyond expectation. Students conversed about a different broad topic each day and every day a different set of questions was posted covering a specific topic, including the family, religious life on campus, and plans for the future.

The methods used in Wave 3, which like Wave 2 was funded by the Avi Chai Foundation, allowed us to accumulate hundreds of quotes and personal stories of dozens of college students. But these narratives cannot stand alone and need to be placed within the findings of a scientifically designed representative survey of that population to be better understood, as is the case with the 2003 College Years Survey.

In all, 969 students participated in all three waves of the longitudinal study. By tracking the same individuals, it has been possible to follow their personal progress and character development and discern patterns of change in attitudes and behaviors that would have been far more difficult to detect in cross-sectional studies of different groups of young people interviewed at different times. Due to the wealth of fascinating data, we have been able to observe how a large cohort of students has grappled over the past decade with the most pressing concerns of the day. We also can infer answers to critical research questions on the changing roles of the family, religious school, peers and other socialization agents such as youth groups, camping, and the campus environment in shaping young people's Jewish lives.

The lesson for Jewish sociology is the need to tailor our methodologies to social realities. Once a useful tool, telephone surveys are increasingly difficult to undertake due to representational and sampling problems associated with the growth of cellphone technology and the reduction in landline penetration. For quantitative research, we shall have to rely increasingly on advanced web-based online surveys to reach large numbers of respondents. Online focus group discussions, which were highly successful in the College Years Project, seem extremely suitable for research on the technologically savvy younger generation. It is also necessary to assess the social impact on Diaspora Jews resulting from the communications revolution of the past two decades. The Internet and other social-networking technologies may hasten the weakening of social boundaries, accelerating intermarriage by exposing to the wider world young, unattached members of previously sheltered religious groups or by tempting in-married couples to stray. On the other hand, Facebook and other online social sites make it easier for far-flung members of minority groups to find each other and form new types of virtual Jewish communities.

Conclusion

Considerable sociological imagination is required to do a reliable job of researching contemporary Jewry. Many of the conceptual and practical problems that arise in an attempt to identify a sample of Jews are not unique to the Jewish group and arise whenever one asks people in our individualistic, privatized, and pluralistic societies to assign themselves to one specific group at the expense of alternative identity options.

> Particularly in an environment where individuals may hold multiple notions of self, and hold membership in multiple, non-continuous communities and associations, establishing any fixed notions of identity is problematic. One of the hallmarks of contemporary American society in particular is that individuals can lay claim to a variety of identities, like so many "screen names" in cyberspace, with varying degrees of commitment to each. The relative salience of these diverse identities can fluctuate with the psychic economy of the individual as a result of evolving circumstances. In such an environment, it becomes difficult to speak of anyone's identity as a permanent fixture of the self. (Kosmin, et al., 2001, 31)

Sidney Goldstein and I suggested with regard to the multi-stage 1990 NJPS study that:

> The screening process used in sample surveys, though scientific in method, is basically subjective in nature. We use questions involving terms or groups as keys in order to unlock doors, but we cannot predict who will enter. There are no correct answers in a fluid and dynamic society. Instead, as in this case, we are able to rely on measuring the variation in responses across groups; and across time when we have the luxury of multiple screenings. (Goldstein and Kosmin, 1992, 242)

It has become obvious that the reason that Jewishness is hard to define in 2012 is that it is multifaceted. There are different Jewish populations for different purposes (Lerer *et al.,* 1997). There is no consensus across the Jewish world as to which membership criteria are paramount. What was largely theoretical for NJPS 1970 (Massarik and Chenkin, 1973), touching only a few cases, affects hundreds of thousands of people today across the Jewish world due to vast increases in the rates and numbers of intermarriages over the last few decades. It has been demonstrated very clearly how different Jewish populations with very different social characteristics emerge using different identity criteria (Goldstein and

Kosmin, 1992). This social reality has raised the question of when the inclusion of peripheral populations or, as Schmelz and DellaPergola (1996, 437) termed them, the "extended" and "enlarged" Jewish populations, makes theoretical and practical sense. For political purposes, such as in connection with antisemitism, where most of the perpetrators use a wide definition of their target population, the Jewish community should also be more inclusive. The same thinking should apply on the analytical level for social indicators on Jews residing in "mixed" households. For instance, it would be inaccurate and unhelpful to exclude gentiles from analyses of household composition, since it would artificially create one-parent families. The same logic applies to economic and occupational data. Gentile partners' incomes cannot be excluded without making the data meaningless.

Other cases involve close judgment calls as to the relevance of including or excluding certain sections of the total household population. Since one person's Jew is, literally, another person's gentile, an assessment of what constitutes the "population at risk" may well involve ideological assumptions. That is inevitable. However, the key responsibility of social scientists of the Jews today is to be transparent about such issues and decisions in their research designs and analyses.

Over the past few decades, the quality and volume of Jewish social research has been much affected by the interplay of mostly adverse political, social, economic and disciplinary factors. To this mix has been added a further burden imposed by the need to research a rare population with unfixed or nebulous boundaries. This creates a complicated series of methodological challenges in locating, sampling and interviewing the population which in turn requires a larger than average investment in resources. It appears unlikely that Jewish resources alone can or will fund large projects and government and university funds are unlikely to plug the knowledge gap.

However, in the U.S. the research vacuum will be filled in 2013 by a national survey of Jews under the auspices of The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, an arm of the Pew Charitable Trusts, a massively-endowed private foundation, which interestingly has Evangelical Christian links. Since this $2 million study plans to include an oversample of Orthodox respondents, it may not be as scientifically objective or as neutral as some might wish. How it will deal with or even whether it will cover secular or cultural Jewish "Nones" is presently unknown. The Pew goal is to fit the Jewish survey into its research series on other American religious groups so one can assume that the emphasis in the questionnaire and analysis will be on Jews as one "faith community" among others and certainly not as a *sui generis* "people" (Kosmin and Lachman, 1993).

As a result Jewish social research on the most important Jewish Diaspora population effectively will lose its autonomy and breadth of vision. In effect, it will have been absorbed into a narrow sociology of religion framework.

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Appendix A
PUBLICATIONS RESULTING FROM THE B'NAI MITZVAH CLASS of 5755 LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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Notes

1 Only perhaps in Canada does scholarship on the Jews remain within the mainstream of ethnic and multicultural studies. This probably results from the analytical work of Louis Rosenberg at the Canadian Jewish Congress and, more recently, the work of Jim Torczyner and Morton Weinfeld of McGill University, and Jack Jedwab at the Association for Canadian Studies. Their research and lobbying efforts secured a Jewish category in both the religion and ethnic-origin questions of the Canadian Census and thus a long-term time series (1921-2011) on Canadian Jewry. These two questions thus combined the two modern European Jewish identity traditions and so aid the production of a more inclusive (and accurate) count of the Jewish population, one that allows secular and cultural Jews to identify themselves on their own terms (Torczyner & Brotman, 1995). It is interesting to note that this took place within Canada's official policy of multiculturalism, with its echoes of the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian Empire.

2 In his presidential address to the survey methodologists of the American Association for Public Opinion Research at their 2003 annual meeting, Dr. Mark Schulman recommended our longitudinal study as an example of how 21st century social science research ideally ought to be carried out using both qualitative and quantitative components.

INTERNET MEDIATED MIRACLES: THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE'S ONLINE IGROS KODESH

Simon Dein

Abstract

This paper examines the use of the Internet by Lubavitcher Hasidim. It focuses on the (now deceased) Lubavitcher Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh* — a compilation of his writings. Following his death in 1994 it became commonplace for Lubavitchers to consult the physical text to seek the Rebbe's advice, blessings and 'miracles'- a modern day form of bibliomancy.

Recently it has become possible to perform this activity online. Using data from a chat forum I analyse attitudes towards the online version and discuss my findings in relation to studies examining the relationships between online and offline religious experience using Durkheim's categories of the sacred and profane.

Introduction: Online Religion

This paper focuses on one specific online activity among Lubavitcher Hasidim -the use of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh* — a compilation of his writings, which Lubavitchers deploy as a form of bibliomancy. Through the analysis of messages displayed on a chat room message board, I examine the relationship between online and offline activities and how they conceptualize the Internet in terms of the Durkheimian distinction between sacred and profane.

Religion has become one of the most popular and pervasive topics of interest online. Although for many conservative religious groups, religious practice and lifestyle are shaped by their rejection of modernity, which is seen as secular, as Hadden and Cowan (2001: 8) rightly note 'There is scarcely a religious tradition, movement, group or phenomenon absent entirely from the net'. Research on religion on the net has focused upon several interconnected themes: virtual community (Dawson 2004); identity (Lovheim 2004); evangelism and proselytization (Caraega 1999); the status of cyberspace as sacred or profane (O'Leary 1996, Cobb 1998,

Wertheim 1999, Wagner 2012); the dialectic relationship between online and offline activities (Helland 2000); pilgrimage (McWilliams 2004, Hill – Smith 2011) and the authenticity of online religious ritual (O'Leary 2004, Kruger 2005, Wagner 2012, Hill- Smith 2009).

Modern communication technologies have changed the meaning of place, space and religiosity and Internet-mediated rituals raise interesting issues concerning the sacred and profane. O'Leary (1996) asserts that the Internet is approached as a technological landscape that transforms religious expression and understanding. As Durkheim (1912/2001:36) asserted, religious thought categorizes all things "into two classes, two opposite kinds, generally designated by two distinct terms effectively translated by the words *profane* and *sacred*". Durkheim stated that the sacred represents that which is "ideal and transcendental," while the profane represents the material world.

What constitutes the sacred varies according to faith/religious group. Durkheim argued (p. 37): "The circle of sacred objects cannot be determined … once for all. Its extent varies infinitely, according to the different religions." … Nothing is inherently sacred, i.e., humanity classifies things as such; "there are sacred things of every degree." (p. 38) and continued (p. 229): "The sacred character assumed by an object is not implied in the intrinsic properties of this latter: *it is added to them*. The world of religious things is not one particular aspect of empirical nature; *it is superimposed upon it*."

In a similar way Eliade (1983) suggested that sacred space is somehow marked out and distinguished from profane space. Wagner (2012: 79) remarks that the appearance of virtual reality on the conceptual scene has spurred a rehabilitation of Eliade's terms to examine how the virtual relates to contemporary religious belief and practice. As she correctly points out, there has been some divergence of opinion as to how the 'virtual' relates to the 'sacred'. Are they identical, can the sacred manifest in both the physical and the virtual worlds or are some 'worlds' sacred while others profane? The answer to these questions varies according to different authors and they cannot be solved in any normative way. As Wagner (2012: 96) notes, as we are forced to address the problem of virtual reality, we are increasingly forced to recognize our own roles in demarcating space, in labelling it as sacred, profane or, perhaps, as a combination of the two.

Internet Mediated Miracles

One aspect of religious experience that has attracted little academic attention is the relationship between online and offline requests for divine

interventions including blessings and 'Internet-mediated miracles'. Most work in this area has concerned online prayer requests within mainstream Christianity (see Young 2004 on Christian prayer sites) although websites representing other faith traditions as diverse as Buddhism and neo-Paganism sometimes include petitionary activities including online prayer. Within other faith traditions, as with Orthodox Judaism, there may be differences of opinion concerning the authenticity of such undertakings. For example *http://www.balkantravellers.com/en/read/article/2273* reports the Romanian Orthodox church's disapproval of one such service. There are examples from Buddhism (*http://en.tibet328.cn/01/01/201202/t1098875.htm* 'Buddhist temple offers e-blessing service', Dec 2012) and Paganism (*http://spiralgoddess.com/Homage.html*).

Judaism and the Internet

Orthodox Jews comprise a specific group that has been neglected in terms of the study of Internet use. Zaleski (1997) examined a variety of religious websites including those of the Jewish Chabad-Lubavitch, the Zen Mountain Monastery, and the Catholic Information Center. Although these cyberministries capitalise on the latest technological advances, representatives of all religions interviewed repeatedly point to the limitations of the Internet because of its break with the body. Although a few see this new frontier as sacred, most think of it only as "a holy tool."

Research on Judaism and Internet use to date has largely focused on the Ultra- Orthodox community in Israel. Use of the Internet is viewed by Orthodox Jews in an ambiguous way (Livio and Tenenboim-Weinblatt 2007). On the one hand, it is a carrier of secular values, a gateway to the outside world and is therefore considered a threat by undermining religious values such as gender hierarchy. On the other hand it presents significant socio-economic opportunities. The inherent tension between modern socio-economic necessities and the desire to protect the community's traditional and religious values — the 'dangers' and 'possibilities' — renders the Internet a site of constant deliberation and ambivalence (see also Cejka 2009).

Formally, rabbinical authorities have issued several proclamations and rulings over the past few years, expressing different positions on the use of the Internet. These range from a complete ban on Internet use (pronouncing the new medium a "lethal poison") to permitting Internet access solely for professional use or religious purposes (Horowitz 2001).

Livio and Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2007) note that Ultra-Orthodox Rabbinical authorities have traditionally denounced nearly all forms of

modern communication (except newspapers), maintaining that they signify secularity and idolatry (see also Tsarfaty and Blais 2002). This applies first and foremost to television, which is considered by them to be one of the major evils of secularism and whose potential harmful influences are often constructed in terms of defilement and contagious diseases within Ultra-Orthodox discourse. Initially, the rabbinical authorities also banned other technologies, amongst them the telephone, mobile phone, and to a certain extent also radio, until socio-economic necessities resulted in their introduction into the community (Horowitz 2001). However, the use of these technologies often remains a dilemma, in some cases involving compromises such as "kosher" mobile phones, which offer conservative Orthodox Jews a phone free from 'corrupting' influences.

In practice, despite these reservations, a growing number of Ultra-Orthodox individuals deploy the Internet for both work and leisure, although there are very few accurate data (Barzilai-Nahon and Barzilai, 2005; Portnoy 2004). As Cejka (2009: 100) notes 'as one can easily discover through a variety of search engines, the Haredim do not use the Internet solely for the most necessary tasks, but also for many other purposes. So in fact one can find on the Internet numerous more or less "Kosher" pages such as specialized Haredi discussion forums, Haredi blogs (so called *J-Blogs* and *J-Blogosphere*); some Haredim even use Facebook'.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

Hasidism is a form of Ultra-Orthodox Judaism which derives from Eastern Europe and was founded by the Baal Shem Tov (Dein 2002). What differentiates Hasidism from other forms of Judaism is the Hasidic emphasis on the *tzadik* – the spiritual leader who acts as an intermediary between God and Man. Most Hasidic communities abound with stories of miracles that follow a *yechidus*, a spiritual audience with a *tzadik*: infertile women become pregnant, individuals with terminal cancer are cured, wayward children become pious, businessmen become rich. Many Hasidim assert that miracles can occur after partaking of the *shirayim* (the leftovers from the Rebbe's meal), such as miraculous healing or blessings of wealth, marriage or piety.

Lubavitch is one of the largest Hasidic groups and is popularly known as *Chabad*. Founded in the 18th century by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, it has an almost worldwide presence. Its headquarters is at 770 Eastern Parkway in Crown Heights in Brooklyn — called '770' by

Lubavitchers — and served as the office of the last two Lubavitcher Rebbes. There are other large communities in London, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv and Toronto. From 1951 Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe who died in 1994, led the group. For several years prior to his death his followers held him to be *Moshiach* — the Jewish Messiah. Following his death a schism developed between two opposing factions – the messianists who maintain that his death was illusory and he is the long-anticipated Messiah and the anti-messianists who contend that he could have been *Moshiach* if God had desired, but having died, his messianic status is invalidated (Dein 2010, 2011). During his lifetime much Lubavitcher lifestyle centred on the Rebbe who was seen by his followers as a 'miracle maker'. Followers would regularly write, fax, or email him asking for a blessing in anticipation of 'miraculous' changes in their life. Typically they would petition him regarding advice for health, wealth, education and marriage and few would make any major life decision without first consulting the Rebbe. His perceived supernormal powers derived from the fact that he was seen as an intermediary between God and mankind allowing Divine energy to flow into the world.

Many people met the Rebbe personally at a weekly ceremony called 'Dollars' at which each person attending would receive a dollar and ask the Rebbe for a blessing. Up to 6,000 people at a time attended this ceremony where Lubavitchers reported miraculous events resulting from the Rebbe's blessings — healing of a relative's sickness, finding a spouse, providing infertile couples with children, or the acquisition of wealth. I have previously reported upon several instances in the illness context (Dein 2001).

Following the Rebbe's death Lubavitchers continue to email or fax his gravesite — the *Ohel*, in Queens, New York — whereby his secretary reads out the request. Like other tombs of Jewish saints, the *Ohel* attracts tens of thousands of visitors a year, who often travel long distances to 'commune' with Rabbi Schneerson and has become a major pilgrimage site for Lubavitchers and non-Lubavitchers alike. His grave is carpeted with *Kvitilim* (petitions) over a foot high.

An Instance

Mordechai travelled from the United Kingdom to visit the Rebbe's tomb. Born into a Lubavitch family in Stamford Hill, London, Mordechai had spent many years teaching in a Jewish Boy's school. Married with nine children, his mother was seriously ill with bone cancer. When visiting the *Ohel* he petitioned the Rebbe to provide a cure for her and give her the

ability to get through her chemotherapy. During my interview with him several months after he had returned to Britain, he recounted that his mother had gone into remission and was functioning well. He impressed upon me the fact that despite his 'apparent death' the Rebbe is still very active in the world.

Lubavitch and the Internet

"Judaism on the Internet at the speed of light."

Lubavitch has readily deployed the Internet as a way of teaching Jewish values and practices. The Chabad leadership see it as a neutral medium, which has the potential to be holy. One article states: "Everything that G-d created in His world, He did not create but for His glory" (Ethics 6:11) The Internet, too, is G-d's creation — intended to increase His glory; to bring the world to a greater awareness of its Creator. (http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/675087/jewish/Is-the-Internet-Evil.htm). There is little doubt that the Lubavitcher messianic campaign has benefitted from the use of modern media technology deployed for this purpose since the arrival of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe in the United States in 1940 to the death of the 'current' Rebbe and it continues into the present. As Shandler (2009) remarks, Lubavitch has forged a new spiritual relationship with the Rebbe through innovative and provocative media practices: print advertising, photography, radio, the Internet, and television. Unlike other Hasidic groups in the United States, Lubavitch has a commitment to visibility in the public sphere and this commitment is central to its mission of fostering increased religious observance and propagating their messianic ideas. Emphasizing the visual experience rather than the typical logocentric emphasis in the study of Hasidism, Katz (2010) underscores the fact that the Chabad-generated image is the leading image of contemporary Jewish religious life in American popular culture. As he points out (p. 13), the messianists have deployed this image in the years after the Rebbe's death for their own ideological purposes. They have used the vast number of images from his leadership years to anoint him visually as King Messiah.

Throughout his leadership, which began in 1950, the Rebbe advocated an energetic outreach program to non-Orthodox Jews involving high-tech equipment: radio, television, telephones, beepers, and finally, computers. Far from being opposed to modern technology the Rebbe readily embraced the resource — which was far from surprising given his own background in electrical engineering at the Sorbonne. Rabbi Schneerson never saw any ideological or practical contradiction between faith and

scientific research. For him, objective research reveals our unity with the Creation and brings us closer to our faith in the Creator of the world. As the Rebbe once told journalist Shlomo Nakdimon, "Every new revelation in the realm of science undermines its predecessor and shows the temporary nature of scientific theories, as compared with the permanence of *Toras Moshe* (The Law of Moses)."

The use of the Internet by Lubavitch is far from new. The website *www.chabad.org*, started by Rabbi Yosef Kazen, came online in 1993, providing access to texts such as *Tanya* (the Lubavitcher mystical text), images, and audio and video recordings. It currently claims to serve up to a million people yearly displaying information about *Chabad* philosophy and history, Jewish holidays, life cycle celebrations and religious practices. The website is available in several languages, and it targets different audiences such as women and children. Through the site, it is possible to submit prayers to be read at the Rebbe's grave, donate to charitable causes, post questions for a rabbi, and shop on various Judaica sites. Links are also provided to various Chabad centre websites worldwide.

A highlight of Chabad's Internet resources is askmoses.com, a unique Jewish website offering confidential, free and live chat for spiritual guidance 24 hours a day, 6 days a week. Instant advice from qualified scholars and rabbis for Jews and gentiles alike seeking information on any subject in English, Hebrew, Russian, Spanish and French is readily available. It is also the only website offering a personalized SMS service for Shabbat and Holiday reminders.

Although the Internet is readily deployed by Lubavitchers to provide information, its founder expressed concerns about the performance of online Jewish ritual. According to Zaleski (1997), Kazen himself questions the authenticity, indeed the actual possibility of performing some Jewish rituals online. When asked about 'virtual' synagogue ritual he asserts:

"It can be duplicated, but only to a certain extent. There are limitations. For example, in Jewish life, the man who is above the age of thirteen has to put on *tefillin* or phylacteries [leather boxes containing scrolls of Torah passages])you're putting it on your arm, and you're wrapping it on your arm and you're putting it on your head and you're saying a specific prayer. Yes, the prayer itself can be read off the Net. But the actual act needs to be done by a physical person. The concept of Judaism in general is using the material — the animal cowhide, the hair of the lamb created into wool — so that there's actual participation in all the different four levels: the inanimate, the flora, the fauna, and the human being — all into one aspect… Can I have a virtual meal?' he continues.

"How long is it going to hold me for? I can read a recipe, but I still have to go out there and buy the eggs, buy the sugar."(http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/335578/jewish/The -Soul-of-Cyberspace.htm).

In a similar was he asserts that a virtual *minyan (*a collection of ten men for public worship) is not possible since such a *minyan* requires a physical embodied presence.

Connecting with the Rebbe

In recent years various messianic websites have been developed through with the aim of enabling connection with the Rebbe. Like other religious groups Lubavitchers have shaped and negotiated the Internet for their own purposes. Since the Rebbe's death it has been used as a forum to propagate the views of the messianists who assert the illusory nature of the Rebbe's death and his status as *Moshiach*. The anti-messianists have also widely deployed this resource to oppose their views (Dein 2010, 2011). The messianists have utilized the web to provide several 'spiritual' benefits of an educational and ritual nature. Internet technology enables them to transmit the messianic ideology rapidly around the globe, creating a sense of community and potentially bringing new members to the movement. The sites combine written information with video footage of the Rebbe's *farbrengens* (joyous gatherings) and audio recordings of his numerous discourses. Some of the websites contain video clips of the Rebbe distributing dollars and sound recordings of his followers singing the *yehi-* a song referring to the fact that he is alive. There are autobiographical accounts of individuals whose lives have been significantly influenced by the Rebbe, emphasizing his miraculous feats. Many sites provide 'proofs' of the fact that the Rebbe remains 'alive'.

Examples of such sites include:

- YechiHaMelech.org available on chabloglubavitch.blogspot.com/
- Moshiachtv.blogspot.com
- www.kingmessiah.com
- www.770live.com (referring to the Rebbe's last abode)
- www.moshiach.net (including "Living With Moschiah", described as "A weekly digest about Moschiah for the visually impaired and blind);

- www.chabad-uk.com which is compiled in the UK and represents the views of Beis Menachem, a messianic Group based in Stamford Hill, UK.

It has now become possible to petition the Rebbe online and request a blessing. One site http://www.kingmessiah.com/ provides visitors with a link to write to the Rebbe and 'behold miracles'. Prior to requesting help petitioners are requested to recite:

'I am taking upon myself to add in learning Torah, giving *tzedoka* (charity) and to be more strigent fulfilling *mitzvos (*good deeds*)'*

They then state:

> To the Rebbe shlit'a King Moshiach
>
> I am asking for a blessing for
>
> (Please Write The Jewish Names)
>
> Name: [   ]
>
> Mothers Name: [   ]
>
> Blessing Request:
>
> [   ]
>
> Send The Letter

Finally they recite:

I pray to G—d to hasten the revelation of the Rebbe King Moshaich and proclaim: '*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu VeRabeinu Melech HaMoshaich Leolam Voed*!' (Long live the Rebbe King Moshiach forever!)[1].

Internet Mediated Miracles and the Rebbe's Igros Kodesh

Bibliomancy, the use of books in divination, has been a popular pursuit throughout the history of Judaism (Trachtenberg 1977). Biblical passages have been deployed to ward off evil spirits and the Bible has been used for amulets and talismanic purposes. For instance Exodus XV

26 has traditionally been used for healing purposes. Genesis was used to protect against hailstorms and thunder. Although the practice has always been controversial, Rav Shlomo Aviner, one of the leaders of the Religious Zionist Movement, opines:

> 'The commentators of the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Yoreh Deah* 179:4) mention that it is permissible to open a holy book and find an answer, and this is even called a "minor prophecy". This means that there is no prohibition.' (http://www.ravaviner.com/2009/05/igrot-kodesh-holy-letters-of.html).

The *Igros Kodesh* is a collection of the correspondence and responses of the seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe. It is modelled on the *Igros Kodesh Maharayatz* of his immediate predecessor. It comprises many realms of discussion including philosophy (Talmudic, Halachic, Hasidic, mystical or other), scientific matters, global events, counsel in private issues, schooling, and social/communal proceedings. Statistics are unavailable detailing the use of this text by Lubavitchers although several members of the London community maintained that it was widely deployed both by messianic and non-messianic Lubavitchers.

For many years Lubavitchers have deployed the physical text to communicate with the Rebbe, to obtain both his blessings and his answers to their requests. This has a long historical legacy. When Hasidim in Russia were out of contact with the Rebbe, they would insert their letters in a Tanya; after the Frierdiker Rebbe (6th Rebbe) passed away the 'current' Rebbe wrote in his "general letter to Hasidim" that whoever can't make it to the *tziyun* (grave) on the day of the *yahrtzeit* (anniversary of death) should put the letter in one of the Frierdiker Rebbe's *seforim*, (books) and then send it off to the Ohel (structure built over resting place). In a *Sicha (*talk*)* of the Rebbe in 5749 (1988/89) the Rebbe speaks of a *minhag* (custom) of "many *Yidden* including both *Gedolei Yisroel*, simple people, and even women that before making certain decisions they would open a "*sefer kadosh* (holy book) and look at the place where the sefer randomly opened to and make a decision based on what is written there.

Typically in this form of bibliomancy questions are randomly inserted into a volume of the *Igros Kodesh* and a response is obtained by opening the page at which it is inserted. In recent years it has become possible to consult the *Igros* online. One site (http://www.igrot.com/) displays an image of a petitioner writing a request alongside an image of the Rebbe sitting in front of a Hebrew book with a pen lying across its open pages.

The site states:

 'Every person encounters difficult moments throughout his life that requires guidance and assistance in order that he/she will be able to return to and go about his routines with peace and tranquillity. Generally speaking, difficulties are personal and arise from health problems, married couple interaction, love, family, job, a traumatic experience and the list goes on and on. Today we can receive the Rebbe "א gniK שליט Messiah's advice, blessing and guidance through the "*Igrot Kodesh*". Those who turn to the *Rebbe Sh'lita* via this channel receive immediate answers with amazing precision and merit assistance at no charge and completely confidential.'

Long live our master, teacher and the Rebbe King Messiah forever!

Before consulting the *Igros*, petitioners are adjured to:

"Wash our hands without a blessing, three times on both hands alternately… right, left and back again. This is done in order to purify the body and soul before submitting a request."

"Write whatever is in your heart in any language... for requesting a blessing. It's important for the person requesting a blessing to write the full Jewish name and the name of his/her mother. Judaism declares that these names characterize the person, not his last name."

"Make a firm resolution i.e., one decides to perform a *mitzvah* (good deed) such as putting on *tefillin* (phylacteries), keeping kosher, keeping *Shabbos* (Sabbath) and performing good deeds for the benefit of another. One declares, "Long live our master, our mentor and teacher, the King *Moschiah*, forever and ever!" and sends the request that reaches one of the volumes of the *Igros Kodesh* as they were scanned on the Internet site. The software on site randomly and immediately responds with an answer."

As Ehrlich (2004: 264) notes: 'That the method works, at least for believers, is evident from the many stories of fortuitous answers and miraculous occurrences passed by word of mouth in the movement and published in messianist Chabad journals'. However some Chabad rabbis such as Rabbi Ginsberg in Israel have cautioned against its use and have compiled guidelines to limit its potential excesses. Rabbi Ginsberg argues that the *Igros* is not to be deployed when answers are forthcoming from other sources. For medical issues, a doctor should be consulted and similarly, for religious questions, a rabbi. The only issues for which the process of *Igros Kodesh* may be endorsed are those for which no 'normal'

solution can. It is important to note that Rabbi Ginsberg's views are contentious and are not widely accepted among Israeli Chabad.

The Study

Methodology

This study aimed to examine the dialectic relationship between offline and online ritual and more specifically explored the attitudes of individuals posting messages on a chat forum towards the online version of the Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*.

The use of Internet sites for religious research raises significant ethical issues in relation to anonymity and informed consent (Rodham and Gavin, 2006). There is debate concerning the ethical implications of online data collection. Anyone with access to the Internet can view 'open' message boards (not requiring registration to log in) and therefore these authors assert that the data are in the public domain and not subject to the requirement that the researcher needs informed consent. http://www.chabadtalk.com/forum/archive/index.php3?t-14.html is an 'open' site and therefore in the public domain.

I searched the Internet for message boards, which discussed attitudes towards using the online Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*. One site, www.chabadtalk.com displays wide-ranging topics about Lubavitch, Torah and Judaism and Jewish life and is linked to http://www.chabadtalk.com/forum/archive/index.php3?t-14.html, which focuses on the *Igros Kodesh*. Much of the discussion on www.chabadtalk.com centres on the late Lubavitcher Rebbe and his teachings. New members have to register and then will be able to contact existing members. The site cautions that although the administrators and moderators of Jewish Forum & Discussions — Chabad Talk will attempt to keep all objectionable messages off this forum, it is impossible for them to review all messages.

One section '*Igros Kodesh*—the Rebbe's letters' contains a discussion on the use of online Igros and has elicited replies from 25 individuals[2]. Using content analysis I analyzed the discourse of all individuals who posted statements there. I present statements verbatim.

Results

The discussions I saw revolved around whether the Internet was sacred or profane, whether it was the Rebbe or a computer who actually answered;

some likened its online use to 'magic'. Advocates of online use cited the Rebbe's positive attitude towards the Internet as a way of spreading *Yiddishkeit* (Jewish teachings). A selection of these statements appears below.

'Hannah' adopted a positive attitude:

"The Rebbe incouraged Rabbi Kazen obm to use the Internet, and supported using technology for things of *kedusha* (Holiness). What is different from a television where you could get *sichos* (talks), or the phone to call '770'. If used properly, it seems to me (again) that it can be used as a good *keli* (vessel)".

Likewise Yossi stated:

"To say that it's crazy or disrespectfull to the Rebbe **** to place Igros online or to say there is some difference between scanned or printed ones is stupid."

Others asserted that the Rebbe could answer through the net but did not find its online use acceptable. Talli wrote:

"Although I don't agree with the Internet Igros, simply because it's VERY easy to rig the letters with key words etc., however, the Rebbe CAN answer us in any way, even through the net. I disagree with this idea, simply because it makes it into a real horoscope (ch"y) type thing for the not-yet-frum. For the *fremder* (person who does not know), Igros needs to be consulted along with some who will guide him/her to a *hachloto toivo* (good decision) along with helping him/her understand the letter."

Others were opposed to the use of the online version. For instance 'Shmueli' stated:

"You may be correct about saying that about the *Igros* in a general way, but not Internet Igros. It turns it into Hocus Pocus!"

Likewise 'Yitzchak' wrote,

"no, ariel770, no! this is completely outta the ball park! there's no respect here, none @ all. you do not make a website out of a holy thing like this. it's not just a website wher u can research igrus kodesh, if it waz, then that's fine, but it's like ur making a whole horoscope, crystal ball thing out of it. like they have online these dream interpatation sites. all you hafta do iz write 3 words & a whole interpatation comes up, when

u haven't even written a dream. you can write whatever you want & some answer will come up. is there someone receiving these questions 24/7, putting them in2 the igrus &writing wut he found? no it's some COMPUTER! you are not having the right intentions & u r not receiving the rebbe's answer. i don't care how it works! the idea is just sickening. i know i may have used this term too much, but unfortunately this is wut ppl. are doing, *laigen der rebbe in der shmutz*! (To drag the Rebbe through the filth)) it's *pashut a shande* – simple shame-(of how far ppl. will go with this whole thing)."

According to Reuben

"I have to say that this thing with igros online is stupid, because it all depends on the characters you type in. If there is a typo, then you will get 2 different answers after and before you correct it. This is even though it is the same question. This proves the baselessness to igros online."

Similarly 'Sharon' voiced her opposition:

"qwert, this website or any other lubav website for that matter is not cheapening the Rebbe, or a hocus pocus, igrus online IS! looking for answers from the Rebbe in the igrus is a very holy thing, there are ways of spreading the crown jewel that it will reach other people NOT thru a website like that. it is a website where u do not get the Rebbes answer. it is a COMPUTER! we have askmoses, chabadonline, farbrengen & numerouse ways to sprinkle the crown jewel, WITHOUT making a disgracful site such as igrus online2. "

Several people responded to 'Sharon'. 'Aaaron' replied:

"i think thats disrespectful to the rebbe to say something like that. the rebbe said he would find a way to answer people who ask him. im sure he can find a way to answer even on the Internet! come on, there's *hashgacha protis* (Divine Providence) on the Internet to you know. if you believe that you can write to a book then there really is no difference in writing to a computer. i think igrot online is also a beautiful thing. imagine, one person somewhere in the world who needs to ask something from the rebbe can just turn on their computer and get an answer from the igros.it shows how far lubavitch has gone in publicizing an making every aspect accesible to everyone. i still dont understand why you think sichos online or using the actual sefer is any different. Why should we find other ways to spread the crown Jewel? I think i said this before but were not supposed to be limited by anything!"

Esther retorted:

"I totaly respect what youre saying, to you it may not seem to be the way
to get answers from the Rebbe, but everything is *hashgacha pratis*,
(Divine Providence) so if someone opens up a sefer and learns something
and it applies to a question they have, or likewise if they open up a
website and find the answer they were looking for, both were equally
hashgacha pratis. Shouldn't we use everything in this wold and elevate
it? like instead of using the Internet for innapropriate things people are
elevating it different ways, same thing with the television- instead of
watching television shows, we use that technological advancment to be
mekushar (connected) to the Rebbe, through Rebbe videos. I think the
Rebbe spoke about this, how we should use technology to spread
yiddishkeit."

Michael, another advocate asked:

"Can you please explain to me what exactly the difference is? Who are
you to decide what is considered disgraceful or not? Once you say its
disgraceful to have sichos online. Whats the diff? the rebbe told us we
shouldnt be limited in ways of reaching out to others and bringing
mashiach. why is this any different. the rebbe was on television and he
didnt say that was disgraceful. what makes this any worse."

Discussion

To date there has been limited research on how religious groups frame the
Internet for their use. Campbell asks how users 'spiritualize' the Internet,
i.e., how they see the Internet as a technology or space that is suitable for
religious engagement (Campbell 2005). She underscores the fact that a
need exists for studies that not only define what happens when religion
appears online, but also interpret why this is occurring and the
implications for religious culture as a whole.

This study was set up to examine visitors to a Lubavitcher chatroom
view online ritual in terms of the categories of sacred and profane. We
know little about the individuals leaving messages in this chatroom but
assume that they have some affiliation with Lubavitch. Within this group
there are diverse views concerning the sacredness of the Internet. Those
who adopt a positive attitude to the online version also seem to support
Lubavitch's emphasis on publicising its mission of fostering increased
Jewish religious observance as a way of bringing forth the Messiah. For
many years the organization has deployed modern media for promotion
and outreach. Lubavitch has readily embraced the Internet as a way of

disseminating its ideas (Shandler 2009). This contrasts with other Hasidic groups whose accommodation to modernity has been limited.

Proponents of its use assert that, like television and the telephone, the Internet is just another medium through which to access the Rebbe. For them writing to a book is no less legitimate than writing to a computer. Also, since everything is a result of Divine providence — God's activity in the World — sending a request to a book is no different to sending it to a computer; everything has the potential to be sacred if used for the right purposes. As stated on Chabad.org "Everything in this world was created for a divine purpose. All forms of modern technology can and should be harnessed to make the world a better place and, in the case of Jews, to spread Judaism in the widest possible manner". As Durkheim (1912/2001) stated, anything can be sacred. In agreement with authors such as O'Leary (1996), the Internet is approached as a technological landscape that transforms religious expression and understanding. Although online ritual may differ in certain respects from its offline counterpart its performance is still legitimate.

Opponents see it as a profane rather than as a sacred space. Petitions go to a computer through the Internet, which is material (profane), rather than to the Rebbe. They disagree with online ritual performance. Interestingly a few opponents liken the Internet ritual to magic or 'hocus pocus' which is ironic considering the fact that bibliomancy has always been associated with magic yet they appear to accept its offline use.

Despite the limitations of small sample size and therefore its lack of generalizability, this study provides useful data concerning the views of some Orthodox Jews about the sacredness of the Internet. A future study could attempt to contact these individuals through registering with the website to ask more about their attitudes towards online rituals, reasons for their opposition, and how these relate to their religious backgrounds.

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NOTES

[1] The use of the Internet for online petitioning is not unique to Lubavitch. One site 'Window on the Wall' http://www.aish.com/w/note/46615192.html provides the opportunity to send a prayer request to the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem .

[2] In this study the names of individuals contributing to this site are pseudonyms.

SERVED BY THE CHILDREN: THE SPATIALIZATION OF CHILDREN'S HOUSEWORK IN HAREDI SOCIETY IN ISRAEL

Orna Blumen

Abstract

A focus on children's housework, concerning where and by whom specific chores are performed, how they are viewed and interpreted, and the types of entitlements they entail, shows the significance of space for the way housework is conducted in society. Insights obtained from Haredi (Jewish Ultra-Orthodox) informants of three groups explicate how representations of children performing housework are understood: first, employed mothers evaluated children's housework from within the family; second, adult bystanders interpreted their observations of children performing housework outside the home; third, children performing housework outside the home conveyed their own experience of it. Findings indicate that children forthrightly defined their activity as work, but local knowledge imparted by adults identified it as learning and that children and the housework they do were supervised by unfamiliar adults. Spatial analysis revealed adults' dependence on children's housework, which partially reverses the ordinary adult-child hierarchy.

Keywords:

Housework geography, children, public visibility, Ultra-Orthodox Jews, Haredi, Israel

This study examines the daily domestic work of children. Focusing on the effect of public representations of housework by children and of children as domestic workers, it analyzes a midday scene in a typical Haredi street in Israel, showing how various interpretations by mothers, children and adult bystanders reflect child-adult power relations. In so doing this study pertains to two recently emerging research interests: housework and the engagement of children within it (e.g., Bønke, 2010; Warren, 2011). It also calls attention to the geography of housework, especially to that performed by children. The analysis also contributes to the study of the spatiality of work in the Israeli Haredi community (Blumen, 2007a, b).

The Spatialization of Children's Housework

In developed societies, housework marks unpaid domestic work, referring to all forms of physical and emotional work that ensure the functioning and wellbeing of the family. It normally includes tasks such as cooking, child-care and child-rearing, cleaning, laundering, ironing, shopping, chauffeuring and gardening; moreover, it has been largely recognized as the primary facilitator of the paid economy (Alberts *et al.,* 2011; Kynaston, 1996).[1] Overwhelmingly performed by women as their primary social role, housework connotes the invisibility of home privacy, thereby representing gender hierarchy (Oakley, 1974). Yet housework itself is gendered. Women typically perform the "core" of housework, those routine chores necessary to sustain individuals and maintain homes such as preparation of meals and dishwashing, house cleaning, grocery shopping, and laundry, all of which tend to be obligatory, repetitive, boring, and least flexible and most intensive in terms of time and energy. Men usually perform fewer, discretionary chores which are performed less frequently, tend to be more creative and even recreational, such as repairs, garden and animal care, paying bills and various outdoor chores, and are considered peripheral (e.g., Bianchi *et al.* 2000; Gupta, 1999; Hochschild 1989). Unsurprisingly, housework practices construct gender identity and underline socialization (e.g., Cunningham, 2001, 2005; DeVault, 1991).

Children are socialized into controlling their behaviour along two major axes: the child–adult hierarchy and generational proximity, i.e., the (in)ability to influence the social order surrounding them (Bendelow and Mayall, 2002; Mayall, 1998). Socialization to housework depends to a large extent on gender: girls are more likely to carry out routine indoor tasks such as cooking and cleaning while boys are more likely to perform occasional outdoor tasks such as yard care (Antill *et al.*, 1996; Blair, 1992; Bønke, 2010). Probing the overall input of children, Marx Ferree

(1990) has pointed to age being a dimension second only to gender in the allocation of housework. Children assume housework when adults fail to fulfill domestic needs (Gill, 1998; Antill *et al.*, 1996) and their share might be greater than that of their fathers, especially when the mothers are employees (Lee *et al.*, 2003; Bianchi, Robinson and Milkie, 2006). Consequently, children's housework buttresses the household income and supports the paid economy in general (Mayall, 1996), especially in low-income and single-mother homes (Berridge and Romich, 2011). Such circumstances mark housework as a site where age-power relations can be partially reversed.

In geographic studies, housework is widely acknowledged as a gendered issue with women's unpaid domestic work best known as the facilitator of urban decentralization and suburban lifestyle (McDowell, 1983; Miller, 1983). However, there has been barely any research on the spatialization of the gendered pattern of housework. This pattern is not strict as women are often seen performing some "masculine" tasks, such as gardening, shopping and driving, outside and away from home when many employed men, usually confined to their paid workplaces, remain invisible (e.g., Blumen, 2007a; Mazey and Lee, 1983; Hanson and Pratt, 1995). Thus some representations of housework and the power relations embedded in them are visible in the community public space despite the association with the hidden privacy of the home.

Socialization research indicates that the gendering of housework by adults is replicated by children. Although the spatialization of the children's housework was also noted it was not problematized, either in socialization research or in geography (e.g., Antill *et al*., 1996; Blair, 1992). However, the spatiality of children crossing the indoor-outdoor divide is a well known phenomenon (e.g., Bingham, Valentine, and Holloway, 1999; Holloway and Valentine, 2001; Valentine, 1996; Valentine and McKendrick, 1997). As the ultimate locus of socialization, children are disciplined and trained mainly in the home. Outside the home, control over children is realized by their spatial confinement to places such as schools, bounded playgrounds and neighborhood parks. In the public space children are constructed as Others, constantly under the watchful eyes of adults who control their experiences (Connolly and Ennew, 1996:133; Valentine, 1996, 1997). However, the power relations embedded in these representations of housework are not limited to gender. The frequent discomfort of viewing breast-feeding babies, diapering toddlers and disciplining children in public (e.g., Blumen, 2007a; Carpenter, 2006; Staehli, 1996) indicates that these representations have additional hierarchies, in which age is inevitably conspicuous, which are publicly displayed, observed and negotiated. There has been only a single

study, which, in passing reported on the awareness of male adolescents of the indoor-outdoor division of housework and how public visibility in performing domestic chores (dis)honours the gender identity of the performers (Curtin and Lineham, 2002).

Work and Children in Israeli Haredi Society

The pursuit of religious wisdom through *yeshiva* study, which is glorified as a divine occupation and recognized as "holy work" (*avodat kodesh*), epitomizes Haredi masculinity. This most prestigious vocation contrasts with the entire gamut of dull ungodly types of paid and unpaid work (Finkelman, 2011; Stadler, 2009). In Israel, Haredi Jews comprise about 8 per cent of the entire population but their growing political influence allows many yeshiva men to disparage paid work (up to 60-70 per cent).[2] The Haredi community allocates housework to women (Ben-Shahar–Neria, 2002; Stadler, 2009). Yet, to escape acute poverty, many mothers add paid jobs to their intensive housework and children commonly ease the burden by doing some housework. By 2008, the labor force participation of Haredi women reached 53.9% (nearly 70% for Jewish women) indicating that the phenomenon of the employed mother is a common one.[3]

Appropriating a distinct part of the city is essential in Haredi theology because it equips the community with a public space of its own. Typically Haredi practices are implemented in such "privatized" public space. All told, this spatial tactic yields a Haredi neighborhood, a supportive milieu for adherents facilitating large-scale systems of social reproduction that are publicly displayed and exercised, all the while minimizing conflict with the dominant modern culture (Schnell, 2001; Schwartz, 1996, p. 268; Shaffir, 1997; Shilhav and Friedman, 1985; Boyarin and Boyarin, 1995).[4] In addition, Haredi society is also young. The average number of children under 18 per Haredi household is 3.9 compared to 1.8 in non-Haredi Jewish households (Ministry of Industry, Trade & Labor, 2009, Table 6). The 2008 Israeli census indicates that in Bnei-Braq almost 40 per cent of the population was under 15 (compared with 25.4 per cent for all Jews: Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics: Table 1.21). Haredi children are regarded as a closed, separate enclave where hierarchies and individual identities are inexorably structured by sex, age and social role. Childhood exists in a superior-inferior paradox. Haredi affiliation values children and adults identically and as superior to non-Haredi, but at the same time and by the same affiliation, children are inferior in the rigid adult-child hierarchy. Strict observance of religious precepts, strong willpower and self-control are the most important qualities in teaching children how to

become either scholars or employed mothers (Heilman, 1992; Yafeh, 2004). The Haredi interface of pious and impious work in Israel has barely been investigated (but see Hakak, 2004; Gonen, 2002; Stadler , 2002, 2009; Berman, 1998; Blumen, 2007a), and housework which has scarcely been studied in connection with women, is hardly considered at all in connection with children (e.g., Blumen, 2002,2007b 2008; El-Or, 1994).

Working with Children: Some Methodological Concerns

The present study was conducted in Bnei Braq, a mainly Haredi city in Inner Metropolitan Tel Aviv, where about 30 per cent of the Israeli Haredi population live. The city is managed by elected Haredi councilors and daily life is regulated by Haredi lifestyles such as prohibiting motor transport on Sabbath and holydays. Data were obtained through four complementary steps.

First, I conducted 55 in-depth interviews with employed mothers from the Vizhnitz sect. This documented the work routine in their homes and shed light on the contribution of children's housework. The interviewees were of Ashkenazi origin and aged between 28 and 42; they were the wives of yeshiva students and were mothers of five to eight children. All had graduated from the local Haredi education system. Although qualified schoolteachers, they were employed on a prototype assembly-line at a nearby high-tech firm (Blumen, 2002).

I then observed the midday Haredi public space for two weeks at three busy street corners and evaluated the visibility of children's housework. Three weeks later, after analyzing my observations, I returned to these sites and conversed with Haredi passersby, both adults and children. The conversations with the adults continued for five successive days and talking with children extended for ten days. Altogether I was present at these sites for five weeks and interviewed 59 people: 30 adults – 13 women and 17 men, and 29 children – 13 girls and 16 boys. Children gave their first names and reported their age, which was between six and twelve years.[5]

As a "stranger" – a secular woman with an audio-recorder and camera, my persistent "out of place" presence and my attempts to respect local codes (dressing modestly, not directly filming faces) were noticed, recognized and appreciated. Local people quickly became used to my presence so that often a passerby – woman, a man or a child – initiated a brief conversation. Previous work had prepared me for such local encounters; as long as these chats were brief and public, i.e., socially controlled, they were acceptable (Blumen, 2007a). I expressed general

interest in the Haredi lifestyle, relying on the people observed in the street to fuel the conversation. For example, turning my interlocutor's attention to one of the children doing housework, I chose standard comments such as "S/he looks very young" or "What can s/he be doing with three toddlers on a busy street?" or "I wonder if s/he feels tired". Such comments were serviceable at two levels. First, they centered attention on the children performing housework and second, my seeking local knowledge reversed, Haredi-modern, interviewee-interviewer and also adult-child hierarchies, at least for a short time.

Conversing with children was a sensitive undertaking. While cooperation was not difficult to obtain, their behavior was strictly controlled. To some extent I could overcome this difficulty because watchful adults were distanced and unable to hear the conversations. Nevertheless I had to keep them short, about four minutes each. Children usually moved in small bands, homogeneous with respect to the gender of the older children and heterogeneous among the younger children. Usually one started the conversation while others watched at a distance; I focused the conversation on the speaker's experience and feelings; about four-five minutes later the friends came closer and then I apologized and left. In sum, this allowed about four minutes of undisturbed conversation with one child from each group. In general, mixing visual and verbal approaches with children and adults (Pimlott-Wilson, 2012) is a successful technique. These fleeting, semi-controlled conversations, which were recorded and transcribed, allowed me to extract the local knowledge embedded in these ordinary Haredi representations of housework. However, indoor housework was only described, not observed; yet, most significantly, there is validation in the matching reports of mothers, children and passersby.

Children's Indoor Housework: "I'm Grateful for their Work"

A concise description of the domestic experience of 55 employed mothers reveals how they view their children's housework. A routine day in a Haredi family starts before 06:00 when the fathers leave for morning prayers and the mothers wake the children, preferably each one separately. The men return from prayers just before the women leave for work; together with the older daughters the men conclude the morning tasks by walking the younger children to school. The men leave the *yeshiva* around noon, hurrying to meet the youngest children at their schools and shopping for groceries on the way home. In many families children older than six accompany younger siblings home, where they all meet their fathers. At home the men warm up and serve lunch (prepared in advance

by the mothers), supervise their older daughters who tidy up the kitchen and do a little housekeeping before returning to the yeshiva (around 15:00-16:00). In some families older siblings are also responsible for daily shopping and serving lunch. When the mothers return home in the early afternoon, the older daughters help them whereas the boys are usually sent to neighbors, friends, or family to deliver or fetch groceries and other items that have been forgotten. In general, children are independent relatively young, with older children looking after younger siblings; each child has specific duties with girls given many more chores than boys. Teenage daughters provide most indoor help, while teenage boys are yeshiva students (many studying away from home). Still, the women are responsible for the daily functioning of family life and perform most domestic and family chores (for details see Blumen, 2002).

Housework is very demanding. Though it is far inferior to the prestigious studies of men, it is greatly appreciated in the community. The quality of housework in a specific family is often judged by the children's behavior and mothers are esteemed for having well-behaved offspring. The women I interviewed emphasized this point by means of comparison with modern culture.

Rivka explained:

> We're different. Children are our greatest concern, they are our future and, in fact, the future of the entire Jewish nation… Mothers and homemaking are admired, praised. It energizes the women, and they don't complain as much as you [modern women].

The women are aware of the intimate relations between housework and the presence of children. Eight aspects structure their descriptions of the work their children do in the family. First, children's work is acknowledged in a practical sense as it is integrated into the mothers' daily routine. Second, the children's work is specified as "help" rather than work (see Blumen, 2007b, 143).

Dvora refers to the other aspects of the children's housework:

> The most important is to set an example for your kids, to teach them how to be [proper] adults… They must learn their duties in the parents' home before having their own [family homes]. Our family functions smoothly very much because of their help, [which] allows my [paid] work. Although men care more about education I place greater emphasis on their help and appreciate it, I'm grateful for the work they do. The family and the mothers are greatly appreciated for raising successful matches [partners]; when your children are seen as doing the "right thing" – helping, they respect their parents before God [she refers to the fifth

commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother"] … Some say that the help of their children saves a lot of money, which they do not have. For me, even if I, too, don't have much money, this is not the most important [thing].

Dvora informs how children's housework, which indicates successful socialization, shapes the third feature enhancing the family's reputation. The family reputation is a broad meaningful issue embracing three additional facets. It reflects the parental role of adults, especially of mothers; it determines the appeal of siblings in the arranged marriage market; and it also implies religious quality. The economic value of children's housework, the seventh aspect, is acknowledged but ranked as the least important.

The eighth aspect, the gendering of housework, was just taken for granted. At an abstract level, men emphasize adequate socialization in a general way whereas women stress their children's concrete contribution. In practice, the women alone are responsible for the functioning of the family and the help the men proffer is usually focused on accompanying children to and from school, managing and supervising the midday hassle at home, and the daily and weekly shopping. Thus, there is a spatial aspect to housework as the women's work is mostly hidden within the privacy of the home while the men's work is almost entirely displayed in the community public space (Blumen, 2007b). The housework allocated to children reflects the adults' gendered pattern. Bearing in mind their age, older children look after younger. Daughters are given many more chores than sons; even as young as seven or eight, daughters provide most indoor help such as serving food, cleaning and "mothering" younger children. Being more active indoors means that girls lose out on the prestige gained from the public visibility of children performing housework outside the home.

Children's Housework in the Public Space

Three issues comprise the public representation of Haredi children: their visibility as domestic workers and the interpretation of their appearance by adults and by other children. By midday, about 10 minutes before the official end of the school day, legions of men dash out of the yeshivot but the average level of noise on the streets hardly changes.[6] A little later this restrained silence is dispelled by an influx of many noisy children and adolescents. Women, many of them schoolteachers, also join this public mayhem but in small numbers. This persists about 30 minutes and then slowly dissipates, finally subsiding about 90 minutes after it had started.

The children are more publicly conspicuous than at any other time of the day and their role as domestic workers is most noticeable. Dressed in colorful clothes, their small bodies, particularly the young ones, emphasize their presence while their school uniforms categorize them as Others. A reflexive comparison with the larger bodies of adults, mostly those of the men, scurrying along in their almost uniform dark clothes, is inescapable.[7] Children fill the air with noise and tend to move slowly and leisurely. Men are almost always seen accompanying children and the image of an impatient man, dragging one or two children by the hand behind him, is very common (Blumen, 2007b). However, many children move independently. Uncontrolled by adults, shouting, yelling and dragging their feet, children of various ages walk little by little in noisy gaggles; many, some as young as six or seven, push baby buggies, hold toddlers' hands, or carry grocery bags. They stop at the neighborhood store, play in the park, or sit on a low wall in a shady street corner to chat. These settings evince children's housework, implying the exemption of many parents from this daily phase of childcare and shopping.

"They learn to help": Adults' View of Children

Across the street-dialogues with Haredi adults, children (to whom I referred as "she" or "he") were categorized as children. Most significantly, women and men alike identified age as the most apparent feature; none classified any of the children observed performing housework as domestic workers. A woman in her early forties smiled at my comment that the children appear joyful and energetic. We then turned our attention to four girls, aged about eight, with schoolbags on their backs. One carried a plastic bag containing some groceries and two others each held the hand of a toddler about four years old. She pointed at this company of six young children and continued with an unmistaken tone of pride:

> How happy our girls are. At school they expand their wisdom to help them to become worthy women, to be a proper match for nice [yeshiva] students and decent mothers to their, our, children… These children know what they have to do simply by watching others… And if they marry a gifted [yeshiva] man their life will be very meaningful, even if they have to work hard for the money [to support the family].

In front of a noisy group of nine children composed similarly of young girls watching toddlers in their buggies in a shaded corner, I heard a very similar description with some elaboration from a man in his thirties:

> Children demand a lot of work, especially from their mothers but they give us all, much satisfaction… The girls will be real Jewish mothers and the boys are to become true workers of God devoting their life to [yeshiva] study… They'll be happy with one another so that their children will follow them, because for us the survival of the faith is the most important. This is why we are so strict about our children. We teach them what they need to know in order to keep the Jewish spirit. This pious spirit guides them to stay away from an evil, worthless life – disobedience, drugs, prostitution, God knows what else.

Boys performing housework were also perceived in terms of the future. A man in his late forties referred to two boys about ten years old who were looking after two younger ones about six years old.

> It looks as if they are friends, they are probably neighbors and in the same school. In a few years they'll go to a yeshiva [away from home] and will become scholars, so we'll all [the Haredi community] be proud of them... They learn to help at home, how to be good husbands, so that in ten or twelve years when they are married, their brides [wives] will appreciate their help and then *they* will set a proper example for *their* scholarly sons how to be good husbands for their wives… The children are our [the nation's] survival. We are served by them, today and in the future.

Altogether several themes structured the impressions the adults on the street have of children performing housework. Children form a distinct category, educated and supervised by adults, recognized as the objects of adults' housework. Indirectly, this reveals how adults depend on children as an important source of personal and collective meaning. This dependence stems from children symbolizing the future of a chosen (Haredi and national) collective, which causes the interviewees repeatedly to emphasize the importance of socialization to both religious values and family life as a unitary fabric. The socialization of Haredi children is accepted as gendered and as rigid so that the two roles are complementary. Finally, added value is ascribed to Haredi children by their detachment from modern irreligious mores. It is difficult to tell whether this comparison was provoked in response to my [modern] presence or is typical of Haredi internal discourse (e.g., Yafeh, 2004), yet it is noteworthy that this impression reaffirms the testimonies of the employed mothers.

Children's view of Children's Housework

Haredi children indicate a self-awareness of belonging to a distinct category — children. A ten-year-old boy, Meir, testifies to that sense:

> Boys with suits are not boys, they are bigger, and anyway after bar-mitzvah … boys are not boys anymore. With girls it's more difficult to tell... Maybe they have to be a little older to be [considered] grown-ups. Then, there are the biggest children like me, and there are little children about three or four or five and maybe even six. Before that there are babies... And there are the children between them [little children] and us [oldest children] "children in the middle". After my tenth birthday, on *Tu-b'Shvat* [a festival four months earlier], I became a big boy.

> Question: Why is it difficult with girls?

> Because they don't wear suits, like grown-up boys. But for children this doesn't matter, it's not important. Me and my [eight year old] sister are the same, only at school we are not together, but our schools are close [to each other]. When we grow up it will be different but now we are children, we do almost the same with our little brothers.

> You see that some children go with their fathers. They can't talk or play with friends, they're the little ones, and they get home the quickest … There are children who go home with their older sisters and brothers. Then there are children – big and in the middle, and maybe even little, but not many – who go to collect their little brothers and sisters or baby brothers and sisters [from day care and schools], and take them home. And there are the children who go home with their friends [who] don't have to walk their little sisters and brothers. Sometimes children have to shop at the grocery. If they go with [are accompanied by] their father they wait for him, and still they get home quickest; [if they go] with friends, they do the shopping and the friends wait for them and [when necessary] watch the little ones, and even if they [the shoppers] are not with young brothers all the friends wait for them so that the gang stays together. Children like to go together with friends. It takes more time to walk with friends and [younger] children also want to play and [that is why] children with children get home the latest.

Age appears to be the prime criterion as to who is a child. At the same time, it also marks the heterogeneity within the children category. While gender forcefully adds to this heterogeneity, the children themselves, who are familiar with its significance, tend to minimize it. Heterogeneity is also embedded into the children's activity. The presence of relatives or

friends and the frequent need to buy groceries are important determinants of how time is spent and whose housework is represented. Adult relatives restrain the children they accompany. Children who perform housework are absorbed by such frivolities as admiring cars, staring at passersby and watching animals (cats, insects), enjoying the company of friends and sharing domestic tasks with them, as well as chatting and playing together. It appears natural to all the young respondents that children's outdoor housework is performed within a reciprocal nexus that bonds co-equals who offer mutual help in performing their chores. In this sense, it enhances their sociability within age-mixed ensembles and children accompanied by adults are not part of this bustle.

All the young informants confessed a preference to hanging around, dawdling and losing track of time. A ten year old girl, Sarit:

> Very often people on the street, neighbors and people we don't know, tell us to hurry up, to stop playing or chatting and run home to help our moms. I love to help my Mom, but I also love being together with my friends, and usually my Mom is not angry with me being a little late because at home I help a lot before and after she returns [from work].

While adults disapprove and are often annoyed by the delays in the journey home, they tolerate it as a typically immature characteristic. By extending the journey home, children actually adapt their tasks to their needs to mix and play. This local knowledge suggests that seeing children proceeding leisurely is also a reflection of resistance. The longer the delay, the greater is the perceived resistance to and the sense of the adults' dependence on children's housework and the adults' frustration is an outcome. The children often mentioned that dawdling children are discovered, chased away and told by unfamiliar adults to hurry home, demonstrating that adults apply age hierarchy and supervise children they don't know. The superior-inferior paradox is apparent: while embracing the children as the progeny of an entire community of superior believers, this practice of adults reinforces the inferiority of Haredi children as subordinate to all adults. This suggests that adults possess local knowledge, which recognizes and appreciates the importance of children's housework — "go home to help your Mom" — even if it contradicts their inclination to define children's activity in terms of socialization. This collective supervision indicates what goes unadmitted: Haredi adults (i.e., parents) depend on the work of children. All the children interviewed were well aware of their parents' reliance on the housework they provide in maintaining the family routine. Sarit labeled her outdoor activity as "work," but when she focused on her mother's work inside and outside

the home, her own contribution was redefined as "help". The power of the indoor-outdoor dichotomy reveals the principles by which children spatialize their housework and their resistance to the burden of housework itself, its intensity and the rhetoric ("help") that devalues their input.

The oldest fourteen children (out of 29) briefly pointed out that this noontime bustle is all about children: "People go home because they care about their children". An eleven year old boy tied this insight to his indoor housework: "All the people go home because children have to have their lunch on time." In his view, the needs of the children determine the community standard of returning home at noon. Although the younger interviewees tended to describe themselves as providers of housework for the benefit of their family, especially mothers and younger siblings, they also recognized themselves to be objects of housework. However, this adults-children hierarchy which was embedded in their description of the division of housework was limited to relations with their mothers within the home; the fathers' contribution was generally ignored and four children even played down its value directly, describing it as an "addition" and "help" to their own housework.

The children also seem to encounter a gender paradox. Whereas they describe their own personal experience as barely gendered, they realize that gender undeniably fashions the lives of everyone around them, including the gendered spatialization of the housework performed by adults (Blumen, 2007b). Their own juvenile experience is segregated. At home, brothers or sisters play and perform housework together and it is common to see boys and girls playing together when various groups meet at the same playground. Some children resolve this paradox by deferring the gender effect until adolescence and adulthood; others by emphasize playing preferences or ignore it entirely. Regarding housework, the experience of children is far less gendered than that of adults and the less gendered experience of the spatialization of housework is evidently shaped by age. Age separates them from the world of adults and age appears to be a vigorous natural focus of bonding, cohesion and identity, linking their daily experiences most significantly, overshadowing other effects, including gender.

Housework, Children and Space

This study raises two main concerns: (a) housework should be examined from a spatial perspective and (b) in addition to gender, housework is also allocated by age. The research shows that housework is divided between the publicly invisible and often unnoticed chores performed inside the home and tasks performed visibly in the public space. The public space is

where social negotiation is ongoing and the allocation of tangible and symbolic entitlements to various social groups is bargained and contracted. This also applies to housework and those who perform it so that outdoor visibility awards some extra value (Blumen, 2007b).

This study has demonstrated the consequences of this spatialization of housework for children in Haredi society in Israel. Many Haredi women become breadwinners in addition to having responsibility for all housework and performing most of it, usually indoors. The men, usually engaged in unpaid religious studies, take on a modest share of all housework, typically performed outdoors and visible (Blumen, 2007b).[8] Children's housework is mostly performed outdoors in the community public space, resembling that of men. Concentrated around midday, children's housework starts by public performances of child-minding and shopping, usually continuing indoors until the mothers return from their paid employment in the early afternoon. However, the children's practices are disputed. Adults identify them as "learning" while children adamantly called their activities (house)"work", indicating that similar activities and their differing visibilities yield differential impressions and entitlements.

This is an excellent example of generational proximity: the children, tentatively aware that their contribution is disparaged cannot change this state of affairs because of their age subordination. However, speaking to outsiders who apparently lack local knowledge, they rhetorically amended their underprivileged standing, equating it with that of adults, especially the fathers (see Bendelow and Mayall, 2002; Mayall, 1998). Considering the tributes frequently showered on women for their housework and the compliments men often receive for their domestic help, the children's insistence on defining their activities as "work" expresses a reflexive resistance, clearly located outside the home in the public space. At home, children structured another hierarchy, which appreciates the vast amount of housework performed by their mothers; some ranked the contribution of the fathers to housework as tertiary, after their own. This not only shows how the children spatialized their own housework but that their related resistance is also spatialized by indirectly equating their daily outdoor housework with that of their fathers. A few even managed to lessen the value of the housework performed by the fathers indoors: "sometimes my Dad comes home to eat with us and I also give [serve] him lunch, and then he helps me clear the table."

The adult-child hierarchy in the public space includes additional rhetoric. The tendency of the adults to think about children in future terms not only disparages their current contribution but also rationalizes their existing disentitlement. This explains why children's experience, especially with respect to housework, underplays the effect of gender and

intensifies that of age. Similarly, almost all the informants were silent about the economic value of children's housework. Yet this did not seem to upset the children, reflecting the Haredi denigration of the pursuit of wealth. This is consistent with a widespread disregard by researchers of the routine work performed by children and the still common tendency to overlook the economic value of housework in general (Boyden, 1990; Marx Ferree, 1990). Additionally, the adult interviewees emphasized socialization, thereby reflecting both the Western view and the Haredi inclination to classify children as incomplete adults and to order Haredi adherents by their social roles (Bendelow and Mayall, 2002; Mayall, 1998; Heilman, 1992; Yafeh, 2004). In the public space, supervision by unrelated adults commonly validates the lower status of children. As adults oversee each other's children, thus facilitating the functioning of each others' homes, they share their parental authority with unfamiliar adults. This is a twofold standard. It ensures close control over children while also pointing to the extent of the adults' dependence, and that of the entire community, on children's housework. Considering that housework is ranked second only to religious work and that these two types of unpaid work are more prestigious than paid work, this study has shown that in practice, children are also integrated into the social division of labor. Their performances, entitlements and related resistance are spatialized in a distinct pattern, exposing their age subordination.

Although this is only a single case, by examining such issues as where specific chores are performed and by whom, how they are regarded and interpreted and the types of entitlements they entail, this study on children's housework shows how space is important for understanding the conduct of housework in society. In this study of a relatively poor population, it is also worthy of note that housework was conducted within the family and rarely by paid domestic workers, downplaying the effect of class and allowing the effect of age-power relations to emerge also as a spatial issue.

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NOTES

[1] For some studies on the issue see Jefferson and King, 2001; Marx Ferree, 1990; Oakley, 1974; Walby, 1986.

[2] Another benefit (also obtained by political means) often connected to Ultra-Orthodox men's long stay at the yeshiva is the exemption from compulsory military service (e.g., Hakak, 2004; Stadler, 2009). About the labor force participation of Haredi population see note 4 below.

[3] The dearth of data is due to lack of cooperation with outsiders, high rates of informal employment among women (who do not want to lose state benefits) and the inevitable reliance of surveys on ecological assessments (and fallacies related to areas of mixed Jewish population). The general impression is that labor force participation of Haredi men is less than 35%-40%. That of women is assessed at 54% yet varies considerably between vicinities in peripheral regions, where the number of suitable jobs is scarce, and neighborhoods in the central parts of metropolitan areas. Still, most women (66%–80%) work part-time as teachers and in other public services (Hakak, 2004; Ilan, 2000; Malchi and Greenstein, 2010; Ministry of Industry, Trade & Labor, 2009, Table 15).

[4] In terms of urban politics a distinct public space is produced by the concentration of adherents in defined areas where they make up the majority of the electorate and the population that supports practices of separatism. However, material clues such as *eruv*, synagogues, ritual bath houses, kosher restaurants and food stores are usually hard to distinguish in dense built-up areas, whereas

the Ultra-Orthodox body is inexorably noticeable (e.g., Valins, 2000; Siemiatycki, 2005; Blumen, 2007a).

[5] Age distribution of the 29 young interviewees:

Age (years)	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number of interviewees	1	3	5	3	4	7	6

[6] The typical Israeli school day is short. Public kindergartens and elementary schools start at 8:00 am and end by 1:30 pm, the latest.

[7] At noon many employed women who are still at work, are absent and so the overall number of women is lower and the gender composition of the crowd on the street emphasizes men's presence.

[8] A comparison of the Haredi modern lifestyles usually includes references to the involvement of men and children in housework, but in-community discourse does not necessarily refer to that of the children.

LANDSCAPES OF DEATH — THE KIBBUTZ AND THE CEMETERY

Yoram Bar-Gal

Abstract

This paper deals with the cemetery at Kibbutz Ein Harod. This was the first cemetery established in the Jezreel Valley and is of particular historic importance to the *Kibbutz Hameuhad* movement. To understand how cemeteries reflect tensions between the values of egalitarianism and personal diversity and the conflicts ensuing from these, I hypothesize that the graves reflect the cultural transformations of the kibbutz over the time. As in life, the attempt to maintain the value of egalitarianism was neither dogmatic nor unequivocal with egalitarianism degenerating in the context of social ascription. In addition, the kibbutz commemorated those of its members who had achieved national political and cultural renown during their lifetimes differently from ordinary members.

Introduction

This paper deals with the cemetery at Kibbutz Ein Harod, the first cemetery to be established in the Jezreel Valley and of historic importance to the *Kibbutz Hameuhad* movement. In an attempt to understand the extent to which the cemeteries have reflected tensions between the values of egalitarianism and personal diversity and the conflicts that have arisen as a result, I hypothesize that the burial plots reflect the cultural transformations that the kibbutz has undergone over the course of time.[1]

In the Jewish world outside the kibbutzim, burial and bereavement come under the auspices of people with specific functions within the community, the best known of which is the *hevra kadisha* (holy burial society), which is responsible for cemeteries and interment. Likewise, Jewish cemeteries in Israel are mostly administered and maintained by such burial societies, which adhere strictly to *halakhah* (the collective body of Jewish religious law and precedents). This impacts on the landscape, influencing the order of burial, the burial ceremonies themselves and the characteristics of the headstones.[2]

In contrast, and in the secular spirit of socialist revolution, the young, revolutionary and secular pioneers of the Second and Third *aliyot* (two waves of immigration between 1902 and 1923) rejected or altered many aspects of burial, just as they had rejected other established organizations that had existed in the Diaspora. As a consequence, not only were there changes regarding burial but also the issue of death was one that the pioneers and the collectives that they founded had to confront very early in their history.[3] An issue that needs addressing, therefore, is the creation of alternative, intra-kibbutz, organizations for dealing with death, burial and commemoration.

A fundamental question in relation to kibbutz cemeteries is what they say about values such as equality and fraternity frequently mentioned over the past century. How do individual tombstones — their shape, the inscriptions they carry, and their location within the cemetery — reflect changing social relations within the kibbutz?

In this respect, the changes in kibbutz cemeteries are little different from processes occurring in cemetery landscapes the world over as a result of the cumulative product of many centuries of urbanization.[4] Urban growth and population increase have greatly increased the population density of cemeteries in relatively constricted geographical locations. At the same time, tombstones not only convey something of the personal stories of the dead but also the social history of communities lived in. Moreover, as there is in life, religious, social and economic segregation occurs in cemeteries, with distinctive "neighbourhoods" in different parts of the cemetery. This segregation after death reflects lack of equality, a constant thread running through human societies everywhere and a social characteristic transferred into the cemetery — a belief that a similar lack of equality exists in "life after death".[5]

Much of the segregation in cemeteries exists simply because of religious ascription for a preference or an obligation to bury the dead in a "sacred space" occupied by members of the same religion. This is in addition to distinctions within cemeteries based on the social status and economic stature of the deceased and their families. Segregation in the burial place is expressed by the size and degree of ornamentation of the tombstone or the quality of the material used, all of which contribute to creating "good and bad neighbourhoods" within graveyards. Consequently, a basic assumption in the study of cemeteries is that they conceal symbolic representations and social statuses.

In this paper, from what can be gleaned in the cemetery itself and from archival material documenting sentiments expressed and decisions taken about death and burial, I concentrate on aspects of segregation and

preservation of the principle of egalitarianism in the spaces of death. Thus I differ from Barbara Mann who used an interpretative method in discussing the Old Cemetery in Tel Aviv.[6] Although this research is historical and local in geographic extent, it confronts several issues in the landscapes of kibbutz cemeteries over the eight decades since pioneers dug the first grave at the bottom of Mount Gilboa.

Kibbutz Ein Harod and the Cemeteries

In summer 1921, as part of the Zionist Organization's policy and action establishing agricultural settlements in the Jezreel Valley, a group of pioneers established a tent camp near the spring of Ma'ayan Harod on the land of the Arab village of 'Ein Jalud. Several years later the first campsite near the spring was abandoned and moved several kilometres to the north to its current location (See Figure 1). The expansion of the kibbutz, the establishment of an economic infrastructure based on agriculture and industry, and the social and cultural centrality of the kibbutz in terms of ideology made Ein Harod one of the most prominent symbols of Zionist settlement in Palestine. By the mid-1940s, its population was over 1,000 and after the establishment of the state exceeded 1,300. Ein Harod's great schism, over which socialist party to support, occurred in the early 1950s, after which several hundred people left the kibbutz, setting up Ein Harod (Ihud) nearby. The older settlement, renamed Ein Harod (Meuhad), appears never to have recovered and even today, its population is the same as when the separation occurred.[7]
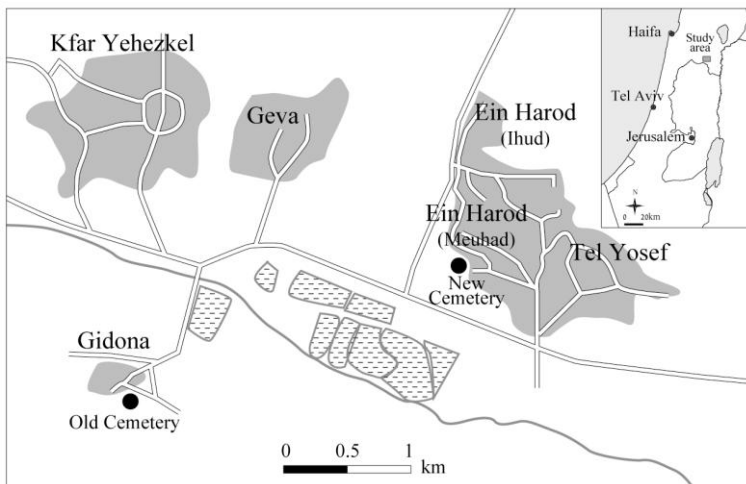

Figure 1: Ein Harod Location

Ein Harod as a collective has always been influenced by such national events as Israel's wars and, established with a collective-secular-pioneering ethos, it has been exposed to the same social and economic transformations that have overtaken Israeli kibbutzim in general. In the past decade and a half, this included wide-scale privatization, which came to Ein Harod early in 2010. The current lifestyles and standards of living differ widely from those of the kibbutz founders and these processes have affected the relationship between individual and collective in many areas of kibbutz life, one aspect of which is the basis for the current research.[8]

There is no archival evidence in Ein Harod that a special committee to deal with these issues existed and they appear to have been dealt with by a subcommittee of the kibbutz secretariat. It was only in the 1940s that the kibbutz Culture Committee assumed partial responsibility as it had also handled the issue of memory and commemoration. During the 1950s, the schism and the settlement crisis in Ein Harod, as well as a rise in mortality, led the kibbutz to establish an independent Cemetery Committee. This committee was active from the early 1960s and prepared proposals for decisions taken by the general assembly of the kibbutz as well as aiding the activities of the kibbutz secretariat on these issues. Twenty years later, responsibility was further divided when the Memory and Commemoration Committee was created. These two committees ran the cemetery, commemoration ceremonies, funerals, commemoration, care of mourners, bereaved families, and so on. Their activities were organized and authorized by rules adopted by the kibbutz movement in general and by Ein Harod Meuhad in particular over the years.[9]

Figure 2: General view of the old cemetery, Ein Harod

The first contact of the young pioneers of Ein Harod with death came in December 1923, about half a year after its establishment and involved the suicide of Nahman Gellerman. This was the first suicide on the settlement but not the last. This led to the establishment of the old cemetery (sometimes referred to as the Lower Cemetery, or the cemetery by the spring or the *Gidonah* Cemetery); during the 1920s and 1930s members of Ein Harod and of other kibbutzim were buried there. The exact number of burials is unknown though there are over 100 tombstones of different kinds. The graves are spaced relatively far apart, several metres from one another, and because of the slope there is a lack of uniformity in their height even within an individual row. Nahum Benari, who was then a member of Ein Harod, describes the place as it was in 1931:[10]

> Two rows of cypresses lead upwards to the foot of the mountain. We dedicated the cemetery above the first vineyard planted. The tombstones rose between the vines, memorial stones to those we had lost. The graveyard is not […] isolated outside the camp; it is very close to us, housed almost amongst us. For the place that we have chosen for our lives, these swampy plains and the surrounding wilderness, have caused us suffering so that we were unable to flee difficult obstacles and disasters.

Continuing in this vein, Benari stated that in contrast to other more conventional cemeteries where mainly old people are buried, in Ein Harod, it is young people are buried, just as in other pioneering settlements throughout the country. He wrote his majestic, heroic and dramatic description as propaganda material for the Jewish National Fund, amont other things. However, the archive indicates that it hid a bitter truth about the cemetery during the 1930s. Although kibbutz Ein Harod moved to a fresh site, the old cemetery continued to serve the surrounding kibbutzim until 1938. In summer of that year, Haim Shturman was killed by a mine and his grave inaugurated the new cemetery at the kibbutz.

The new cemetery attracted considerable attention from the very beginning because of the symbolic importance of Shturman's grave. The formal expression in the general planning included the planting of avenues of cypresses and enormous *Ficus* trees. Close to the kibbutz buildings, the new cemetery expanded when a military cemetery was added in the early 1950s. And in the early 1980s further change occurred when a large Holocaust commemorative arrangement by the sculptress Dalia Yairi was established in the cemetery's northern section.[11]

The current cemetery (the "New Cemetery") is seen as a spacious tree-shaded garden with two plots in which more than 500 people are buried. This cemetery is the focus of the present research. In Plot 'A', the older one, there are several types of tombstone. Some of these are standing and uniform, constructed of vertical concrete slabs; others, of horizontal marble, lie flat with most resting on a concrete base. Here and there are headstones that stand out as different. In the newer plot, Plat 'B', dating from the 1980s on, uniformity of shape stands out — horizontal marble tombstones. The question of uniformity and differences in tombstone design are dealt with later.

Figure 3: The new cemetery at Ein Harod Meuhad

Segregation in the Cemeteries at Ein Harod

Bar-Levav claims that "the location of the dead in the cemetery should reflect their status in the religious world of the living: it is fitting that the righteous be buried close to one another; similarly for the sinful. Disregard for this rule is likely to cause great discomfort among the dead, who are helpless in this regard". The cemetery is not the appropriate place to demolish social boundaries. In effect, Bar-Levav claims that the Jewish cemetery reflects the community and its social organization, by relying on what appears in tractate Sanhedrin (47, 71) of the Babylonian Talmud, where it is stated that it is forbidden to bury the sinful alongside the

righteous.[12] The broader significance attributed to this prohibition is the spatial segregation within the traditional Jewish cemeteries. This is the usual explanation for the allocation of separate plots to different social groups, as is apparent in the old cemetery in Tel Aviv or in the cemeteries in Jerusalem.[13]

Among the better-known types of segregation in Jewish cemeteries are those associated with *kohanim* (the priestly caste) and, in sharp contrast, suicides. Out of fear that kohanim be contaminated by impurities originating with the dead, there is a long string of prohibitions concerning their burial. They are usually buried near the principal routes through the cemetery or in separate lanes, thereby permitting their priestly relatives to participate in funerals. Another form of traditional segregation in Jewish burial grounds originates in the prohibition against committing suicide. In the past, it was usual to bury suicides in a special plot on the periphery of the cemetery or even outside the cemetery. At the same time, halakhah recognizes the possibility that the suicide might perhaps have regretted his or her action in the final seconds of life and repented during this time, allowing a normal Jewish burial.[14]

The issue of a separate plot for the burial of suicides was not apparently discussed in Ein Harod even when each of the first three deaths in 1923 was unusual: the suicides of Nahman Gellerman and Nehama Avrumin and the murder of Aharon Rozin, Avrumin's lover. These were the first graves in the Old Cemetery at Gidonah. As the pioneers did not regard suicide as a social aberration or a sin, not only were the graves not segregated and they were buried "as everyone else" but the causes of death were actually noted, in the form of: "He stole his soul". This practice was accepted when in 1938 when Leah Hirschheut, a young immigrant to Ein Harod from the Netherlands, ended her own life at age 23. (Figure 3)[15]

Yet contrasting with the non-segregation of the suicides, another form of segregation is prominent in both Ein Harod cemeteries. In kibbutz terminology this concerns "the parents of members". The "parents" were quite a large social group, living on the kibbutz but were not kibbutz members, first arriving at the kibbutz in the second half of the 1920s. In the early decades the "parents" numbered about a sixth of the formal membership of the kibbutz and as a natural course of events, their proportion declined from the 1960s onward.

The parents' graves were dug in the old cemetery in segregated lines laid out on what was then the edge of cemetery, some distance from the graves of kibbutz members. The segregation was apparent not only in their location in the cemetery but also in the separation of rows – one line

for men, one for women; married couples were separated at death. About a third of the graves in the Old Cemetery are those of parents, with a similar ratio between members and parents in both parts of the New Cemetery. Thus it is clear that segregation of members and parents was an accepted practice when the New Cemetery opened in 1938 and this continued into the 1970s.

Figure 4: "She stole her soul", Old Cemetery

The practice of segregating the parents at death is an indicator of the way they were segregated in life from the community of pioneers. As Muki Tzur notes:[16]

The kibbutz did not pay attention to the fact that ageing is an essential part of the human life cycle and [the life cycle] of the kibbutz. When

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members' parents appeared on the kibbutz, they were completely separated from [this] rebellious community, which had incorporated the insurgence of youth. This separation also existed because the parents demanded kosher food. [They had] lost their former traditional lives the moment they had immigrated to the kibbutz [and] they aged quickly … in their lifestyle, the parents lived as a community [that was] separated from the kibbutz.

Figure 5: Tombstone "Ein Harod Member", New Cemetery

Azza Ronen, the kibbutz archivist, wrote is similar vein in 1984: "The members' parents … these were mostly religious old people who had immigrated from the Diaspora and lacking any alternative came to live amid the pioneers. They were allocated a special area where they retained values close to Jewish religious tradition." She added that this was particularly the case amongst those parents who had come from Russia and Poland but not among those originating in Germany. In addition, as already mentioned, the burial was in separate rows for men and women.[17]

A further distinction between the parents' graves and those of the members can be found in the shape of the tombstones and also to some extent in their inscriptions. Despite the locational segregation the form of the tombstones is usually identical in the Old Cemetery at Gidonah: vertical tombstones of concrete (in the Ashkenazi style) in the shape of cubes with small marble tablets sunk into them carrying minimal personal details of the deceased, including personal and family names, date of death, age, and connection with Ein Harod.

Figure 6: Tombstones of the graves of "parents", New Cemetery.

With the move to the New Cemetery, distinguishing features began to appear in the shape of the tombstones: vertical concrete headstones were erected for the parents (often with a crown on top) whereas for the kibbutz members, the memorial stones were of concrete and were horizontal (Sephardi style).

In addition to the segregation of parents, there is further segregation in the two Ein Harod cemeteries that is no different from traditional Jewish cemeteries, i.e., in the burial plots for children; this is a traditional issue that does not need to be discussed here in detail. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that what is special at Ein Harod is that at the Old Cemetery at Gidonah there are no headstones at all in the children's section and it is unclear how many children were buried there. It addition, not all the children interred there were from Ein Harod; premature babies from the nearby hospital were also buried there.

There is no doubt that the death of a baby or infant was a hard blow for the family just as it is throughout the world. But from what appears to

be at the Ein Harod cemeteries there is a wide gap between kibbutz society's investment in children and the severity, bordering on suppression, of the apparent disregard for their deaths.

The Headstones at the Ein Harod Cemeteries

As a new and revolutionary community, the kibbutz marked out the value of egalitarianism as one of its central "Ten Commandments". This was the dream of the pioneers who had worked so hard to make this a reality during their lives in Ein Harod, as in other kibbutzim. According to this, through never-ending debate and discussion over decades, the kibbutz world drew up rules, regulations and technical prescriptions to turn the egalitarian dream into reality for kibbutz members. With reference to burial, some kibbutzim preserve egalitarianism meticulously: tombstones are uniform and inscriptions completely regular. However, other kibbutzim recognize the fact that in spite of everything, people's lives and their contribution to the kibbutz and wider society differ. Consequently, there is no reason not recognize this after death. "Kibbutz members are not identical to one another during their lifetimes and there is no group obligation to be assimilated and to lose one's personal character"; "we need to express our esteem to our comrade through a pleasing verse or a sentence appropriate to the way he lived, to his creativity, his work, [and this] should be placed on the tombstone".[18]

From the development of the cemeteries at Ein Harod we can ascertain that in the Old Cemetery, until the death of Haim Shturman in 1938, egalitarianism in the form of headstone design and inscriptions, was largely preserved. Nevertheless, the kibbutz did not oppose the erection of other tombstones. For the most part egalitarianism after death was maintained on the tombstones in the New Cemetery. However, a more detailed examination indicates that there were exceptions, mostly related to central or special kibbutz personalities, among them Yitzhak Tabenkin, Aharon Zisling, Haim Shturman, Haim Atar, Zerubavel Gilads.

As recorded in minutes of meetings, the question of egalitarianism and tombstone uniformity arose from time to time after the establishment of the New Cemetery. One example from 1945 concerned a discussion over family burial and order of burial: "A year ago the kibbutz council unanimously decided that no special family burial plots are to be arranged in our cemetery. The majority opinion of members was that the graves should be arranged row by row, with no exceptions. We are all the children of a single movement and we all have an equal share in this world, all the more so in the world to come …".[19]

Figure 7: Haim Shturman's Tombstone

Figure 8: Shturman Family Burial Plot

Notwithstanding this statement, there was no direct reference to the shape of the headstone; rather it was an echo of a desire to be equal not only in life but after death. It would appear that without any explicit decisions about tombstone uniformity and egalitarianism, the custom was retained throughout the 1950s and was valid for "settlement man" — any kibbutz member whose public or community activities had been unexceptional.

Figure 9: The Headstone on the grave of Yitzhak Tabenkin

A sharp disagreement over the principle of egalitarianism and tombstone uniformity occurred in the cases of members of the Tabenkin family. Visitors to the cemetery cannot but be aware of the gigantic slanting limestone block in the middle of the cemetery, over the grave of Yitzhak Tabenkin, raised above the other graves. This enormous piece of non-indigenous limestone stands out as an alien being among the local black basalt stones that had already marked the graves of the Shturman family.

It is perhaps a symbolic reference to Tabenkin's life, which had been lived mostly outside Ein Harod. Tabenkin had been a public figure on the national stage — a social philosopher, the founder of the *Kibbutz HaMeuchad* movement, a Knesset member, a political activist, and more. When he died in 1971, the valedictory ceremony took place at the Histadrut Executive building in Tel Aviv where the General Secretary of the Histadrut and Golda Meir, the Prime Minister eulogized him. A siren was sounded on each of the kibbutzim of HaKibbutz Hameuhad at the time of the funeral.[20] When the cortege reached Ein Harod cemetery, there

was little doubt as to where to inter the most notable personality the kibbutz had produced — in the centre, which had been the space for all public assembly since the 1940s and which had remained unoccupied.

There was nowhere more fitting than this place in the cemetery to inter its principal leader even if this meant deviating from convention and physical planning in an egalitarian society. There Cemetery Committee held no discussion on the location of Tabenkin's grave or the type of headstone; the family and institutions outside the kibbutz took all decisions. It would appear that the critical roles played by Tabenkin and his prominence created a situation to which the members of Ein Harod agreed in silence, considering decisions concerning Tabenkin as a natural incident, despite its deviating from all norms and convention.[21]

But the actions of fathers are not necessarily visited upon their sons. The poet Moshe Tabenkin, Yitzhak Tabenkin's son, who died in 1979, was also a central figure in the cultural and educational life of the kibbutz and is buried close to his father. The issue of his headstone is a case in point. Moshe Tabenkin had lived in Ein Harod and immortalized the place and the pioneering period in his poems. When the Tabenkin family decided to erect a black granite headstone, the issue appeared on the agenda of the Cemetery Committee. The committee took the position that "a black granite tombstone … is different [and unconventional] [our convention being white marble]". The family did not wish to make an issue over the size of the headstone. The case at hand involved just the type of stone and this was regarded purely as a financial issue.

In May 1980 the kibbutz assembly decided to ratify a set of rules for the cemetery and the first clause dealt with the issue of egalitarianism and the form of headstone:[22]

> The headstones in the cemetery will be of uniform size and material. It will be possible to select a headstone from three models in the cemetery (one of horizontal marble and two different vertical models). By special request, the marble can be replaced by a stone of different colour. The inscription on the headstone will be coordinated with the family.

The grave of Moshe Tabenkin, like other family members, was located close to that of Yitzhak Tabenkin. This is evidence that in order of burial, proximity to family members had become an important consideration in locating a grave within the cemetery. Although it had been determined as early as 1945 that there would be no family plots in the kibbutz cemetery, reality proved stronger and over the years several portions of the cemetery became family plots.

Figure 9: Decorated headstones — Puah and Tolik Shavit, Kibbutz Members

The issue of egalitarianism and hierarchy in the cemetery became more moderate from the 1980s when a new section of the cemetery was inaugurated. This was marked by a decision by the general assembly of the kibbutz in 1980 to allow limited choice in the shape of the headstone from among three models, to permit the family almost total freedom of choice regarding the personal inscription, and to approve the custom of reserving a plot for a partner. This brought about greater landscape uniformity within the newer section as compared to the older, as most people chose the horizontal tombstone with broader lettering, with only a few preferring the vertical headstones that had been popular in the older section.

Epilogue

The diversity concerning the issue of death and bereavement on the kibbutz is reflected in a collection edited by Shua and Ben-Gurion in which they write that the cemetery is[23]

> "like a history book of the place. If people could make the tombstones speak, they would hear the personal stories of the people interred … chapters and events from the distant and near past, about the history of the place. In this sense, the traditional Jewish designation — *beth olam*, the house of eternity — is apposite for this place."

They indicate that in many kibbutzim, as in Ein Harod, there are special graves from the "early days", in which many of those who died young and who survived the suffering of that period are buried, becoming the 'veterans' layer' of the kibbutz. These and others "represent the 'founding fathers' and the collective myth, the original vision in all its purity".

By using this approach, in which the cemetery becomes a sort of history book of the settlement, I have attempted to examine one of the important principles of the kibbutz as a socialist community where the merit of egalitarianism is inscribed. It seems that as in life, the attempt to maintain the value of egalitarianism in Ein Harod Meuhad was neither dogmatic nor unequivocal. Egalitarianism degenerated in the context of social ascription — kibbutz members were segregated from the parents but nevertheless attempted to maintain some semblance of uniformity within each group. There is a strong congregational expression of personal and intergenerational differences here. In addition, the kibbutz commemorated its outstanding members, those who had been highly esteemed and who had achieved national political and cultural renown during their lifetimes, making them different from ordinary members.

There is also a distinction between the inscriptions on the gravestones of members and parents in the New Cemetery of Ein Harod. In two-thirds of the headstones of parents there are no inscriptions other than the bare personal details. Nevertheless, in addition to traditional Jewish inscriptions, such as נ"פ (here is interred) at the top of the stone and ה"תנצב (May his soul rest in peace) at the bottom, during the 1970s, family attributions began to appear as part of the inscriptions on the graves of parents: "our dear mother", "widow of …". From the 1970s and 1980s personal inscriptions appear on some of the parents' graves, such as "With a hammer and … with all his heart" or "Mother from Poland, Father from Syria. Her language was Yiddish, her words were Arabic, Hebrew [was] in the middle, a bridge to their love". At the same time, there was a significant rise in personal inscriptions on the graves of the kibbutz members, too. Occasionally, the inscription was personal or had a pioneering ring; on others, it carried a poetic or literary quotation. In parallel, there was an increase in the number of headstones of kibbutz members using traditional Jewish motifs. In most cases, this involved the use of ה"תנצב after the personal inscriptions, such as a proclamation which signals the life of a member of Ein Harod as a Jew. Is this an indication of a return to Jewish beliefs, a form of repentance? A return,

perhaps, to the sources that had guided their parents and the generations that had preceded them?[24]

Shua and Ben-Gurion further indicate that the kibbutz movement, with hundreds of settlements and differing ideological streams developed a range of solutions to the issue of bereavement, memory and cemeteries. In this regard, one of the important components in the variation among the kibbutzim is the extent to which the principle of egalitarianism is preserved after death, as expressed in the local cemetery. In contrast to the relative pluralism at Ein Harod, there are many kibbutzim, especially those of the "Kibbutz Artzi" movement which, over the years, have not only scrupulously preserved the uniform shape of the headstone but also the order of buria, which was chronological, except for those designated as special cases and which were segregated, such as parents, children and soldiers. The power relationships between individual and collective-communal, as observed in the landscapes of these cemeteries, may be different from Ein Harod.

The accuracy of these observations will be tested in coming years. As many kibbutzim have been privatized, it will be fascinating to examine the influence of privatization on the pattern of kibbutz cemeteries. What will happen in the cemeteries and at personal commemoration sites in the kibbutz when they, too, carry a price tag as in capitalist societies? There will be a bill for a burial plot, a charge for a headstone, a fee for a page in the memorial book or a memorial plate in the "founders' house", a price to maintain a file in the kibbutz archive, an outlay for a funeral, and more. Is it to be expected that the future landscape of the kibbutz cemetery will appear more capitalist, less representative of the founding fathers and the collective myth and of the original vision in all its purity?

NOTES

[1] Bar-Levav, A. (2005) Another Place: The Jewish cemetery in culture, *Pa'amim* **98–99**: 35–39 (in Hebrew). An early version of a paper on the cemetery at Ein Harod appeared as: Bar-Gal, Y. and Azaryahu, M. (1997) Israeli Cemeteries and Jewish Tradition: Two Cases. In: Brodsky, H. (ed.), *Land and Community: Geography in Jewish Studies.* (Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland), 105–25.

[2] Of the many sources dealing with the issue of the Jewish cemetery and customs relating to mourning and bereavement, it is worth noting the important basic work by Tikochinsky, M. (1960) *Gesher HaHayyim (The Bridge of Life),* Jerusalem: Salomon Books (in Hebrew); Roobin, N. (1997) *Qetz HaHayyim — Tiqsei qevurah ve-evel be-meqoroth hazal (The End of Life: Ceremonies of burial and mourning from Jewish sources).* Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz HaMeuchad (in Hebrew); Lichtenstein, Y.S. (2007) *Mi-tumah le-qiddushah — teillah ve-heftzei mitzvah be-vatei qvaroth v'aliyyah le-qvaroth tzaddiqim. (From Impurity to holiness: Praise and objects for good deeds in cemeteries and graves of the righteous).* Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz HaMeuchad (in Hebrew). A short survey also appears in Meizlisch, S. (1987) *Hayyei addam — Zikhron le-vrachah. (Human life, of Blessed Memory).* Ben Shemen: Modan (in Hebrew).

[3] An important source of material on bereavement and cemeteries in the kibbutz movement the collection edited by Shua, Z. and Ben-Gurion, A. (1990) Yalqut Aveluth (Mourning Anthology). Beit HaShittah: The InterKibbutz Committee and Festival Archive.

[4] See, for example: Curl, J.S. (2002) *Death and Architecture.* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing); Worpole, K. (2003) *Last Landscapes: The Architecture of the Cemetery in the West* (London: Reaktion Books); McGuire, R.H. (1989) Dialogues with the Dead: Ideology and the Cemetery. In: Leone, M.P. and Potter, P.B. (eds.) *The Recovery of Meaning: Historical Archeology in the Eastern US.* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press), 435–480; Etlin, R.A. (1984) *The Architecture of Death.* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press); Miller, D.S. and Rivera, J.D. (2006) Hallowed ground, Places and Culture. *Space and Culture* **9** 334–50.

[5] Park, C.C. (1994) *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion.* (London: Routledge): 223; C. Howett (1977) Living landscapes for the Dead, *Landscape* **21** 9–17.

[6] Barbara Mann (2006) The Zionist Uncanny: Reading the Old Cemetery on Trumpeldor. Chapter 2 of *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space.* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press): 26–71.

[7] Kibbutz Ein Harod is one of the best documented and most researched kibbutzim, not only because of its primacy but also because of its status within the *Kibbutz Hameuhad* movement. Tens of books and articles have been written by kibbutz members and various researchers. The following are examples: Zerubavel, G. and Zisling, N. (1972), *Ein Harod: Jubilee Chapters* (Tel Aviv:

Hakibbutz Hameuhad) (in Hebrew); Yanai, A. (1983) *The History of Ein Harod* (Tel Aviv: Davar), (in Hebrew); Levita, L. (1983) *On Ein Harod by the Slopes of the Gilboa* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad) (in Hebrew).

[8] After the schism and until the end of the 1960s the members of Ein Harod (Ihud) continued to be interred in the cemetery located on Ein Harod Meuhad until they consecrated their own separate cemetery, which I do not deal with in this article. Nevertheless, several of the veteran members of Ein Harod Ihud have requested burial in the cemetery at Ein Harod Meuhad and their requests have been granted.

[9] There are various decisions regarding burial and bereavement procedures in Ein Harod from different dates, such as the kibbutz decisions of June 20 1970 and those verified by the Inter-kibbutz Society committee of March 1978. In addition to these there is the minute book of the Cemetery Committee and other relevant documents in the memory and bereavement practice of the kibbutz in Box 21.6.2. For the development of this issue in the kibbutz movement, see Bereavement Anthology, pp. 143–44. (See Endtnote 11).

[10] Benari, N. (1931) *Ein Harod*, (Tel Aviv: Jewish National Fund): 78—83. Nahum Benari (Brodsky) (1893-1963) immigrated from the Ukraine, joined Ein Harod, and became a pioneer emissary abroad. He left the kibbutz in 1942, becoming one of the designers of the cultural and educational activity of the *Histadrut* (Federation of Labour Unions).

[11] The landscape architect Shlomo Oren Weinberg planned cemeteries and gardens in many kibbutzim and his work at Ramat Hanadiv in Zikhron Yaaqov was widely praised. See: Enis, R. and Ben-Arav, J. (1994) *Sixty Years of Kibbutz Gardens and Landscape* (Hebrew). (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defence): 88–91. In Weinberg's estate at Kibbutz Yagur there is no evidence that he planned the cemetery at Ein Harod but in the Ein Harod archive there is a draft of a planning map signed by him. On the design of the commemoration area in the cemetery, see *The Bereavement Anthology*: 322–23. I thank Ruth Enis for this information.

[12] Bar-Levav (2005): 10—11.

[13] In Tel Aviv there is a subdivision into writers, statesmen, important rabbis, etc. See: Kroll, Z. and Leinman, Z. (1940), *The Book of the Old Cemetery in Tel Aviv* (see Mann, 2006: Chapter 2). In Jerusalem, the segregation is most extreme with the great abundance of burial societies and the division of *Har Hamenuhot* into tends of subdivided plots by community and other criteria. These include a plot for The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, members of the Haganah and many others. See: Benvenisti, M, (1990) *City of Rest: Cemeteris in Jer*usalem (Keter: Jerusalem). (in Hebrew).

[14] Meizlisch, S. (1987) *Human life of Blessed Memory*. (Ben Shemen: Modan): 58 (in Hebrew).

[15] On the subject of suicides in the early days of settlement at Kinneret and other collectives, see: *The Bereavement Anthology*, pp. 122–27. Of the 33 graves in the Old Cemetery at Ein Harod, five bear an inscription listing suicide as the cause of death.

[16] Muki Tzur, cited in *The Bereavement Anthology*, p. 130.

[17] A document written in her hand from 27 May 1984 exists in the Memory File, Box 21.6.2 in the archive of Ein Harod Meuhad. Azza Ronen was born in Ein Harod, served in the Palmah and worked as an educator. She died in 2009.

[18] The first of these quotations is from 1970 and was noted at Kibbutz Revivim. The second is undated from Kibbutz Na'an. See *The Bereavement Anthology*: 299

[19] From a document of the Culture and Cemetery Committee, apparently written by Gur-Aryeh on 19 January 1945. *Memory File*, Box 21.6.2 in the archive of Ein Harod Meuhad.

[20] The Ein Harod Diary, 1162, 9 July 1971: 3–4. On Tabenkin, see: Canari, B. (2003) *Tabenkin in the Land of Israel*, (Kfar Habad).

[21] In a conversation with Ahuviah Tabenkin (24 December 2010), Yitzhak's son, he divulged that is brother Yossele Tabenkin requested a company engaged in the transportation of rocks to find a suitable large stone, which was then brought to the kibbutz. The first inscription on the tombstone was in metal and became dislodged over the years and was replaced with a limestone plate that was attached to the rock.

[22] Cemetery Rules, *Decisions of the General Assembly of the kibbutz*, 17 May 1980.

[23] *The Bereavement Anthology*: 256

[24] These are just some of the examples of inscriptions. The textual analysis of the tombstone inscriptions is an extensive chapter in the connection between "the living and the dead", which, because of word limitation is not dealt with here.

LONDON JEWRY AND THE LONDON MAYORAL ELECTION OF 2012: A NOTE

Geoffrey Alderman

This note addresses some features of the London mayoral election of 3 May 2012. This contest, which took place at the same time as elections for the London Assembly, achieved international media coverage. Seven candidates presented themselves to an electorate of some 5.8 millions but two dominated the event: Boris Johnson the incumbent and Ken Livingstone, his predecessor. Johnson is a politically Conservative idiosyncratic media personality who has openly challenged several policies adopted by David Cameron's Conservative-led coalition government and Livingstone, equally idiosyncratic is a stalwart of the Labour party's 'hard' Left who had served as Mayor from 2000 until 2008. I have already traced the history of Livingstone's tenure of City Hall and of his tempestuous relationship both with the Labour party and with London's Jewish communities.[1]

In 2000 Livingstone had not been the official Labour candidate but ran as an independent. Expelled from the party he was reinstated as a party member and re-elected in 2004. In 2008 he lost to Johnson in a contest in which London's Jewish electorate (of perhaps just 118,000) played a quite disproportionate part.[2]

The reason for this lay not merely in Livingstone's much-publicised anti-Zionism but in a continual series of statements over two decades on the subject of Jews and Jewish values.[3] I do not intend examining these statements here but it is important to note that they were more or less universally accepted as evidence of an antipathy towards Jewish people. Rarely since the end of the Second World War has this issue featured so prominently in an English local election. In the politics of London one would have to go back to the London County Council a century ago for a 'Jewish question' hanging over a capital-wide electoral contest.[4]

That this was so and that London's Jewish voters and Livingstone's perceived attitude to them might decide the fate of the 2012 mayoral race was not lost on Jewish Labour party members. On 1 March 2012 an extraordinary meeting was held in secret between some of these and Mr. Livingstone. We know about the meeting because it was the subject of a remarkable letter written on 21 March by some of those present to Labour

leader Ed Miliband (the first professing Jew to lead the Labour party). The meeting was supposedly private and its proceedings were conducted under Chatham House rules.[5] The letter was subsequently leaked to the *Jewish Chronicle* – a fact of significance in itself.[6]

What were the motives of those attending the meeting? They claimed that they wished 'to explore ways in which Ken could re-connect with Jewish voters in advance of the May 3rd mayoral election.' Did they hope that he would oblige them with an attractive sound-bite or that he would give an assurance that during the mayoral campaign he would refrain from saying anything about Jews or Israel? If so they were bitterly disappointed. Livingstone (they reported to Miliband) saw Jews exclusively as a religious group, lacking any ethnic or national dimension. 'At various points in the discussion,' they continued, Livingstone 'used the words Zionist, Jewish and Israeli, interchangeably, as if they meant the same.' What is more, he 'did so in a pejorative manner.' And when asked to consider the importance of addressing the concerns of London's Jewish electors Livingstone intimated that in his view this would be a pointless exercise since Jews were wealthy and – thus – firmly entrenched in the Conservative camp.[7] Incredibly, however, the attendees still managed to end their letter on a note of optimism: 'We firmly believe that Ken can turn this situation around, and can count on Jewish voters to help him be elected Mayor of London. But he does however desperately need to face up to the issues we raise.'

Livingstone failed to live up to this expectation. It is true that following the reported personal intervention of the Labour leader he wrote for the *Jewish Chronicle* (30 March) an uncharacteristically contrite article expressing the hope that the past (for which he uttered not one word of apology) might be forgotten. Some of those who had met with him on 1 March were aghast. The *Guardian* and *Jewish Chronicle* columnist Jonathan Freedland (who was present at the 1 March meeting) had already announced that he would not be voting for Livingstone.[8] Other Jewish members of the Labour party indicated on social media websites that their support for him had ceased. Most dramatic of all was the intervention (on *Twitter*, 18 April) by Lord (Alan) Sugar, the Jewish entrepreneur and Labour-party funder who announced that he would not be voting for Livingstone and opined that 'no one' should vote for him – even though he was the official Labour candidate.[9]

Livingstone lost the electoral contest in a singularly significant way.

The 3 May local elections were a resounding success for the Labour party throughout Great Britain.[10] On turnouts averaging just 38 per cent, their candidates gained control of 32 local authorities, including Birmingham, Glasgow and Cardiff. Of the 181 local authorities up for re-

election in May 2012 Labour now controls 75 and the Conservatives only 42 (a loss of 12 compared with 2008). The Conservatives lost two and Labour gained four of the 25 seats in the London Assembly. With 12 seats, this made Labour the largest party in the Assembly, though it lacks overall control.

However, this achievement was not replicated in the London mayoral contest. Elections for Mayor of London are held under the Supplementary Vote system in which irrespective of the number of candidates voters can express only a first preference and an optional second. A candidate obtaining 50 per cent of the first preferences is declared the winner. If no candidate receives 50 percent of the first preferences, the second preferences of all but the two leading candidates are redistributed to those two, thus producing a result.[11] In 2008 Livingstone had polled just 36.4 per cent of first preferences. In 2012 his proportion of first preferences actually increased to 40.3 per cent. Johnson's first preferences also increased from 42.5 to 44.0 per cent, but still short of a plurality.

As in 2008 the outcome depended on second preferences. Livingstone actually obtained 55.3 per cent of these compared with Johnson's 44.7. However, this strong showing by the Labour candidate was not enough to return him to City Hall. In terms of first and second preference votes combined Johnson's support totalled 1,054,811 compared with Livingstone's 992,273, a difference of 62,500 votes.

How many of these were Jewish and was Johnson's remarkable victory, bucking the national trend, due to a 'Jewish vote', a backlash against Livingstone's perceived antipathy to Jews and to Israel? Though no discrete survey of Jewish voters was undertaken at the time, some compelling evidence is provided in the results of some of the 'constituencies' for the London Assembly contests.[12]

The London boroughs of Barnet and Camden form one such constituency and contain some of the highest proportions of Jewish voters anywhere in the UK.[13] The contest for the Barnet & Camden seat on the London Assembly, featuring two Zionist supporters, followed the national trend: The Labour candidate, Andrew Dismore easily took the seat from the Conservative, Brian Coleman on a swing of almost 12 per cent.

However, in the mayoral contest in this same constituency, the same voters behaved very differently, giving Johnson 49.4 per cent of their first preferences and 13.6 per cent of their second with a turnout three percentage points above the nationwide and London averages. Some 82,000 Barnet & Camden voters gave Johnson their first-preference mayoral votes, 29,000 more than had supported the Conservative in the Assembly contest. Livingstone received 58,000 first preferences in this

constituency, whereas the Labour candidate for the Assembly seat polled over 74,000.[14]

The patterns of voting behaviour in three other London Assembly constituencies with significant Jewish electorates were similar, though less dramatic. In Havering & Redbridge (an Assembly seat which the Conservatives held) Johnson's first preference votes were over 20,000 more than the Conservative Assembly vote. In Brent & Harrow the vote for Johnson was 18,000 higher than for the (unsuccessful) Conservative in the Assembly election. In Enfield & Haringey (which Labour held) the Johnson 'differential' was approximately 14,000 votes.

Even in mature democracies, electoral outcomes remain crude aggregations of individual decisions and it would be foolish to argue that Boris Johnson's victory over Ken Livingstone was due solely to the Jewish vote. Nevertheless, there was only one other Assembly constituency – Ealing & Hillingdon – where the voting pattern for the mayoral contest differed from that for the Assembly seat. As in Barnet & Camden, Labour took the Ealing & Hillingdon Assembly seat from the Conservatives but the Johnson mayoral vote there exceeded the Livingstone vote only by some 12,000 first preferences, half the differential (over 24,000) in Barnet & Camden, and on a lower turnout (37 per cent).

Although, as already mentioned, no discrete survey of Jewish voters was undertaken at the time of the London mayoral contest, one polling organisation did survey a sample of London voters generally over a wide range of issues, one of which concerned 'the poor relationship between Ken Livingstone and the Jewish Community.' Specifically, respondents in the sample were asked how important that factor was (along with many others) in determining how they would cast their mayoral votes. Of those respondents who declared themselves first-preference Johnson supporters some 40 per cent specifically identified Livingstone's attitude to Jews as either a 'very important' or a 'quite important' factor in propelling them to vote for his Conservative opponent.[15]

It should be noted that Livingstone had made enemies elsewhere. When mayor, he had annoyed London's gay community by hosting at City Hall an Egyptian Islamist preacher who openly called for the execution of homosexuals (and for legitimating wife-beating). During the 2012 mayoral campaign Livingstone and Johnson had traded public insults on tax avoidance: the Conservative Johnson did not operate through a company (an arrangement with significant tax advantages) whereas Livingstone the Socialist did. While this negative publicity for Livingstone might have resulted in and accounted for Labour abstentions it is hard to demonstrate that it led also to an increase in support for

Johnson — except where the Jews were concerned. Livingstone had gone out of his way to alienate them and he seems to have reaped the whirlwind at the ballot box.

NOTES

[1] Alderman, G. (2010), Jews and Electoral Politics in the United Kingdom: A Contemporary Note. *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* **52** 69–74.

[2] I arrive at the figure of 118,000 by applying to the total number of self-identifying Jews in London the ratio of registered voters to general population in Great Britain; this ratio is of the order of 2:3. The total number of self-identifying Jews in Great Britain (as suggested by the 2001 census) is approximately 266,000 and the best estimates suggest that two-thirds of these live in Greater London. For a discussion of the likelihood of Jews not identifying themselves in the census, see Graham, D. and Waterman S. (2005), Underenumeration of the Jewish Population in the UK 2001 Census. *Population, Place and Space* **12(2)** 89–102.

[3] See G. Alderman (2009), *The Communal Gadfly* (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press), Chapter 3 passim; G. Alderman (2012) "Red Ken" Redux. *The Jerusalem Post*, 1 April; M. Shaviv (2012), 'Candidate Ken's attitude to Jews …,' *Times of Israel*, 27 April. http://tinyurl.com/6pdlewn [accessed 14 May 2012].

[4] See G. Alderman (1989), *London Jewry & London Politics 1889-1986*. (London: Routledge).

[5] This means that nothing that was said could be attributed. However, Livingstone let it be known that he was happy for his remarks to be both reported and attributed.

[6] *Jewish Chronicle*, 23 March 2012, 8. The full text of the letter is at: http://www.thejc.com/node/65426 [accessed 14 May 2012].

[7] An assertion which is demonstrably false, as Livingstone subsequently admitted.

[8] *Jewish Chronicle*, 30 March 2012, 4.

[9] 'I don't care if Ed Miliband is backing Livingstone [Sugar wrote to his reported 1.8 million Twitter followers]. I seriously suggest NO ONE votes for Livingstone in the Mayoral elections.' 'Livingstone is [the] real issue,' he added: 'Livingstone must NOT get in on 3rd May.' At the time Sugar did not say – at least publicly - that his advice was directed specifically at Jewish voters. It was however widely interpreted as such and after the election Sugar himself confirmed this when he spoke at a Jewish Care business breakfast (*Jewish News*, 17 May 2012, 6).

[10] Apart from failing to regain the London mayoralty there was only one other significant reversal of Labour fortunes. This occurred in the West Yorkshire city of Bradford, where the 'Respect' party headed by former Labour MP George Galloway took five seats, one from the Conservatives and four from Labour, including that of the outgoing Labour leader of the city council. Two months earlier Galloway had himself been elected MP for the Bradford West

parliamentary constituency, taking the seat from Labour following a campaign in which Respect's Islamist and anti-Zionist credentials had played a prominent part: see G. Alderman, 'The upside to Galloway's win', *Jewish Chronicle*, 13 April 2012, 21. Bradford boasts the third largest Muslim population in England and Wales (after London and Birmingham), with around one-fifth of its population from South Asia (see Office for National Statistics data at http://tinyurl.com/8323tj6 [accessed 14 May 2014]). The positive response of young Anglo-Muslim voters to a British political party with a palpable anti-Zionist agenda is undoubtedly a portent.

[11] The voting system is fully explained at www.londonelects.org.uk.

[12] The analysis which follows is based on voting figures available at the BBC website: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-17540438 [accessed 14 May 2012]. A useful list of the London Assembly constituencies, and an outline map locating them within the Greater London area, may be found at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_London_Assembly_constituencies [accessed 31 May 2012].

[13] The precise percentages, derived from the 2001 national census, are reproduced in Alderman (2010), 'Jews and Electoral Politics,' loc.cit., 72.

[14] The Barnet & Camden result may thus be regarded as a classic example of the phenomenon of so-called 'split-ticket' voting, which is becoming more common in proportional-representation systems and which is said to reflect increased voter sophistication. On the phenomenon generally see Lewis-Beck, M.S. and Nadeau, R. (2004), Split-Ticket Voting: The Effects Of Cognitive Madisonianism. *Journal of Politics* **66:1** 97–112 and Burden, B.C. and Helmke, G. (2009), The Comparative Study of Split-Ticket Voting. *Electoral Studies* **28** 1–7.

[15] The poll was undertaken (27-29 April 2012) by 'Populus' for *The Times*, and was reported in that newspaper on 30 April. The precise data relating to the 'Jewish' question can be found at the Populus website: http://www.populus.co.uk/uploads/Times-May-2012.pdf : table 16.

BOOK REVIEWS

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB, *The People of the Book: Philosemitism in England from Cromwell to Churchill*, 184 pp., Encounter Books, London & New York, ISBN: 978-1594035708, 2011, $23.95 (paperback)

JONATHAN KARP & ADAM SUTCLIFFE (eds.), *Philosemitism in History*, viii + 348 pp., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge & New York, 2011, ISBN: 978-0521695473, £55 (hardback), £16.99 (paperback)

In 1928, in a celebrated article in the *Menorah Journal*, the young Salo Baron deplored the 'lachrymose theory' that seemed to him to have underscored the writings of the celebrated 19th century historian of the Jewish people, Heinrich Graetz. Despite the fact that his own parents had been murdered in the Holocaust Baron never wavered from this view. But in the historiography of the Jewish world the Holocaust was, as Professor Himmelfarb reminds us, a defining moment, after which it was inevitable that Jewish historians would concentrate on the history of antisemitism rather than of philosemitism. Now a lively debate is in train, weighing the comparative importance of the two movements – philosemitism and antisemitism – in the history of the Jews. These two volumes are amongst the latest contributions to this discussion. But as the authors themselves demonstrate, we may not be talking about two separate movements at all, merely about two sides of the same coin.

All those who are inclined to dispute this view should read a little-noticed essay by the late German Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch (1885-1977). Bloch, who came from an assimilated German-Jewish background, is now remembered – if at all – mainly on account of the contributions his writings are said to have made to the manufacturing of 'liberation theology' and to the musings of the students' protest movements of the late 1960s. But in 1963, in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Bloch offered (in a short article entitled 'The So-Called Jewish Question') a brilliant and brilliantly sarcastic dissection of philosemitism. Put bluntly (declared Bloch), philosemitism is inherently antisemitic: 'A philosemite is an antisemite that loves Jews.' Of course Bloch condemned without reservation the antisemite – who sees Judaism as an evil materialistic creed and Jews as its unrepentant (and irredeemable) purveyors. But he

condemned with more or less equal lack of reservation the self-proclaimed Jew-lover, whose motives he suspected as inherently antithetic.

We need not buy completely into this view in order to agree that it has merit. Indeed its essential, brutal truth is borne out in Professor Himmelfarb's monograph. The volume is a work of synthesis. Professor Himmelfarb takes some well-known themes – the so-called 'readmission' of the Jews to England in the mid-17th century, the 19th century struggle to gain for British Jews political rights equal to those of British Gentiles, the reception of Zionism amongst the British political elites in the first half of the 20th century – and effects to establish that in all these (and in others) what was uppermost was a respect for Judaism (often grounded in a particular vision of the Judeo-Christian tradition) and a love for Jews (justified in an admiration for their financial acumen and business skills). But had she dug a little deeper she would have discovered some particularly nasty specimens in this otherwise appealing woodshed.

The puritan divines who supported Oliver Cromwell's view that the already-established but minuscule Jewish communities that existed in London and Bristol in early 17th century England should be permitted greater freedom to establish places of worship and go peacefully about their daily lives were ultimately interested only in their conversion to Christianity: Judaism was to be killed off, but rather by kindness than by persecution. The campaign for Jewish political rights two centuries later had very little support from within British Jewry. It was a battle waged exclusively by a handful of exceedingly wealthy Jews, supported by their Gentile admirers, mainly out of unashamedly political motives. Professor Himmelfarb (like so many others) seems to me to have fundamentally misread the much-reprinted speech delivered by Thomas Babington Macaulay in the House of Commons in 1830 in favour of Jewish political rights. Macaulay did indeed point out the irrationality of Jews being permitted to 'make money' (and money, moreover, which could 'make' politicians) but not to sit in Parliament (or even – he might have added – to vote at parliamentary elections). What was he really saying? In colloquial parlance, and to misquote slightly the late American president Lyndon Johnson (who was actually referring in October 1971 to J. Edgar Hoover, then head of the FBI), it was better to have the Jew 'inside the tent pissing out than outside the tent pissing in.'

As for the Gentile Zionists, we would do well to remember that Arthur James Balfour was an out-and-out antisemite. Professor Himmelfarb took my breath away when she referred [p. 132] to Balfour as having been 'not always … so well disposed towards Jews. Like most in his party, he supported the Aliens Bill of 1905 restricting Jewish immigration.' Professor Himmelfarb may not be aware that Balfour was actually Prime

Minister in 1905, that he was not merely a supporter of the Aliens Bill but its prime mover, and that he told us all why:

> A state of things [Balfour declared at the Committee stage of the Bill] could easily be imagined in which it would not be to the advantage of the civilisation of this country that there should be an immense body of persons who … however much they threw themselves into the national life, remained a people apart, and not merely held a religion different from the vast majority of their fellow-countrymen, but only intermarried among themselves.

I defy any rational person to characterise these words as those of a philosemite. As for Lloyd George, I need to remind Professor Himmelfarb that at the time of the constitutional crisis (1909-10) triggered by the refusal of the House of Lords to approve his 'People's Budget' Lloyd George referred – publicly and in the crudest terms – to the fact that Lord Rothschild (a leading opponent of the Budget in the Upper House) was of the Jewish persuasion. In two speeches delivered on consecutive days in December 1909 Lloyd George launched scathing attacks upon Rothschild in the course of which he alluded – quite gratuitously – to his Jewish identity. On 16 December he referred to 'those Philistines [i.e., opponents of his Budget] who are not all uncircumcised'; the following day, drawing attention to Rothschild's support for the construction of Dreadnought battleships while resisting the higher taxes needed to pay for them, he likened the premier Jewish peer to Pharaoh, who had oppressed the Jews by forcing them to make bricks without straw (*The Times*, 17 December 1909, 6; 18 December, 8). No true 'philosemite' would have done so.

As a work of academic scholarship the volume edited by Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe is in an altogether different league. *Philosemitism in History* consists of fourteen essays by leading historians, anthropologists and students of literature and of religion. The topics upon which they write range widely over formidable chronological and thematic canvases: the philosemitism of the medieval polity; the portrayal of Jews as ethnic role-models in the social politics of the Afro-American world; Christian Zionism; and the production and sale of 'kitsch' memorabilia in post-Holocaust central and eastern Europe.

Every reader will come to this volume with different priorities and interests. Two contributions particularly impressed me. Dr. Alyssa Sepinwall (California State University, San Marcos) demonstrates that even within the apparent philosemitism of such a self-proclaimed champion of Jewish rights as the abbé Henri Grégoire in revolutionary France there was an underlying critique of Jewish values, which he seems

to have believed would somehow be overcome by the success of the campaign he espoused. Dr. Alan Levenson (who teaches Jewish religious and intellectual history at the University of Oklahoma) offers a sober and sombre assessment of philosemitism in Germany from 1871 until 1932, and in so doing helps us to understand why this apparent love of Jews was unable to prevail against – and may indeed have contributed to – the politicised antisemitism that matured (so to speak) within the Nazi party.

Most German philosemites emphasized the contribution that Jews could make to Germany as Germans rather than as Jews. Paradoxically, this awkward negation of Jewish particularism came to function as an element in a wider anti-Jewish discourse.

The myth of the 'clever' or 'smart' Jew is as lethal and corrosive as the myth of a Jewish world conspiracy. Perhaps for this reason, on 31 January 2003, in the New York Jewish newspaper *Forward*, the novelist Melvin Bukiet pleaded that 'we must stamp out philosemitism, wherever it rears its ugly head.' After reading *Philosemitism in History* you cannot fail to sympathise with this appeal.

Geoffrey Alderman
Michael Gross Professor of Politics & Contemporary History, University of Buckingham

STUART J. HECHT, *Transposing Broadway: Jews, Assimilation, and the American Musical*, vii +240pp., Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, ISBN: 978-0-230-11327-5, $85 (hardback)

This is a volume in Palgrave's wide-ranging series of studies in Theatre and Performance History. Introducing the content, the author defines and explains his dramaturgical approach, which involves the study of representative shows and analyses of how they work on stage for both the immediate audience and the community represented by that audience. A book using this approach may not seem an obvious candidate for review in this journal but, in many ways, it may be read as a short history of the American musical. Highlighting the pre-eminent place of Jews in its development and considering the impact that these shows had on the development of Jewish identity in the United States, it may interest some readers.

At the outset the author suggests that one role of the theatre is to show the world to audiences and make individuals reflect on where they stand in society. Stuart Hecht proposes that up to the middle of the 20th century American musical theatre broadly provided a stimulus for immigrants

from many countries to think about and absorb (probably unconsciously) differences between one's self or one's group and others. Hecht discusses the classical musical form as one outcome of an immigrant society in which composers and lyricists first helped newcomers understand a new environment and who, as time went on, interpreted American society and ideology for their children and grandchildren.

The book examines in some detail a selection of the best-known Broadway book-musicals. These range from Oscar Hammerstein and Jerome Kern's 1927 *Show Boat* through the Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein classics of the 1940s and 1950s – *Oklahoma, Carousel, South Pacific, The King and I* – to the 1956 Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim *West Side Story* and the Shalom Aleichem-based, Jerome Robbins-directed *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964). As it moves on from these narrative pieces, Hecht pays tribute to the more recent concept musicals of Stephen Sondheim, the acknowledged master of those contemporary works which are not based on Hollywood films or do not rely on technical effects for impact. *Follies* (1971) and *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981) are pinpointed as distilling the composer-lyricist's attitudes towards acculturation and as showing sorrow at the loss of young identities. Sondheim is described as charting a 'gradual corruption of identity' assuming that the 'younger selves' of the characters are their true identities. For Sondheim, identity is a personal, not a group, attribute. By incorporating the idea of corruption, identity is presented as originally immutable or innocent; any change is for the worse. Theatre still represents society to audiences but today's audiences have to come to terms with an individualistic society that is viewed pessimistically – a strong contrast with the optimism and hopefulness of an *Oklahoma* or *Fiddler*.

The composers, lyricists and directors named above are only a sample of those discussed in the book. They are *some* of the most widely known of the very many Jews who participated in a creative, entrepreneurial or managerial capacity in the development of this popular theatrical form. Even this truncated list indicates how profound the Jewish contribution was throughout the 20th century.

Since this elementary point has been discussed and examined many times before from various standpoints, the core of this book is not unexpected. Analyses of the genre over the last 20 years or so, very often by Jewish authors, bears witness both to the interest in and impact of the topic. What is more explicit in this volume is the observation that book-musicals may be viewed as instruction manuals on how to integrate into American society. Of course, while this point may have been touched on in some of the similar studies listed in the bibliography, Hecht makes it a

central argument of his thesis and raises an interesting discussion point. As is suggested, would these classical musicals indeed cause American Jews to reflect on the development of Jewish identity and the attainment of the American dream – even if only subconsciously? Do minority groups in a melting-pot society need such publicly shared opportunities? How far did such experiences contribute to the consolidation of American values and an American identity among the urban masses that, at the very least, inevitably had to live side by side? Is the musical format particularly suited to this exercise? Did the 1960s Israeli hit-show *Kazablan* (like *West Side Story*, an adaptation of Romeo and Juliet) serve the same purpose? To come up to date, the 2010 Tony award-winner *Memphis* (not covered in the book) is loosely based on the life of one of the first white disc-jockeys to play black music on the radio in the 1950s. It focuses on local and national (i.e., white) broadcasting's prejudice against ghetto (i.e., black) music and the struggle of black musicians to move into the mainstream. Certainly, identity and integration issues still resonate with America's Broadway audiences.

This book may present a conundrum for a non-specialist and non-American reader. In Britain, for example, 'musicals' are mostly regarded little more than light entertainment. While Gilbert and Sullivan, the 19th century precursors of the musical, mocked English characters and institutions, it is difficult to conceive of any musical either providing a guide to or interpreting values or society in Edwardian England, the time at which Hecht starts his narrative. Certainly until the mid-20th century the British version was somewhat frivolous and had slight storylines. Perhaps because of this, it comes off worse in any comparisons with its American counterparts. Moreover, other than a rather sanitized Fagin in *Oliver!,* Lionel Bart's 1960 transformation of Dickens' *Oliver Twist,* it is difficult to pinpoint any minority-group ethnic character in British shows up to the present. On the whole, even where these have tackled serious themes, they have had a more parochial tone. This, perhaps, is the key to the puzzle. In multi-national New York where most of the Broadway shows were written, identity and absorption – whether acculturation or assimilation – were local, maybe even parochial, issues. It is interesting to be asked to ponder on these themes. The author is to be thanked for providing the necessary material.

Marlena Schmool
Director, Community Research Unit, Board of Deputies of British Jews, 1986 – 2003

TONY KUSHNER & HANNAH EWENCE, (Eds.), *Whatever happened to British Jewish studies?*, 416 pp., Vallentine Mitchell, (Parkes-Wiener Series on Jewish Studies), London, 2012, ISBN: 978-0853039549, £50.00 (hardback)

"Whatever happened to British Jewish Studies?" is a collection of papers partly based on a conference at the University of Southampton in July 2008. The book, so the publisher tells us, "reflexively interrogates as well as celebrates the current position and purpose of British Jewish studies in the modern age". This reflexivity implies a self-referential, circular form of analysis, where the analysts analyse themselves. And, as the question mark in the title implies, any celebration is muted, and in fact the volume strikes a somewhat elegiac and perplexed note. Indeed its editors, Professor Tony Kushner and Hannah Ewence, feel that there has been "a loss of clear purpose" in this area over the previous decade.

These feelings, in two instances in particular, lead to real anger on the contributors' part. They feel ignored and rejected. The opening of the Museum of London's "Galleries of Modern London" occasions one such instance of understandable fury. Jewish Londoners are virtually overlooked in these galleries. Aside from occasional and passing references to Jewish refugees there is "only one small, partly presented and obscure section on the Jewish community as a whole", where "the text is short, consisting of several vague sentences". "In a dark corner, and with the text close to the ground, it is hard to read".

How are we to account for this? The contributors to this volume represent a tightly knit circle of talented scholars. Most would probably classify themselves as progressive to the extent that they have railed against, and indeed played a significant role in shifting, the previously dominant discourse of British Jewish historiography from the Whig version embodied by Cecil Roth – a version which uncritically praised Britain, stressed Jewish gratitude and highlighted Jewish contributions to Britain's well-being. The scholars represented here wish to move the focus away, to ally the Jewish experience with that of other "minority groups" in Britain. However, to their dismay, their embrace is not reciprocated. Indeed, as Kushner and Ewence state, "in many cases [it] has been rejected in a hostile way". As one of the few outsiders represented in this volume, the American Professor Todd Endelman, comments, "the logic of multi-culturalism… extends only to 'unsuccessful' minorities, those still mired in poverty, suspected of violent or 'unsocial' behaviour and victimised by exclusion and discrimination". Endelman thus classifies and characterises the approach adopted by many

in the volume as apologetic, serving "a strategic end that is distinct from whatever scholarly work it performs". Those, he says, who attempt to diverge from Cecil Roth's instrumental version of Jewish history mimic him nonetheless. "However admirable the intent, once again, the study of Jews is validated by reference to what it can do for the study of something else – in these examples the studies of race, gender and ethnicity and the terms and concepts on which their study proceeds".

If rejection by mainstream and post-colonial British historians, evidenced by the Museum of London experience, is painful, no less annoying to the contributors is the publication of Anthony Julius' "Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England", widely reviewed in Britain's national newspapers and abroad. According to Kushner and Ewence it "has been an unwelcome and polemical intervention, taking scholarship back a generation". It is hard to know what the latter means, but it certainly evidences splenetic rage. Julius has offended their orthodoxy not just, one suspects, because of the high profile the book received both in the United Kingdom and overseas. Nadia Valman complains bitterly that Julius "eschews the tendency of most literary critics in the past two decades to view Semitic representations as metaphors for larger questions specific to time and place". Indeed, she adds, "he seems unaware of these scholarly developments", a suggestion which, given the evident voraciousness and breadth of Julius' reading is, to put it mildly, highly unlikely. For several in the group represented in this volume, the study of anti-Semitism is anathema. Indeed, as the editors explain, "many of the authors would hesitate to use the term, viewing it as too crude a tool to investigate British responses and attitudes towards 'the Jew'." Presumably this is why Julius has ignored their work.

The contributors to this volume think of themselves, as undoubtedly Professor Mark Levene does in his clever but contorted essay, as "passionate, radical, thinking, *yidn*". But, as Endelman states, for all their hard impressive work contextualising the history of Britain's Jewish community within that of Britain as a whole and of its minority groups in particular, "the greater the temptation to view it only in that context and not simultaneously in the context of a transnational Jewish history as well". There might be a motive for this - as he continues, "at a minimum studying British Jews in a British context alone avoids the potential for awkward confrontations". And by that, he means the State of Israel.

Rejection by the community of post-colonial historians is attributed to Israel. As the editors complain, "whilst the historical mainstream still has a tendency to reject British Jewish Studies as a minority subject and marginal, those within other ethnic studies rarely consider the Jewish case to be of relevance perceiving Jews to be 'white' and part of the majority

culture and power bases of society and sometimes, through reference to the Middle East and Israel/Palestine, even imperialist."

Israel too lies behind Julius' heresy. As Valman explains, "in the context of the deteriorating political situation in Israel/Palestine, drawing attention to the persistence of anti-Semitic culture has been the characteristic gesture of the Anglo Jewish establishment, rather than its critics". The adjective "deteriorating" says a lot. The political situation in Israel/Palestine has not been good for the best part of a century, but what has certainly deteriorated is the Left's view of Israel.

Israel is undoubtedly a problem for this volume's contributors, especially for Levene. He argues that it was the British Mandate which prompted British Jewish support for Zionism. "[T]he supposed new dispensation, Zionism, under the auspices of British rule in Palestine, simply became a more embedded basis for Anglo Jewish adherence and an allegiance to Empire". He praises those who "resisted the easy allure of loyalty to state/s (Israeli or British), neo-Empire or the military industrial complex, and instead began challenging first principles." In fact British Jewish support for Zionism, more readily explained by millennial adherence to Jewish religious and national thought, has often strained rather than strengthened Anglo Jewry's relations with Britain, most particularly between 1945 and 1948 and indeed, as the evidence presented in this volume suggests, in the present day.

Professor Geoffrey Alderman, one of the most prominent British Jewish historians of the day but who is not among the contributors to this volume, has commented that the Jews in Britain and their historians of the last century were "obsessed with considerations of image, and with the management of that image", and this seems no less true of the historians represented in this volume.

Whilst it is true I have concentrated in this review on the things that trouble me about this book, it would certainly be wrong of me to dismiss the contributions within it. Todd Endelman's essay in particular is magnificent. Many of the other historians in the book are talented but so much of this talent has been wasted, a wilful communal act of self-denial, placing British Jewish history outside of the wider Jewish context. Getting a little more comfortable with the Jewish in British Jewish history will not do these historians any harm. As it is, they crave the embrace of the community of "multi-cultural" and British historians, echoing Cecil Roth, the very stereotype they wish to avoid, but, like him, are rebuffed; and they eschew the global community of Jewish historians, so you get the feeling that they have nowhere to go. No wonder they are depressed and angry. Writing by themselves for themselves. They risk making little

impact, being dismissed as bland, irrelevant or, to use our vernacular - *pareve*.

It is striking that Britain's Jewish writers and novelists seem to have done better than Britain's Jewish historians in this regard. They have understood better the ambivalences of the identity. In her contribution on "British Jewry Writing Today", Ruth Gilbert quotes one of them, Linda Grant, as noting, "the British are tactful, decorous, well-mannered, prudent, prone to meaningful silences and Jews are – well, the opposite". In his book on Jewish identity *Roots Shmoots*, the Booker prize-winning novelist Howard Jacobson recalling his childhood in 1950's Manchester said, "we faced in opposite directions, we were our own antithesis". Admittedly Jacobson is a writer of genius but he has found his voice, has indeed celebrated his Jewishness – and has made a spectacular success of it. The historians represented in this volume could do a lot worse than try and emulate him.

Richard Bolchover

EITAN P. FISHBANE & JONATHAN D. SARNA (eds.), *Jewish Renaissance and Revival in America* x + 192 pp., Brandeis University Press, Waltham, MA, 2011, ISBN: 978-1-61168-192-5, $29.95 (paperback)

This edited volume, a memorial to Leah Levitz Fishbane, a doctoral student in American Jewish History at Brandeis University who died of a brain tumour aged 32, is a thought-provoking exploration of the issues and complexities of renewal and revival in the American Jewish community. *Jewish Renaissance and Revival in America* arose from a desire to realise the aim to "broaden our understanding of the important cultural crises and imperatives of the post-Civil War period which paved the way for new developments in American Jewish communal, cultural and religious life at the turn of the twentieth century" [p. 10]. In this vein, the work explores how American Jews approached the subject of spiritual, cultural and ethnic renewal between the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The book develops a model of Jewish revival that owes much to Jonathan Sarna's earlier work on revitalisation in American Jewry. This conceives of renaissance and revival as driven by a group of earnest young idealists dissatisfied with contemporary constructions of Jewishness and seeking to reconceptualise that Jewishness. Though such attempts were often short lived, it did not necessarily undermine their impact. As each case study demonstrates, the actions of these idealists

continued to influence American Jewishness many years after they themselves had moved on. Yet as Arnold Eisen notes revival itself quickly gets old and a key theme of the volume is the cyclical nature of renaissance. The initial revitalisations of American Jewishness soon became part of daily routine, with a new generation emerging who once again sought to rejuvenate the community. Nonetheless the argument presented by *Jewish Renaissance* allows for significant variation in the origins and manifestations of revivalist trends, as each case study demonstrates.

In 'Common bonds: A Collective Portrait' and 'On the Road to Renaissance', Leah Levitz Fishbane traces the life histories of the group of young Jewish men who founded the *American Hebrew* newspaper and who were active in the Young Men's Hebrew Associations (YMHA) of New York and Philadelphia between 1877 and 1883. She notes that though they differed in their interpretation of religious standards, each possessed a deeply held commitment to the Jewish community, whilst simultaneously conceiving of themselves as wholly situated — as Jews — within American society. She persuasively argues that it was this innate confidence in their position within America that allowed them to speak out for their Jewish identity and to turn to exclusively Jewish projects without fear of being accused of an unwillingness to participate fully in American life. Their particular life histories were responsible for their construction of American Jewish renewal. Arguing that Americanism had been fully and confidently instilled, they believed it necessary to focus on the Jewishness of their peers and subsequent generations. They sought to achieve this renewed Jewish vitality through the YMHA and the *American Hebrew*, shifting its focus towards Jewish education and Jewish renewal work. She suggests that the sense of Jewishness they articulated emphasised Jewish culture, history, peoplehood and, importantly, religion. A response to the challenges of indifference, antisemitism and assimilation, this attempt to spark a cultural revolution within American Jewry was to be transmitted through the text of the *American Hebrew*. The author argues that the actions of these young men must be understood as early expressions of the 'Jewish Awakening' of the late 1880s and beyond, thereby grounding the existing historiography of Jewish revival in the late nineteenth century and establishing the outline of the book's model of renewal.

Arthur Kiron continues these efforts to place issues of Jewish renewal within textual spaces in his perceptive 'A Renaissance of Jewish Readers'. Following Chartier and Foucault, Kiron notes that histories of reading activities must also acknowledge the complex processes through which texts are received and read. To that end, Kiron explores the production of

Jewish reading material through such organisations as the American Jewish Publication Society and how these texts were disseminated among and engaged with by Philadelphia's Jews. The author thereby establishes that the educational and literary associations created by young Jewish Philadelphians sought to create a renaissance in Jewish readership by creating a new Jewish reader who could engage with traditional Jewish sources and Hebrew worship. Kiron argues that in this sense reading was an extension and renewal of their religious identity. Simultaneously, these readers were expected to be able to read and write fluently in English, and their reading activities were to be "isomorphic with the Victorian culture in which they lived" [p. 77].

Shuly Rubin Schwartz continues the focus on the text as a source of renewal through an examination of the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, published in 1901. Noting that the *Encyclopedia* functions as a primary source in addition to being a reference work, she emphasises the intention of its editors to use it to generate a revival of Jewish knowledge, and thus Jewish culture. Schwartz convincingly outlines how the editors of the *Jewish Encyclopedia* not only sought to spread the results of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to American Jewry but that this itself would act as a catalyst for Jewish renewal. The editors believed that educating American Jews about their heritage would lead to a concomitant increase in communal feeling and Jewish pride. Similarly she demonstrates how the *Encyclopedia*'s descriptions of how Jews traditionally observed festivals was a means of ensuring Jewish continuity and renewal. As with the previous contributions, Schwartz offers an insightful perspective on how the reflection of knowledge also shapes it and, in so doing, the ways in which texts create, renew and personify communities.

Paul Mendes-Flohr's 'Leah's Hope' departs from the textual and youth-centred approaches of the previous essays to focus on the legacy of German-Jewish ethical monotheism in the American Jewish community. He suggests that the German-Jewish ethic of *Besitz und Bildung* (property and education) found unique expression amongst the United States' ideals of tolerance and inclusive democracy, arguing that these values "became the twin pillars of American Jewry" [p. 130], informing the philanthropic activities and religious identity of the community. In support of this thesis, Mendes-Flohr cites the actions of Rabbi Emil Gustav Hirsch (1851-1923) and Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932). He argues that Hirsch's life and actions exemplified the notion that economic and material success brought social obligations to engage in charitable acts in support the common good, influencing strongly the charitable acts of his pupil Rosenwald, a senior partner in Sears, Roebuck and Company and a prominent philanthropist. Both were committed to disseminating the philosophy of

Besitz und Bildung throughout American Jewry and indeed wider society, Rosenwald by funding of so-called "Rosenwald schools" for African-Americans deprived of education and Hirsch in his sermons and professorship at the University of Chicago. Mendes-Flohr provides a compelling account of the position of ethical monotheism in American Jewish life.

Attempting to move beyond a focus on religious revival through an exploration of revivalism in American Jewish ethnic identity and secular culture, David Kaufman's 'Revival Through Celebrity' returns to the 'text', in the form of art. He notes a watershed moment in the last revival of Jewish secular identity in 1967 and seeks to establish its antecedents in the preceding decade. Taking as his foundation the increased status of the celebrity in this period, Kaufman argues that whereas Jewish celebrities had previously sought to hide their Jewish identity, young Jewish stars comfortable in displaying an assertive Jewish public identity emerged in the early 1960s. Through their Jewishness stars such as Lenny Bruce, Sandy Koufax, Bob Dylan and Barbara Streisand "introduced a new paradigm of ethnic identification into American Jewish consciousness" [p. 141], paving the way for the secular revival of 1967.

Whereas Kaufman emphasises the specifically American factors inherent in the revival of 1967 in 'Renewal and Havurah' Arthur Green, like Mendes-Flohr, notes how American movements possessed European origins even as they situated themselves within American culture. Whilst acknowledging Havurat Shalom's roots in American counterculture and its status as a reaction against contemporary American Jewish life, Green attempts to draw out the European roots of the movement. The author traces the history of pre-Holocaust Eastern European neo-Hasidism and convincingly establishes that much of Jewish Renewal's outlook was drawn from that tradition. He demonstrates that religious revival need not always take place along the lines outlined by Levitz Fishbane, even while remaining within the renewal model established by *Jewish Renaissance*.

Jewish Renaissance and Revival in America offers a compelling framework for the process of Jewish renewal. Its case studies are diverse and it is this very diversity that emphasises the utility of *Jewish Renaissance*'s concept. Fishbane, Sarna and the contributors have developed a thesis that is easily applicable to other Jewish communities. Nonetheless it is tempting to suggest that the volume's concept of renewal is overly generic and that little in the framework is specific to the Jewish community. Arnold Eisen attempts to reconcile this through the volume's focus on the centrality of the text, Jewry's "portable homeland" [p. 166], which delineates the Jewish nature of renewal.

The book is a stimulating and perceptive addition not only to the historiography of American Jewry but to the study of Jewish communities as a whole.

Thomas Plant
Karten Postdoctoral Outreach Fellow, University of Southampton

CHRONICLE

Britain's Jewish Community Statistics 2010[1]

In April 2012 The Board of Deputies of British Jews reported on 'Britain's Jewish Community Statistics 2010', covering data on births, marriages, divorces and deaths. This follows 'Community Statistics 2007' which was published in November 2008 and is the latest in a data-series that began in 1967[2] and has continued unbroken since. As the author Daniel Vulkan notes the data are collected on behalf of the whole community, regardless of institutional denomination and are unique in being able to indicate changes over time. However, they only represent those Jews who have chosen, or whose families have chosen, to associate themselves with the community through a formal Jewish act such as marriage in a synagogue. Thus Jews who have not chosen so to identify do not appear in the statistics and some individuals who are included would not be recognized as Jews by all sections of the community.

Births

Numbers of births were developed from data of *brit milah*[3], which were available only up to 2007. These showed 1,702 religious circumcisions in that year and a total 3,313 Jewish 'births' were inferred from this number. The authors note that the presence of unregistered *mohalim* suggests that the true figure may be somewhat higher and that the number of births within the strictly Orthodox community had increased by 2010 to the point where they comprised 40 per cent or more of all British Jewish births.

Marriages

836 Jewish marriages were recorded in the UK in 2010 continuing a clearly identifiable, consistent downward trend. Further, the figures show that over the past 30 years the proportion of marriages taking place under the auspices of mainstream Orthodox synagogues has declined from almost two-thirds to just over half. Over the same period, the proportion of strictly Orthodox marriages had increased from one in ten to more than a quarter.

Divorces

The downward trend, which started in 2003, is continuing. It is possible that this indicates that fewer Jews who divorce seek a religious divorce, opting only for a civil one.

Deaths

A total of 2,734 burials or cremations under Jewish auspices were recorded in 2010, continuing a clear downward trend that has been evident for several decades. In line with the intention of recording data only for people who identify with the Jewish community in some formal way, data for cremation of persons known to be Jewish – but with no involvement with a synagogue or burial society – have not been included. For consistency, the data for earlier years have been restated to reflect this change of approach. This reduced the previously recorded average number of deaths between 1996 and 2005 by 150 per annum.

The authors note that the number of deaths recorded each year since 2005 is significantly lower than the inferred number of births and tentatively conclude that the community is experiencing a period of net natural increase but say it is too soon to say whether this pattern will continue in the long term.

Inspiring Women Leaders – Advancing Gender Equality in Jewish Communal Life

A *Commission on Women in Jewish Leadership* set up by the Jewish Leadership Council in Britain published its report in July 2012. Its objective was to address the gender imbalance in British Jewish communal leadership and to encourage more women into leadership positions. The research for this report included one-to-one interviews with communal leaders, focus groups with senior female communal professionals, an organisational survey and an online survey distributed throughout the community by more than 50 Jewish communal organisations and social media channels and which received 1,600 responses from across Great Britain.

The full report is downloadable on

http://www.thejlc.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Inspiring-Women-Leaders-Advancing-Gender-Equality-in-Jewish-Communal-Life.pdf.

A report *Gender imbalance: The Status Quo* was published by the Council in 2011.

NOTES

[1] For full report see:
http://www.bod.org.uk/content/CommunityStatistics2010.pdf

[2] See: Prais, S.J. and M. Schmool (1967) Statistics of Jewish Marriages in Great Britain: 1901-1965 in The Jewish Journal of Sociology, Vol IX, No.2 and (1968) The Size and Structure of the Anglo-Jewish Population, 1960-65 in The Jewish Journal of Sociology, Vol X, No.1.

[3] Provided by the Initiation Society that registers mohalim.