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AJS ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH STUDIES NEWSLETTER

No. 34 Summer 1983 Editor: A. J. Band

Preliminary Announcement
AJS FIFTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM
18-20 December 1983, Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston, Mass.

Sunday, December 18, 1983

10:30 A.M. Registration *Main Lobby*
Meeting of AJS Board of Directors *Back Bay Room*

1:30 P.M. Session I, Section A: *Back Bay Room*

Bible
Chairperson:
Rachel Zohar Dulin (Spertus College)

"You Can Go Home Again": A Study in Prophetic Ethics
Jeremiah Unterman (Barry University)

Can External Considerations Such As the Stories of Isaac and Iphigenia Elucidate the Fate of Jephthah's Daughter?
David Marcus (Jewish Theological Seminary of America)

What Modern Biblical Translators Can Tell Us About Their Ancient Counterparts: The Example of Max L. Margolis
Leonard Greenspoon (Clemson University)

1:30 P.M. Session I, Section B: *Forum Room*

Modern Hebrew Literature
Chairperson:
Emanuel S. Goldsmith (Queens College)

Memory and Myth: Towards a Grammar of Autobiography in Israeli Fiction
Yael Feldman (Columbia University)

Temporal Structures in the Historical Novel: The Case of *Kivsat Harash* by Moshe Shamir
Stephen Katz (Indiana University)

Love and War in Israeli Fiction
Esther Fuchs (University of Texas)

Bialik and T.S. Eliot: Poetry of the Waste Land
David Aberbach (University of Oxford)

1:30 P.M. Session I, Section C: *Venetian Room*

Modern Jewish History
Chairperson:
Gershon Hundert (McGill University)

The Kitāb-i Anusī of Bābāī ibn Laṭf (17th cent.) and the Kitāb-i Sar Guzasht... of Bābāī ibn Farhād (18th cent.): A Comparison of Two Judaeo-Persian Chronicles
Vera B. Moreen (Dropsie College)

Lenin on the Jewish Question: The Theoretical Setting
Yoav Peled (Hebrew University)

From Pariah to Parvenu: The Emergence and Composition of the Anti-Jewish Stereotype in South Africa Before 1910
Milton Shain (University of Capetown)

The Effect of Intermarriage on Jewish Numbers: Findings From the 1980's
Bruce A. Phillips (Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles)

(Continued on Page 2)

Report of the AJS Nominating Committee

The following Report will be submitted to the membership at the Annual Business Meeting on 18 December 1983:

1. Nominees for Officers for 1984:
   President: Nahum M. Sarna (Brandeis)
   Vice-President/Program: Ruth Wisse (McGill)
   Vice-President/Membership: Haym Soloveitchik (Yeshiva)
   Vice-President/Publications: Robert Chazan (Queens)
   Secretary-Treasurer: Robert M. Seltzer (Hunter)
2. The following Directors continue to serve until the Annual Meeting in 1984, in terms to which they were elected at the Annual Meeting in 1982:
   Stanley Chyet (HUC-JIR)
   Todd Endelman (Indiana)
   Harriet Freidenreich (Temple)
   Paula Hyman (JTSA)
   Robert Goldenberg (Stony Brook)
   James Kugel (Harvard)
   Rela Monson (Gratz)
   Jehuda Reinharz (Brandeis)
3. Nominees for Members of the Board of Directors to serve a one-year term (December 1983-December 1984) until the Annual Meeting in 1984:
   David Blumenthal (Emory)
   Steven Katz (Dartmouth)
   David Ruderman (Yale)
   Marshall Sklare (Brandeis)
4. Nominees for Members of the Board of Directors to serve a two-year term (December 1983-December 1985) until the Annual Meeting in 1985:
   David Berger (Brooklyn)
   Jeremy Cohen (Ohio State)
   Seymour Feldman (Rutgers)
   Michael Fishbane (Brandeis)
   Deborah Dash Moore (Vassar)
   Herbert H. Paper (HUC-JIR)
   Joel Rembaum (U. of Judaism)
   Marc E. Saperstein (Harvard)
   Ismar Schorsch (JTSA)
   Michael Signer (HUC-JIR)
   Leon Weinberger (Alabama)
5. Honorary Directors:
   Leon A. Jick (Brandeis)
   Baruch A. Levine (NYU)
   Arnold J. Band (UCLA)
   Marvin Fox (Brandeis)
   Michael A. Meyer (HUC-JIR)
   Jane S. Gerber (CUNY-Graduate Center)

Respectfully submitted,
Michael A. Meyer (HUC-JIR), Chairman
Arnold J. Band (UCLA)
Yael Feldman (Columbia)
James Kugel (Harvard)
Rela Monson (Gratz)
Jehuda Reinharz (Brandeis)

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ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH STUDIES
Widener Library M, Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Program (Continued from Page 1)

1:30 P.M. Session I, Section D: *State Suite*

Modern Jewish Thought
Chairperson:
To be announced

Krochmal's View of Ibn Ezra
Jay M. Harris (Columbia University)

Martin Buber and Gershom Scholem: The Limits of Revisionism
Laurence J. Silberstein (University of Pennsylvania)

The Mystical Prayer in the Teaching of Rabbi Kook
Moshe Amon (University of British Columbia)

Translating Paul Celan's "Jerusalem" Poems
John Felstiner (Stanford University)

4:15 P.M. Plenary Session I: *State Suite*

Chairperson:
To be announced

From the Oral Folksong to the Written Individual Poem
Dov Noy (Hebrew University)

5:15 P.M. Annual Business Meeting *State Suite*

6:15 P.M. Reception *Venetian Room*

Sponsor:
Jewish Theological Seminary of America

7:00 P.M. Dinner *Oval Room*

8:30 P.M. Plenary Session II: *Oval Room*

The Literary History of The Babylonian Talmud: The Work of David Weiss Halivni
Chairperson:
Marvin Fox (Brandeis University)

Speakers:
David Kraemer (Jewish Theological Seminary of America)
Meyer S. Feldblum (Yeshiva University)
Response:
David Weiss Halivni (Jewish Theological Seminary of America)

Monday, December 19, 1983

9:00 A.M. Session II, Section A: *Back Bay Room*

Orthodoxy in America
Chairperson:
To be announced

Dealing with Tradition
Samuel Heilman (Queens College)

Confronting Modernity
David Singer (New York City)

Opinions and Beliefs: A Survey
Steven M. Cohen (Queens College) and Samuel Heilman (Queens College)

9:00 A.M. Session II, Section B: *Forum Room*

Bible
Chairperson:
To be announced

Improvising Rules in the Book of Ruth
Jan Wojcik (Purdue University)

Gender Disagreement in Biblical Hebrew: A Proposed Solution
Robert Ratner (Wellesley College)

Moses' Alleged Speech Defect: A New Interpretation of Exodus 6:12
Manuel Gold (New York University)

9:00 A.M. Session II, Section C: *State Suite*

Medieval Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah
Chairperson:
To be announced

Negation of Ethics as Ultimate Human Felicity
Raphael Jospe (University of Denver)

On Joseph Ben Shem Tov
Ruth Birnbaum (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)

The Influence of Abner of Burgos on Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Kabbalism
Shoshanna Gershenzon (University of Judaism)

9:00 A.M. Session II, Section D: *Venetian Room*

Zionism
Chairperson:
To be announced

Truman and the Jewish Refugees in 1945
Allen H. Podet (State University of New York College at Buffalo)

Polemics of Rebirth: David Gordon and Proto-Zionism 1858–1886
Carol Diament (New Rochelle, NY)

Christian Allies in the Founding of the State of Israel, 1939–1945
Monty N. Penkower (Touro College)

11:00 A.M. Session III, Section A: *Back Bay Room*

Talmud
Chairperson:
Herbert Basser (Queens College, Kingston, Ont.)

Additions in the Babylonian Talmud from the Halakhot Pesoukot and Halakhot Gedolot
Neil Danzig (Yeshiva University)

Lifnim Mishurat HaDin: A Method of Resolving the Dilemma Confronting the Halakha
H. Joel Laks (Flushing, NY)

The Interpretation of 'Iš (Man) in the Halakic Midrashim
Michael Chernick (Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, NY)

11:00 A.M. Session III, Section B: *Venetian Room*

In conjunction with the American Jewish Historical Society

Scoundrels and Scholars: The Migration of a People and their Culture
Chairperson:
Marc Lee Raphael (Ohio State University)

East European Jewry and the Emigration Business
Pamela S. Nadell (American University)

"What Went Awry?": Accounting for Jewish Criminality in the New World
Jenna Weissman Joselit (YIVO Institute for Jewish Research)

Jewish Scholarship in America: The Publication of the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume I
Shuly Rubin Schwartz (Jewish Theological Seminary of America)

Commentator:
Jonathan D. Sarna (Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati)

11:00 A.M. Session III, Section C: *Forum Room*

Simon Rawidowicsz, the Man and his Work
Chairperson:
Alfred L. Ivry (Brandeis University)

Speakers to be announced

11:00 A.M. Session III, Section D: *State Suite*

In conjunction with the Association for the Sociological Study of Jewry

Intermarriage
Chairperson:
To be announced

Raised in a Melting Pot: The Identity Resolutions of Children of Intermarriages
Egon Mayer (Brooklyn College)

New Jews: The Dynamics of Religious Conversion
Steven Huberman (Univeristy of Judaism)

Dating and Mating: Sources of Commitment to Endogamy Among Unmarried Jewish College Students
Rela Geffen Monson (Gratz College)

1:00 P.M. Recess

1:30 P.M. Session IV, Section A: *Back Bay Room*

On the Problem of the Agunah
Chairperson:
Joseph Stern (Hebrew College)

Enforcement of the Ketubah in Civil Courts
Neil Hecht (Boston University)

Avitzur From the Perspective of Jewish Law
David Bleich (Yeshiva University)

Compulsion of Divorce in the Israeli Rabbinical Courts
Aaron Kirschenbaum (Tel-Aviv University)

1:30 P.M. Session IV, Section B: *Forum Room*

Medieval Jewish Philosophy
Chairperson:
To be announced

***Shemonah Peraqim* and *Fusul al-Madani*: A Reconsideration**
Jeffrey Macy (Hebrew University)

Moses Narboni's Averroism: The Commentary on the Treatise *On the Possibility of Conjunction With the Active Intellect*
Michael Blaustein (Harvard University)

Emanation: Ibn Rushd and Some Jewish Averroists
Helen Tunik Goldstein (University of Iowa)

The Philosophy of Two Karaite Halakhists: Judah Hadassi and Elijah Bashyazi
Daniel J. Lasker (Ben-Gurion University)

1:30 P.M. Session IV, Section C: *Venetian Room*

Modern Jewish History
Chairperson:
To be announced

Migration and Social Context as Factors in the Development of Modern Religious Movements
Robert Liberles (Ben-Gurion University)

The Three Ketarim
Stuart Cohen (Bar-Ilan University)

From *Jerusalem* to Brunswick: The Metamorphosis of *Dina de-Malkhuta Dina*
Gil Graff (No. Hollywood, CA)

The Contribution of James Parkes to Christian-Jewish Relations
Roberta Kalechofsky (Marblehead, MA)

1:30 P.M. Session IV, Section D: *State Suite*

Modern Hebrew Literature
Chairperson:
To be announced

Existential Humiliation: Readings in Shulamith Hareven's Short Stories
Judith Nave (Brandeis University)

The Interplay Between the Biblical and the Colloquial in Modern Hebrew Poetry
Ruth Kartun-Blum (Hebrew University)

Shlomo Levisohn and Christian Biblical Scholarship: A Study in Cross-Cultural Relationships
Tova Cohen (Bar-Ilan University)

Besieged Feminism in Contemporary Hebrew Poetry
Yair Mazor (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

4:00 P.M. Interest Groups: Business Meetings and Programs

A. Sociology *Forum Room*
Authors Meet the Critics
Topic: Higher Jewish Education Orthodox-style
Organizer: Harold H. Himmelfarb (Ohio State University)
Authors: William Helmreich (City College-CUNY), *The World of the Yeshiva*, Free Press, 1982. Samuel Heilman (Queens College), *The People of the Book*, University of Chicago Press, 1983.
Critics: *To be announced*

B. Medieval Philosophy *State Suite*
Chairperson:
Seymour Feldman (Rutgers University)
Topic: Maimonides' Philosophy of Law: I. Twersky's *Introduction to the Mishneh Torah*
Discussants: To be announced

Meetings of additional Interest Groups to be announced.

6:00 P.M. Reception *Venetian Room*

Sponsor:
KTAV Publishing House

7:00 P.M. Dinner *Oval Room*

8:30 P.M. Plenary Session III: *Oval Room*

The Holocaust in Historical Context
Chairperson:
To be announced

Speakers:
Richard L. Rubenstein (Florida State University)
Other speakers to be announced

(Continued on Page 4)

Program (Continued from Page 3)

Tuesday, December 20, 1983

9:00 A.M. Session V, Section A: *Venetian Room*

Jewish Suffragists and Radical Women in England and America
Chairperson:
Paula Hyman (Jewish Theological Seminary of America)

Jewish Suffragists in New Jersey
Elinor Lerner (Stockton State College)

The Social Origins of Jewish Radical Women in America
Gerald Sorin (State University of New York, New Paltz)

Jewish Women's Suffragist Movements in England and America: A Comparative Study
Linda Gordon Kuzmack (George Washington University)

9:00 A.M. Session V, Section B: *State Suite*

Jewish Studies and Cultural Anthropology
Chairperson:
To be announced

A Symbolic Approach to Studies of a Contemporary Metropolitan Group
Ruth Gruber Fredman (Washington, D.C.)

Anthropological Perspectives on Historical Reconstruction: An Examination of Jewish Life in the Hadramaut
Lawrence D. Loeb (University of Utah)

Problems in the Comparison of Diasporas: The "Persistent Peoples" Model
Walter P. Zenner (State University of New York, Albany)

9:00 A.M. Session V, Section C: *Forum Room*

Classical Jewish History and Texts
Chairperson:
To be announced

Mark's Usage of Jewish Scribes
Howard L. Apothaker (Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati)

The Jewish Dimension of Philo's Jewishness: An Elucidation of *de Spec. Leg. IV* 132-150
Naomi Cohen (Haifa University)

The Impact of the Christianization of the Roman Empire on the Jewish Communities of Fourth Century Palestine
Barbara Geller Nathanson (Clark University)

9:00 A.M. Session V, Section D: *Back Bay Room*

Literary Theory and the Study of Jewish Texts
Chairperson:
To be announced

Speakers:
Jeffrey Fleck (Brown University)
Susan Handelman (University of Maryland)
Alan Mintz (University of Maryland)

11:00 A.M. Session VI, Section A: *Back Bay Room*

Medieval Jewish History
Chairperson:
To be announced

Attitudes Toward Children and Childhood in Medieval Jewish Society
Ephraim Kanarfogel (Yeshiva College)

Ms. Vat. Lat. 1053 and the Spirit of Christian Hebraism in the Twelfth Century
Michael A. Signer (Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles)

Judah Gibbor's *Minhat Yehudah:* History Derived through Printing
Philip E. Miller (Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, NY)

New Light on the Life and Writings of Leon Modena
Howard Adelman (Brandeis University)

11:00 A.M. Session VI, Section B: *Venetian Room*

Holocaust Studies
Chairperson:
Jack N. Porter (Harvard University)

Theological Myth, German Antisemitism, and the Holocaust
Robert Michael (Southeastern Massachusetts University)

The Holocaust: A Marxist Analysis
Michael Dobkowski (Hobart and William Smith Colleges)

Faith and Holocaust in the Theology of Eliezer Berkovits
Alan Udoff (Baltimore Hebrew College)

Knowledge of and Information-seeking About the Holocaust Among Children of the Survivors
Morton Weinfeld (McGill University)

11:00 A.M. Session VI, Section C: *State Suite*

Aspects of Nineteenth-Century Jewish History
Chairperson:
To be announced

J.J. Sylvester, First Jewish Professor in the United States, and His "Resignation" From the University of Virginia in 1842
Lewis S. Feuer (University of Virginia)

Theodore Herzl: The Zionist as Austrian Liberal
Jacques Kornberg (University of Toronto)

The Literary Genre of the Dialogues of the Dead in Haskalah Literature
Moshe Pelli (Yeshiva University)

French Jewry and the Old Yishuv in the Early 19th Century
Jonathan I. Helfand (Brooklyn College)

11:00 A.M. Session VI, Section D: *Forum Room*

Modern Jewish Philosophy
Chairperson:
To be announced

The Idea of God in the Philosophies of A.J. Heschel and Charles Hartshorne
William E. Kaufman (Southeastern Massachusetts University)

Judaism and Liberation Theology
Dan Cohn-Sherbok (University of Kent)

Buber and Heidegger: Their Polemic Concerning the Constitution of the Interpersonal
David Novak (New School for Social Research)

Buber on Religion and Society: The Hegelian Connection
Heidi M. Ravven (Hamilton College)

1:00 P.M. Meeting of AJS Board of Directors *Back Bay Room*

Essays in Modern Jewish History: A Tribute to Ben Halpern. Edited by Frances Malino and Phyllis Cohen Albert. East Brunswick, N.J., Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982. 343 pp.

Reviewed by David Engel (San Francisco State University)

In their "dedicatory preface" to this volume of essays presented to Ben Halpern upon his retirement as Richard Koret Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Brandeis University, the editors have spoken of Halpern's "breadth of...interests," of his "abiding concern with the historical experience of modern Jewry," and of his "profundity and originality of thought." All of these characteristics are amply reflected in the studies brought together for his *Festschrift*.

The essays are grouped in three parts—Early Modern Jewry, Modern Jewry, and Zionism. In the first section, Benjamin Ravid explores differing attitudes toward Jewish moneylending within the government of sixteenth-century Venice as "a case study of the tension between religious hostility and economic utilitarianism" in the approach of the pre-emancipation state to the issue of Jewish residence. From archival sources he carefully reconstructs the delicate political balance in which the status of Venetian Jewry regularly hung. Daniel Swetschinski, making skillful use of personal papers and public records from Dutch archives, demonstrates the remarkable degree to which the cultural life of the Portuguese Jews of seventeenth-century Amsterdam retained a distinctly Iberian character even as those Jews were successfully adapting themselves to their new Dutch environment. Hillel Levine offers a critical yet basically supportive analysis of Gershom Scholem's thesis concerning the relationship of the Frankist movement to the subsequent rise of explicit ideas of modernization among European Jews. Levine conducts his critique from the perspective of Ben Halpern's theory of myth and ideology, and in the process he points to a highly instructive comparison between Frankism and the "cargo cults" of Melanesia as modernizing agents. Finally, Frances Malino surveys the familiar works of Christian Wilhelm Dohm, the Comte de Mirabeau, the Abbé Grégoire, Zalkind Hourwitz, and Adolphe Thierry for their ideas concerning the extent to which Jewish communal autonomy might in theory interfere with efforts to transform Jews into productive citizens. She finds that the attitudes of these writers toward this question stemmed mainly from their respective overall evaluations of the moral worth of Jewish tradition.

The second section begins with a discussion by Phyllis Cohen Albert of the attempts of French Jews in the nineteenth century to introduce innovations into the synagogue service and the reasons why these attempts did not, in contrast to the case in Germany and the United States, result in a full-scale movement for radical reform. This is followed by a theoretical essay in which Paul Mendes-Flohr endeavors to place the discussion of the modern Jewish intellectual within the framework of the sociology of the intellectual classes of Western society as a whole. Drawing upon the work of Georg Simmel and Erik Cohen, among others, Mendes-Flohr defines an intellectual as "an axionormative dissident and cognitive agnostic"; he then speculates, following Robert Merton and Ben Halpern, upon two of the possible "sources of the acculturated Jew's axionormative estrangement." Laurence Silberstein carefully analyzes the twin roots, in German historiography and Jewish nationalism, of Yehezkel Kaufmann's *Golah ve nekhar* — a work which has strongly influenced Ben Halpern's approach to Jewish history and Zionist ideology. He concludes his discussion with a critique of Kaufmann's historical sociology in the light of Max Weber's notions of historical cause, culture, and religion. The section concludes with Isaac Neustadt-Noy's favorable appraisal of B'nai Brith's policy of political neutrality with regard to internal Jewish organizational conflicts in the United States prior to the First World War. Neustadt-Noy has also appended five documents from the B'nai Brith archives which illustrate the political strategy of the organization under the leadership of Adolph Kraus (1905-1925).

The final section features Ehud Luz's analysis of the ideological positions taken by Zionists in Eastern Europe toward the Uganda controversy. Luz sees this conflict as "a dramatic epilogue to the sharp dispute among the Zionists on the so-called 'culture problem'" which brought about a substantial realignment of the ideological groupings within the Zionist movement. Sanford Ragins offers a brief analysis of the writings of Ber Borochov, arguing that Borochov's revision of Marxism stemmed primarily from an *"a priori* commitment to Jewish nationalism" to which his socialism was made to conform. Deborah Lipstadt takes a straightforward biographical approach to the early Zionist career of Louis Lipsky, concentrating upon the ongoing tension between Lipsky's aspirations as a creative artist on the one hand and his talents as a Zionist polemist and organizer on the other. The section concludes with Jehuda Reinharz's reconstruction, based both upon personal letters and official documents, of Chaim Weizmann's political activities during the years of the British military occupation of Palestine (1918-1920), in which "Weizmann more than any other leader directed and initiated Zionist policy."

From this survey it can be seen that the volume touches upon a wide range of concerns related to the entry of Jews into modern European society and the response of Jews to that process. In organizing the selections the editors have achieved an excellent overall balance of subject matter. Balance and variety are also apparent in the scholarly techniques employed by the authors. The volume contains reconstructions based upon unpublished archival materials, analyses of published literature, and pieces written from the perspective of theoretical sociology.

Halpern's influence upon several of the authors is immediately apparent. Levine and Mendes-Flohr have employed directly central features of Halpern's sociology in constructing their analyses, and they have pointed specifically to Halpern's fundamental distinction between "myth" and "ideology" as a potentially powerful tool for the understanding of significant problems in modern Jewish history. Albert, too, explicitly acknowledges Halpern's role as the intellectual catalyst for her article. And clearly Halpern's interest in Yehezkel Kaufmann and Louis Lipsky has stimulated Silberstein and Lipstadt in their studies. With these essays the volume demonstrates that Halpern has indeed left a significant intellectual legacy.

Included in this collection as well is a personal memoir of Ben Halpern by Marie Syrkin, together with an annotated bibliography

(Continued on Page 6)

University of Haifa, *Mehkarim be-toldot am Yisrael ve-erets Yisrael. Volume 5 [Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel]* Haifa, 1980. xiii, 274 pp.

Reviewed by Martha Himmelfarb (Princeton University)

This volume contains nineteen Hebrew articles with English summaries on aspects of Jewish history from the biblical period to the twentieth century: H. Reviv, "The Pattern of the All-Israelite Tribal Gatherings"; Z. Weisman, "Did a National Leadership Exist in the Era of the Judges?"; H.N. Rösel, "The Literary and Geographical Facets of the Shibboleth Story in Judges 12:1-6"; Z. Ben Barak, "The Coronation Ceremonies of Joash and Nabopolassar in Comparison"; M. Heltzer, "Addenda to the List of Names in M. Heltzer, M. Ohana, *The Extra-Biblical Tradition of Hebrew Personal Names";* S. Applebaum, "When Did Scythopolis Become a Greek City?"; M. Mor, "Samaritans and Jews in the Ptolemaic Period and the Beginning of the Seleucid Rule in Palestine"; D. Goodblatt, "The Talmudic Sources on the Origins of Organized Jewish Education"; Z. Safrai, "Urbanization in Israel in the Greco-Roman Period"; D. Rokeah, "The Enslavement Motif in the Pagan-Christian Polemic of the Roman Empire"; Y. Dan, "Jews in the Indian Ocean Commerce in the Pre-Islamic Period"; J. Shatzmiller, "Desecrating the Cross: A Rare Medieval Accusation"; K.R. Stow, "Jewish Attitudes Toward the Papacy and the Papal Doctrine of Jewish Protection (1063-1147)"; A. El-Ad, "Some Notes on Haifa Under Medieval Arab Rule"; M. Yardeni, "The Relationship Between the Land and the People Israel as Seen by French Travellers of the Seventeenth Century"; S.Z. Schechter, *"Ha-Magid* and the Idea of Shivat Zion, 1860-1870"; A.A. Greenbaum, "The National Revival of Soviet Jewry in the Pre-World War II Period"; B. Ben-Avram, "A.D. Gordon and the Idea of the Kibbutz During the Second and Third Aliya"; and A. Schochat, "A Collection of Homilies Edited by Adam HaKohen Lebensohn."

Even within a single historical period or disciplinary rubric, diversity is more apparent than unity. For example, each of the four articles on a biblical subject is characterized by a different approach. Reviv treats the literary depiction of gatherings of the people in the Torah, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, arguing against the historicity of such gatherings. Weisman offers a critical study of the historiography of the period of the judges. Rösel analyzes a single pericope with an eye to the geographical data, while Ben Barak compares 2 Kings 11 to a Babylonian text published by A.K. Grayson.

In the face of such diversity of subject and of approach, I shall limit myself to a few remarks about articles of particular interest to me. These choices reflect my field of research, not negative judgments about the other articles.

Two articles on the Second Temple period attack established scholarly positions on the basis of a fresh reading of the primary sources. Mor carefully dismantles J.D. Purvis's construction, on the basis of Sirach 50:25-26, Megillat Ta'anit for Kislev 21, and Josephus, *Antiquities* 12.156, of a period of Samaritan ascendancy over the Jews at the time of Simon the Righteous. Mor argues instead that each of the sources represent a separate moment in the ongoing conflict between Samaritans and Jews.

Goodblatt calls into question the large body of scholarship that has accepted the claim of two talmudic sources, P.T. Ketubot 8:11, 32c, and B.T. Bava Batra 21a, that a system of elementary education was established in Palestine by the end of the Second Temple period. The two sources present very different pictures; Goodblatt argues that neither of these texts (though he views both as tannaitic) can be taken as historical. Better evidence for educational practice in the period before 70 is to be found in several of the pseudepigrapha and in Josephus. These texts are often adduced to support the claims of the talmudic sources, but Goodblatt points out that a careful reading actually contradicts the talmudic sources. Education seems to have been associated with the home, with the father, or, perhaps for the wealthy, a private tutor, serving as teacher. The only educational *institution* of the period was the synagogue with its public reading of the Torah.

Another intriguing article was Safrai's overview of a millenium of urbanization in Palestine, from the Persian period to the Byzantine. Two other articles in this volume, Applebaum on Scythopolis and El-Ad on Haifa, are attempts to reconstruct aspects of the history of particular cities on the basis of limited sources. The special interest of Safrai's article lies in its scope, but even more in its reference to a model drawn from the study of modern developing nations. Since most students of the periods which Safrai treats know very little about theories of urbanization in contemporary geography, it would have been worthwhile for Safrai to provide a fuller discussion of the model.

Finally, let me note that Shatzmiller publishes, as an appendix to his article, the Latin protocol of the trial of the Jew charged with desecration of the cross in Manosque in 1342.

To judge by my own experience, the University of Haifa's *Mehkarim* is not a standard item on the shelves of American university libraries. Yet students of almost any aspect of Jewish studies will find something of value in this volume.



Engel (Continued from Page 5)

of his 292 books, pamphlets, articles, translations, and reviews, and a "Tentative Intellectual Profile," both prepared by Edward Goldstein. It is unfortunate that more space was not devoted to the intellectual profile; in its attempt to be comprehensive and to include discussion of Halpern's positions on contemporary Israeli and Zionist political issues, Goldstein's essay seems to have fallen a bit short of its stated purpose of "pointing the way toward an appreciation of his (Halpern's) contributions to knowledge." This, however, is but a minor criticism, for the volume as a whole does indeed present Ben Halpern as an important figure in modern Jewish scholarship.

Jewish Civilization: Essays and Studies. Edited by Ronald A. Brauner. Philadelphia: Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Vol. 1, 1979 (302 pages), Vol. II, 1981 (280 + 19 pages).

Reviewed by Barry Mesch (University of Florida)

Ronald Brauner in the Preface to *Jewish Civilization: Essays and Studies,* Vol. 1 says, "This volume of essays and studies is a response — it is a response to the need for composing and disseminating Jewish knowledge, a response to the hunger of an ever-increasing readership for meaningful and assimilable expositions of the varied facets of Jewish culture and a response to Mordecai Kaplan's challenging assertion that Judaism is best understood as an evolving religious civilization. This collection is evidence that America can produce native-born sons and daughters capable of continuing a long and creative tradition of Jewish learning. It is evidence that the newest institution for the training of rabbis (nine of the contributors are students and alumni of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College) has succeeded, in its short history, in producing yet another generation of scholarship." I have chosen to quote at length from this Preface because it gives a good indication of some of the strengths and weaknesses of both Vol. I and Vol. II which is devoted to the theme of Jewish Law and also honors the 100th birthday of Mordecai Kaplan. There is an obvious note of defensiveness which comes along with a measure of pomposity and declares, "we in the Reconstructionist Movement have made it. We have proven our worth. We can measure up to whatever else is going on in Jewish scholarship today." In a sense these volumes are evidence of that. As in the general world of Jewish scholarship there are different levels of expertise demonstrated in collections of essays; such is also the case here. Some of the essays do look more like the work of students and others more like the work of advanced scholars.

There is, however, another issue implicit in the Preface and that is whether or not there is a particular methodology implicit or explicit in Kaplan's writings which ought to inform Jewish scholarship. The essays contained in these volumes are of two types. There are normal, scholarly treatments of historical or theological issues which make use of generally accepted techniques of scholarship. There are also programmatic essays which try to further the aims of Reconstructionism by providing "Kaplanian" analyses and solutions to contemporary problems of Jewish life and thought. In the first type of essay there is no perceptible Reconstructionist approach to the issues. They bear no common mark and are, as a matter of fact, quite a mixed bag. We get Ivan Caine's "Numbers in the Joseph Narrative," and "Apotrapaics in Biblical Civilization", Steven Sager's, "'Sun and Light' Imagery in Ps. 19", Michael Luckens' "The Life of Levi Yizhaq of Berdichev", Rebecca Alpert's "Jewish Participation in the World's Parliament of Religions" and "The Sotah: Rabbinic Attitudes and the Adulterous Wife", Samuel Lachs' "Epiousios: Another Suggestion" and "The End of the Blue Thread" and so on. This ought not to be taken as a criticism of the kind of scholarship found in these essays but rather as a question of the movement. Does Kaplan's view of Judaism as an "evolving religious civilization" have any particular methodological implications which set it off from contemporary Jewish Studies research? From the evidence of the essays presented here the answer is in the negative.

The second type of essay found in these volumes views Kaplan and his writings as providing the fundamental answers to the problems confronting modern Jewish "civilization." There is a kind of uncritical, adoring attitude to Kaplan which seems out of place in the context of other "normal" scholarly articles. For example, in Richard Hirsch's essay "Mordecai Kaplan's Understanding of Religion and Cosmology" he says, "Contemporary Jewish thought is characterized by a desire to illumine the meaning of Judaism for the modern Jew so that the Jewish people and their inherited Torah tradition may survive in a meaningful and purposeful way. Of all Jewish thinkers of the twentieth century, none has been so bold and relentless in pursuing this goal as Mordecai Kaplan" (I p. 205). In an interesting article "Buber and Kaplan — Tensions and Harmonies" Meir Ben-Chorin says, "The boldest of Jewish theologians Kaplan introduces the concept of 'process' by which all reality is known into his conception of divinity itself. By (sic) while 'process' is the cognizable aspect of all reality, God may be 'understood' as the cosmic process that makes for man's life abundant or salvation. This last step Buber did not take. He did not dare to be so commanded" (I, p. 240).

The essays in each volume are divided into the five "eras of Jewish civilization" reflecting both Kaplan's thought and the curricular structure of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (Biblical, Rabbinic, Medieval, Modern and Contemporary). It is, however, interesting to note that of the 32 essays in the two volumes, 12 are on the pre-modern eras while 20 essays are on the modern and contemporary periods.

In Volume II, dedicated to Jewish law, there are a number of essays which try to spell out a Reconstructionist approach to Halakhah. In most cases they are calls to be more creative, more radical, less traditional and less conservative. There is a kind of self-congratulatory triumphalism. "It was not until the establishment of the RRA in 1975 that a body existed which could put into action the principles of halakhic adjustment which Kaplan had advocated more than fifty years earlier.... there are finally signs that the Jewish community is prepared to set its house in order. Jewish law is once more a live issue, and the debates surrounding it fill the pages of Jewish journals" (II, p. 167). One of the major problems of this and other essays in the volume is the need felt by many authors to take gratuitous potshots at the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox movements. Unique in this respect are the two articles by Rabbi Jack J. Cohen writing from Jerusalem on Halakhah. He takes seriously what Jews outside the Reconstructionist Movement have to say about how Halakhah responds to modernity. Rabbi Cohen provides extended summaries of the positions of various Israeli orthodox rabbis on the issue of Halakhah and treates them fairly and objectively. Thus he places his own position which he calls "post-Halakhic Judaism" into a real context of serious thinkers who are trying to cope with the problems of Jews living in the modern world.

In at least two of the essays extensive use is made of Kaplan's private journals. In Ben-Chorin's article on Kaplan and Buber,

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Howard R. Greenstein, *Turning Point: Zionism and Reform Judaism.* Chico: Scholars Press, 1981. 186 pp. (Brown Judaic Studies, 12)

Reviewed by Steven M. Lowenstein (University of Judaism)

Considering the almost sacrosanct position of Israel and Zionism in contemporary Jewish life, it requires a good deal of historical perspective to realize how recently Zionism was a controversial and often maligned minority view within Jewry. The position of the Reform movement has undergone an especially abrupt and rapid turnabout on this issue. For Reform the Zionist issue was more than purely political; it was tied to basic questions of religious ideology. Zionism seemed to conflict directly with many of the positions of Classical Reform in America. It contradicted the Classical Reform definition of Judaism as purely religious and not national, as well as its rejection of the messianic return to the Promised Land and its confident hopes for universal human brotherhood. The debate over Zionism inevitably became enmeshed with the debate over the advisability of changing the Classical Reform stance on other issues (e.g., the rejection of ritual commandments, the limitation of the role of the Hebrew language). Some wished Reform to continue to change to meet the challenge of new conditions while others wished to remain true to the Classical Reform Pittsburgh Platform of 1885.

The conventional historiography on Reform attitudes views the rapid growth of influence of East European Jews in the movement and other factors as bringing about a fairly rapid acceptance of Zionism. By the time of the Columbus Platform of 1937 with its positive attitude towards Jewish peoplehood, this view argues, Reform had made its peace with Zionism. Greenstein's book is based on the thesis that the Columbus Platform, far from marking the final victory of the Zionists in the movement, ushered in a period of intense conflict over Zionism within Reform which did not really end until shortly before the establishment of the State of Israel.

Greenstein devotes about one-half of his rather slim volume to three incidents indicative of the depth of the conflict. In 1942 the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism was founded by dissenters from a decision by the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) to endorse a Jewish army in Palestine. In 1943 a reform congregation in Houston unleashed a controversy by restricting membership to those who would subscribe to Classical Reform principles including anti-Zionism. Finally in 1946 there was a campaign for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) to withdraw from the American Jewish Conference because the latter took a publicly pro-Zionist stand. Greenstein's evidence shows clearly how bitter the debate was and how unrestrained the rhetoric on both sides. He feels that the Zionism issue precipitated a true crisis within the movement which might have had disastrous consequences.

Besides the chapters on the three incidents Greenstein's book contains a good introduction on the period leading up to the Columbus Platform, a less satisfying chapter on the changing views of three leading Reform rabbis (Morris Lazaron, Julian Morgenstern and Maurice Eisendrath) and a brief conclusion.

Just as Zionism itself was both an ideology and a political movement, so the conflict over the issue had both ideological and political aspects. Though Greenstein has a good deal of interest in the ideological aspects and does touch on such issues as the retreat from nineteenth-century faith in progress, the revival of ritual and the influence of Reconstructionist ideas, the nature of the evidence he uses leads him to place more emphasis on the politics of the debate. Though he quotes from some sermons and ideological pamphlets, much of the book is devoted to debates within the three national Reform insitutions (CCAR, UAHC and HUC [Hebrew Union College]). Although he searched for information in temple bulletins he found very little mention of the issue. It is unfortunate that he was able to find so little about the attitudes of the rank and file. Perhaps he might have found more usable material on this issue in the local Jewish press.

Greenstein sees world political events as more influential on the changing evaluation of Zionism than purely philosophical influences. Zionist successes, beginning with the Balfour Declaration and culminating in the creation of the state, made the movement seem less unrealistic. The rise of Nazism and the crisis of European Jewry made almost all Jews sympathetic to a potential haven for the oppressed while simultaneously challenging the universalistic optimism of Classical Reform. In most cases the Reform leaders involved in the debates chronicled by Greenstein were not ideologues but communal leaders and organizational politicians.

Greenstein makes a strong distinction in his book between anti-Zionism and opposition to settlement in Palestine. In the period he covers the anti-Zionists publicly stated their support for Jewish settlement in Palestine. Thus, despite the bitterness of the debate quoted by the author the differences had already narrowed. The anti-Zionists had admitted (at least in their public statements) that the settlement idea was no longer objectionable. This seems like a major concession, yet Greenstein, in his desire to show the lateness of Reform's conversion to Zionism, does not stress the change even in anti-Zionist attitudes toward settlement before 1937.

Because Greenstein wishes to emphasize the depth of the conflict in the early 1940s his narrative emphasizes anti-Zionist activities. He devotes less space to Zionist activities and gives far less attention to the towering leaders of American Zionism, Reform Rabbis Stephen Wise and Abba Hillel Silver, than to those leaders who changed their views during the period under discussion. This tends to obscure a crucial fact buried in the narrative: the anti-Zionist forces dominated the organs of the Reform movement before the Columbus Platform (although Zionism was supported by the bulk of students at HUC by 1930) whereas they were a more and more desperate minority thereafter. In the maneuvering described by Greenstein it was the Zionists who controlled the machinery of the CCAR and even of the UAHC.

Greenstein's volume is a revision of a thesis done at Ohio State University several years ago. It still bears some of the stylistic traits of a dissertation. Though clearly written it does suffer from some repetition of incidents and anaysis. Greenstein endeavors to be fair to both sides of a conflict which he views as tragic. His book, though modest in scope and perhaps a little overstated in some of its emphases, is a definite contribution both to the history of American Zionism and to the history of American Reform Judaism.

Michael R. Marrus and **Robert O. Paxton,** *Vichy France and the Jews.* New York: Basic Books, 1981. 432 pp.

Reviewed by David Weinberg (Bowling Green State University)

The present volume is an important addition to the growing number of specialized and carefully researched historical monographs on the Holocaust. Expanding on their own previous studies of French Jewry and of Vichy respectively, Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton have chosen to examine an issue that challenges deeply-felt sentiments within France and the French Jewish community. On the one hand, they boldly attack the mythology surrounding the French Resistance during World War II and stress the importance and strength of collaboration among Vichy leaders. On the other, they emphasize the depth of anti-Semitism in France which facilitated the process of roundups and deportations under Vichy and which continues to impact upon contemporary French society.

Specifically, the book yields two significant and novel insights concerning Vichy policy toward Jews. First, the anti-Semitic legislation of the Pétain government was not a creation of the war but reflected a consistent pattern of anti-foreigner sentiment and behavior that had its roots in the last decade of the Third Republic. The accession of Vichy to power in the summer of 1940 merely offered greater opportunities for anti-Semites to voice their prejudices and, in some cases, to realize their nightmarish dreams. Second, Vichy policy toward Jews cannot be explained away as a desperate response to Nazi pressures. In actuality, laws such as the *Statut des Juifs* enacted in October 1940 which authorized prefects to intern foreign Jews in "special camps" or to assign them to live under police surveillance in remote villages were initiated by the Vichy government itself without Nazi insistence and were carried out by French officials and police.

Marrus and Paxton devote a great deal of attention to the period directly preceding the war defeat and the establishment of the Vichy regime. The combination of economic crisis, radical activism, and fear of war in the 1930's created xenophobia among Frenchmen. The Jewish community, swelled by the influx of eastern European and later German and Austrian refugees, proved a convenient scapegoat for France's ills, serving as both the cause and symbol of the country's decline as a great power. In the fevered atmosphere of the 1930's, the language and programs of Vichy's anti-Jewish policies took on embryonic form. Writers and politicians spoke openly in support of a biological definition of Jews, of legislation limiting Jewish influence, and even of the annihilation of Jews. Fears of declining prestige and power fed by the Depression and by the rise of an aggressive Germany led to the enactment of anti-foreigner legislation in the late thirties which severely restricted immigrant political and economic activity and established internment camps to detain "dangerous foreign elements" until they could be expelled. By the onset of Vichy in July 1940, government officials had become used to dealing cruelly and unfeelingly with foreigners and especially with Jews.

As a result, Vichy officials did not need pressure from the Nazi occupier to initiate anti-Jewish legislation. Drawing upon deeply-rooted prejudice, the Pétain government issued a wave of anti-Jewish edicts within only a few months of attaining power. So swift was the enactment of these statutes that they generally caught the Third Reich by surprise. Indeed, Nazi officials often opposed Vichy policies as ill-conceived and premature. Marrus and Paxton reject the argument that anti-Semitic programs were merely a desperate effort to curry favor with Nazi officials and to preserve French independence. Vichy anti-Semitic legislation often went further than similar German laws. In some cases, as in the issue of dumping Jewish refugees into the Unoccupied Zone, the Pétain government actively worked to thwart Nazi intentions. In the end, the authors maintain, anti-Semitic policy in preventing further immigration, encouraging the reemigration of refugees, and reducing the number of "non-French" in public life actively served the needs of the National Revolution.

Marrus and Paxton do not accept the argument often voiced by Vichy apologists that the Pétain government sought to save French Jews by allowing eastern European Jews to be deported. As the book clearly demonstrates, government officials offered few objections when natives were rounded up along with foreign Jews in the final wave of deportations that began in June 1943. More importantly, to devise a plan to protect "their" Jews, Vichy officials would have had to know the full details of the Final Solution, an unlikely possibility given the concerted efforts by Pierre Laval and others to avoid discovering what happened to the cattle cars that left France periodically after March 1942. Though Vichy did indeed drag its feet in 1943, the combined efforts of government officials, politicians, and policemen during the first three years of Vichy rule took its tragic toll. As Marrus and Paxton conclude: "One can only speculate on how many fewer would have perished if the Nazis had been obliged to identify, arrest, and transport without any French assistance every Jew in France whom they wanted to slaughter" (p. 372).

Despite its brilliant insights and penetrating analysis, *Vichy France and the Jews* is not without its faults. Noticeably missing is the Jewish perspective. The authors note in their introduction that they deliberately chose not to study the Jewish response to Vichy policy, yet it is commonly accepted by historians of the Holocaust that government actions in Nazi-occupied Europe were influenced by the attitudes and behavior of the local Jewish community. At times, Marrus and Paxton's work seems to mirror Raul Hilberg's massive tome on the destruction of European Jewry—an exhaustive examination of the bureaucracy of the Final Solution which treats the Jew as a passive and faceless victim with little or no influence in the shaping of his destiny. There is also an awkward imbalance in the treatment of the stages of Vichy's developing anti-Jewish program. Almost two-thirds of the narrative is devoted to the period between 1940 and 1942 when Vichy generally took the initiative and the German occupiers assumed a secondary role. This is understandable given Marrus and Paxton's emphasis yet it is in the period after 1942 when the Nazis begin to impose their own direction on the solution to the "Jewish problem" in France that the greatest losses were incurred. Finally, the work is weakened by a narrative that ends abruptly with the collapse of Vichy in the summer of 1944. One is left wondering about the fate of the various French officials who participated in

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Uri D. Herscher, *Jewish Agricultural Utopias in America 1880-1910.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981. 197 pp.

Reviewed by Henry L. Feingold (Baruch College - CUNY)

Those who look back longingly at the lives of our forefathers and imagine there a harmony and wholeness, perhaps even an epic quality, which they cannot find in their own lives would do well to read this latest work dealing with the Jewish farming experience in America. They will discover that the motivations of these pioneers were no less conflicted, their lives no less encumbered by faulty judgment, their life goals no less unrealizable than what one can observe in contemporary American Jewry. The Jewish farming experience in America was hardly typical but it nevertheless offers insights about the American Jewish experience and character available nowhere else.

It began early in the 19th century when America generally sought to build a "new Jerusalem" on some fertile stretch of soil. Some will recall Mordecai Noah's theatrical Ararat experiment in 1825.[1] It was one of several such schemes proposed but rarely fully implemented by Jews. The notion of full-scale Jewish farm colonies really came into its own after the Russian pogroms of the 1880s created the necessary precondition in human suffering and provided the population willing to experjment with their lives to find a new way to live. The American experience recruited men without prior experience in agriculture but in terms of the population stock involved and to some extent in motivational ideologies employed, it bore strong parallels to similar "back to the soil" experiments in Russia and Palestine. In America most of these agricultural utopias failed either directly or in fulfilling the idealized goals they set for themselves. That failure has left in its wake a residue of questions, many impinging on Jewish political culture and national character, which newly available data and the passage of time allow us to answer. Some are old questions. Is there something in the Jewish personality and group development which rules out farming as a profession? Why did the agricultural colonies fail in America while in Palestine and to some extent in Russia and Argentina they had a modicum of success? Was the heavy ideological freight these colonies bore an asset or liability to their development? Did the conflicted motivation of the settlers, motivation which ran from notions of renewal through agriculture to Jewish communalism to Jewish dispersion and correction of character, promote failure?

When one considers that almost every enterprise American Jews have set their minds to has been a success, sometimes embarrasingly so, the Jewish failure in agriculture seems anomalous. Undoubtedly many factors contributed but one, the underlying ideologies to which the author attributes so much, requires exploration. Wherever Jews came to the notion of farming there existed side by side with the high idealism released by utopian socialist ideology a specific abnegating component for Jews which derided or diminished all that came before in their historical development. They accepted the populist agrarian fundamentalist notion that tilling the soil was somehow more ennobling and more normal than the middle-man occupations which history had made their lot. Farming was productive while peddling, inn keeping and general merchandizing was thought to be "parasitic." Influenced by the narodnik Tolstoyan idealization of soil they became convinced that the growth of a harmonious personality as well as a balanced community was governed by the same rules which govern the growth of a tomato plant. Both had to be rooted in the soil which was assigned divine properties. Jews of course could boast of no such connection nor did they fit well into the socialist conception of productive labor and "normal" class development. Both ideologies in tandem spelled almost a total denial of Judaism and frequently of Jewishness itself. That is why Herscher's frequent observation of how few recognizably Jewish features there were in the American colonies comes as no surprise.

The abnegation component was no less present in the social engineering approach of the stewards like Baron de Hirsch, Jacob Schiff, the Rothschilds and others. Their object was amelioration and improvement of the Jewish condition but there was more than simple philanthropy involved. They also sensed much that was ignoble in the life of the petty traders who populated the congested villages of the Pale and the ghettos of the coastal cities in northeastern America. Subsidizing Jewish agricultural settlements like bringing Jews directly to the midwest through Galveston was part of a process of reshaping Jews into an acceptable American type. All involved in these utopian experiments had little positive to say about what the Jew actually was. They wanted to improve him to correct what they thought were imperfections.

Important, too, in accounting for the failure is timing. Some day a clever historian will isolate a tardiness factor in modern Jewish history. Jews seem to arrive at a specific historical juncture or process when it has become all but obsolete. Hannah Arendt argued that such was the case with the establishment of the Jewish nation state in 1948. Others observe that the application of military power exclusively to solve problems came precisely at that historical juncture when more than ever wars had become political. That is, they were waged as much with ideas and information as they were with tanks and bombs. Similarly Jews came to farming when the sustenance family farm had been made obsolete by the agricultural revolution. The new commercial farmer was required to possess precisely those characteristics of the world of commerce which were so abhorrent to our utopian farmers. The census of 1890 reported that the cutting edge of the frontier, which some felt had shaped American national character, was no more. There was no more wilderness to be tamed and the connection between its disappearance and the revolt of the American farmer was not accidental. The Populist movement featured an anti-urban spin-off. Some detect an anti-Semitic one as well. After the election of 1896 the nation chose the path of industrialization and followed it without looking back. But even before that crucial election it was clear that the farmer, once the hero of the nation, was losing ground. The idyllic image of farm life paled in comparison with the life pictured in the cities which was carried everywhere by the new slick magazines. The farmer went from hero to hayseed in less than one generation. Ironically the Jewish farmer entered the stage armed with his idealized notion of agricultural life when the American farm economy was increasingly hard pressed and when the farmer was experiencing a loss of social status. The utopian Jewish farmer was rushing to board a sinking ship.

We need to make certain observations about ideology because Jews were an ideologically "hot" people. The proliferation of utopian agricultural experiments are additional evidence of that. Here Herscher, perhaps too much influenced by the eloquence of Arthur Ruppin and Gabriel Davidson, chronicler of the American Jewish farmer and one time director of the Jewish Agricultural Society, confines himself exclusively to the positive things ideology can do, mostly its ability to release and generate enormous energy and dedication. He does not capture the underside of that kind of commitment, the heavy freight these Jewish farmers were compelled to bear in upholding the twin forces of agrarianism and communalism. One ideology would have been quite enough in the pragmatic atmosphere of the 1880s where farming was almost foredoomed to failure. Jewish farmers coupled their fantasies about farming with a desire to build perfect communities whose outlines were taken from socialist dogma. They gave priority to collectivism, egalitarianism, absence of private property and a work ethic based on the idea that each would give what he was able and each would receive what he needed. The extent of collectivism, a reading of this book makes clear, varied considerably between the colonies. Alliance held pretty much to the idea of private property while New Odessa in Oregon had not a trace of it. Collectivist enterprises on the American frontier were not unknown but they were rare. The basic pattern was individual homesteads. For Ralph Waldo Emerson, after all, frontier farming was the seed-bed of the component of self-reliance he thought he detected in the American national character. In the larger context of American agriculture such experiments in collectivism and communalism went against the grain. The very shape of the society, its design, favored individualism. That was reflected in the survival capacities of the colonies. The less collectivist, the less ideologically rigid, the more ideology was tempered by practical considerations, the better the possibility of sustaining themselves. Alliance's factory to furnish employment during winter, the proximity of the southern New Jersey colonies to Philadelphia and New York markets and boarders who might bring in a few extra dollars, the willingness to do what worked and not worry too much about ideology was a crucial factor in their longer survival. The crucial transactions with the outside world required a currency more acceptable than mere ideology.

There were, to be sure, more concrete reasons for failure. There were poor planning, poor locations, poor access to markets or no markets, underfinancing and sometimes something as mundane but crucial as imbalance between the sexes: not enough women. But while these had their impact the colonies were so much an invention of ideology that one is compelled to seek a clue to long range reasons for failure here. On the one hand one can agree that it was a powerful transcendent idea such as the rebuilding of a Jewish national homeland which made it possible for Jewish farm colonies ultimately to overcome the formidable roadblocks which stood in the way of success. That was undoubtedly the case in Palestine and is one explanation for the contrast with Jewish settements in America. Yet students of Jewish history who understand the zeal which can be tapped by a meaningful ideology also have ample evidence that passionately believed idea systems burn so furiously that they cannot sustain themselves for a lifetime. Eventually the glitter of alternative choices makes itself felt and casts doubt about the road taken. One reason for the success of the kibbutz after 1920, noted by Herscher, is that those glittering alternatives, namely cities, were not available in the Ottoman empire. More interesting still is Herscher's shrewd observation concerning the Jews drawn to these utopian colonies. He notes that while the Jewish enterprises inevitably failed after a few years, the Mormons, utilizing strong leaders, detailed pre-planning and a religious motivation were everywhere successful. What was the difference? As idealistic and capable of great sacrifice as these Jewish utopians were they lacked a sense of "Christian selflessness". They could not assume the passivity we associate with Christianity and with peasants the world-over. When Jews finally did become farmers they became soil technicians, agronomists, not peasants such as Tolstoy idealized. Even from the vantage of the contemporary kibbutz the judgments regarding the benefits of a defining ideology are not final. It is difficult to say whether their current prosperity stems from their founding ideology or the degree they have been able to depart from it. The moshav proves more lasting, more committed to agriculture, and probably more productive. Less than three percent of the population and not much more of the gross national product stems from the kibbutz. These have often abandoned their basic agricultural cast to become agro-industrial. Frequently their defining socialism has gone the way of all flesh as well. That is what the retention of Arab labor or even any outside labor really signifies. When Jews finally did disperse themselves into the interior in America it was not as farmers seeking to build the "new Jerusalem" but as businessmen seeking opportunity and profit. Those few who survived utopianism and remained farmers succeeded to the extent that they were able to master those business values and skills, especially the sense of where profit could be made, which was so despised by the utopian ideologists. It was as highly commercial chicken and dairy farmers that Jews finally left their mark on American agriculture.

The strongest facet of this sometimes provocative book is the author's ability to write good narrative prose. He also knows the right questions. But this is not a work of basic research; the author relies on secondary source material. Two personal memoirs of people involved in the colonies are attached as appendices. They fill out and otherwise personalize what would be a slight work of four chapters. The description of each colony varies considerably in size and quality. Sometimes these descriptions which form the body of the work deteriorate into recitational cataloging. At other times one cannot avoid the impression that the author's familiarity with the history of American agriculture, especially the literature of non-Jewish agricultural utopian colonies, is too frail to support the structure he builds. It is not until the conceptually rich and provocative final chapter that Herscher comes fully into his own.

It was high time for a reexamination of the Jewish farmer in America. Over a decade has passed since Joseph Brandes' *Immigrants to Freedom* first established the lines of research and outlined the problems attendant on such a historical inquiry. This book stands squarely on its shoulders and at the same time opens up new areas of inquiry. Eventually we will get a broadly gauged study which compares the Jewish agricultural enterprise in Russia, Argentina, Israel and the United States. It would make a sterling dissertation topic for some doctoral candidate. When that intrepid researcher

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which is for the most part an attempt to show the inherent connections between Buber and Kaplan, we are also treated to a fascinating personal history of Kaplan's relationship to Buber and his ongoing reactions to Buber and his writings. Mel Scult, in his essay "The Early Kaplan and Halakhah", demonstrates that quite early in his career Kaplan had come to doublt the divine origin of the Torah and the binding authority of the Halakhah. As early as 1918 he urged the adoption of Sunday as the Jewish Sabbath and a few years later the abolition of the Second Day of the Holidays (II, p. 105).

In the concluding article of Vol. II Richard Libowitz performs a valuable service by providing a catalogue of the correspondence in the Mordecai M. Kaplan Archives which totals over eight thousand letters, cables, and cards. At the end of this second volume dedicated to Kaplan there are nineteen pages of pictures depicting the career of the founder of Reconstructionism.

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anti-Jewish activities. Given the recent outbreak of anti-Semitism in France, readers might also like to know whether the attitudes of Vichy carried over into post-war French society.

But these are relatively minor flaws in an otherwise meticulously researched and well-written work. Students of both the Holocaust and of modern France would do well to examine closely *Vichy France and the Jews* for its rigorous methodology, historical objectivity, and significant insights into one of the most controversial periods in modern French and Jewish history.

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begins his work let him not forget *Jewish Agricultural Utopias in America*. It contains some of the crucial questions he will have to address.

NOTES

[1]Jonathan D. Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew, The Two Worlds of Mordecai Noah*. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1981. See especially chapter IV.

Alexander Scheiber, *Geniza Studies*. Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1981. 686 pp.

Reviewed by Mark R. Cohen (Princeton University)

The Cairo Geniza contains the richest deposit of manuscript sources for the study of Jewish civilization in the middle ages. Its contents, including fragments of every type of literature written and read by Jews in the medieval Islamic world as well as letters and documents from their everyday life, have attracted the attention of scholars from every discipline of Jewish studies. Most have concentrated their energies on a single genre, be it poetry, Bible fragments, halakhic remains, historical letters, etc. The volume of papers presented by the group of scholars who participated in Tel Aviv University's Conference on Geniza Studies in 1976 *(Te'uda I: Ḥiqre genizat Qahir,* edited by M. A. Friedman, Tel Aviv, 1980) offers a birdseye view of the polyvalent field and of its areas of specialized research.

A noted Geniza researcher who was unable to attend that conference is the Hungarian scholar Alexander Scheiber. His work has encompassed a wider range of material than that of most Geniza researchers and hence, in and of itself, represents a kind of cross-section of the field. A selection of his papers, previously published and dispersed over a large number of journals and *Festschriften,* has now been conveniently collected between the covers of one book. Read as the history of scholarship, the anthology affords a glimpse of the cumulative process that has characterized the study of the Geniza.

Sixty-two "Geniza Studies," in English, German, French, Hebrew, and Italian, make up the selection. They were published between 1947 and 1979. Each "study" (with two exceptions) consists in the edition of one or more texts from the Geniza preceded by a short introduction and accompanied by notes. The largest number of texts is from the Kaufmann Geniza Collection, housed in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. The article, "The Kaufmann Genizah: Its Importance for the World of Scholarship," nicely describes the history of scholarly investigation into this group of manuscripts, while the selection from Scheiber's oeuvre as a whole shows that he has been the most conscientious redeemer of the Budapest fragments. Also represented are other major collections, especially in Cambridge, Oxford, and New York, where over the years Scheiber has assiduously searched for texts that supplement and explicate those preserved in his native Hungary.

The studies are arranged chronologically, according to date of publication. Perhaps it would have been preferable to have organized the material thematically to allow the reader to follow the cumulative process of the author's research without interruption. The article on the Kaufmann Collection, if placed at the very beginning of the collection, would then have made a fitting introduction. Natural groupings suggested by the material are: poets and poetry (17 articles); books, booklists, and copyists (9 articles); letters of historical interest (12 articles); Saadyana (5 articles); the "She'elot 'Atiqot" (3 articles); Johannes-Obadiah and other proselytes to

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Alexander Altmann, *Essays in Jewish Intellectual History.* Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1981. x, 324 pp.

Reviewed by Seymour Feldman (Rutgers University)

The history of Jewish philosophy is one of the older fields of *ḥokhmat yisrael,* first cultivated by Die Wissenschaft des Judentums in the 19th century and currently flourishing in the various centers of Jewish learning throughout the Old and New Worlds. Ever since Salomon Munk's pioneering and still important contributions the study of Jewish philosophy has been one of the crowning achievements of modern Jewish scholarship. Just consider the following roster of 19th-century luminaries in this field: Munk, Joel, Kaufmann, Jakob Guttmann; then, their 20th-century successors: Neumark, Husik, Julius Guttmann, Wolfson, Vajda, Pines. With the passing-away of Wolfson, Alexander Altmann stands out as the American representative of this great tradition in Jewish learning. For over 20 years he has taught at Brandeis University, and a significant number of his students have carried on this tradition and now occupy academic positions throughout the country. But unlike his predecessors and contemporaries Altmann is unique in the breadth of his scholarly interests. For among the group of scholars I have mentioned only Vajda had any scholarly interest in Jewish mysticism, a field that Altmann has cultivated and is still cultivating. Moreover, with the exception of Julius Guttmann, none of these scholars contributed any scholarly work in modern Jewish philosophy, other than Joel's, Wolfson's and Pines' work on Spinoza. Yet Altmann has brought the moderns under his wings as well as the medievals. The present collection of all (but one) previously published essays is an excellent exemplar of his catholicity of intellectual interests, including articles on medieval, early modern, and 20th-century Jewish philosophical personalities. The book contains in particular three essays on Maimonides, four on Mendelssohn and three on 20th-century German Jewish philosophy. It is thus quite representative of Altmann's scholarly activities. For the purposes of this review I shall focus upon these three areas of his research.

Of the three essays on Maimonides one is a relatively brief study entitled "Maimonides' 'Four Perfections'", which is a textual study of the concluding chapter of the *Guide,* in which, according to Altmann, Maimonides' debt to ibn Bajja, one of Altmann's favorite philosophers,[1] is evident. The relationship between Maimonides and the Moslem-Spanish philosopher has been studied by others, including one of Altmann's students Lawrence Berman, and it is quite probable that on several topics in moral-political philosophy Maimonides drew upon ibn Bajja. Both Maimonides and ibn Bajja took quite seriously Aristotle's discussion of human virtue in the *Nicomachean Ethics,* wherein he stressed the intellectual over the moral virtues. However, unlike Aristotle, his Semitic successors did not recognize the independent value of moral virtue but saw it only as necessary preparation for intellectual progress. For ibn Bajja and Maimonides man's "ultimate felicity" consists in intellectual perfection, whose attainment results in immortality. Unfortunately, this essay is underdeveloped. I would like to know *why,* given the pronounced *practical* thrust of Judaism and Islam, Maimonides and ibn Bajja relegated moral development to a secondary status, even to the point of depriving it of any real significance? After all, the *imitatio Dei* can be achieved morally as well as intellectually! Altmann's attempt to explain Maimonides' position is curious, for the three reasons he gives for Maimonides' preference for intellectual virtue are all Aristotelian. Aristotle, too, believed that, man differs from the other animals in possessing intellect and that it is via the intellect that man can achieve immortality. So the question still remains: why did Maimonides and ibn Bajja deny independent value to moral perfection?

Of greater length and philosophical significance is the next essay "Free Will and Predestination in Saadia, Bahya and Maimonides". Although the essay is not, as its title indicates, restricted to Maimonides, it is with respect to the latter that Altmann makes a real *novella,* and it is to this *hiddush* that I want to address my remarks. After presenting a concise and useful summary of Saadia's strong defense of "absolute free will" and Bahya's pietistic retreat from this position to the mystical doctrine of complete trust in God, whose "all-pervading will" controls everything, Altmann focuses his analysis on what he considers to be the "real view" of Maimonides on human free will. His thesis is in short that whereas in the theological-halachic writings Maimonides' position on this topic is close to Saadia's defense of absolute free will, in the *Guide* a different account of the matter is expressed. Following the suggestion of Pines Altmann maintains that in the *Guide* Maimonides advances a deterministic view of human action, a doctrine that represents Maimonides' "esoteric" and personal view. Altmann is careful to point out that Maimonides' determinism is not to be confused with the doctrines of fatalism or predestination, whereby man is denied all responsibility for his choices or actions. Rather, although man's behavior is caused, he does have the power to choose, and hence he is a morally and legally responsible agent. Accordingly, on Altmann's reading of Maimonides, the *Rav Hamoreh* becomes a "compatibilist", "reconciliationist", or "soft determinist", all such expressions being used in current philosophy to mark the position of a determinist who believes that human behavior is both caused and free. This is, of course, a big topic, raising a number of philosophical and exegetical problems, which deserve separate treatment. In this review I shall have to limit myself only to suggesting certain difficulties I have with the Pines-Altmann thesis.

First, it presupposes the previously mentioned dichotomy between the theological-halachic writings and the philosophical *Guide,* or the distinction between the exoteric and esoteric Maimonides that Leo Strauss defended a number of years ago. This hermeneutical hypothesis is, however, arguable, indeed, suspicious, if only because it can be so easily abused. I myself prefer the "unitary" conception of Maimonides. True, the latter occasionally requires exegetical ingenuity and hard work to reconcile apparently incompatible statements; but it is, in my view, preferable to the alternative procedure of relegating the *Mishneh Torah* to the libraries and curriculum of the primary schools. Second, if Maimonides had been a determinist, why didn't his medieval successors, many of whom were quite interested in this problem, note this alleged fact? We should have expected the two most percipient and acute critics of

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Maimonides — Gersonides and Crescas — to have detected Maimonides' hidden determinism and to have discussed it. Gersonides would have rejected it and Crescas would have used it as an *asmakhta* to support his own defense of determinism, which he at least regarded as novel. Yet, no mention of Maimonides' determinism is made by Gersonides or Crescas! Weren't they careful readers?

Finally, Altmann bases his argument primarily on the *Guide,* II: 48, a passage originally suggested by Pines, in which Maimonides expresses the view that it is characteristic of the Bible to say that God causes *everything,* including human actions and choices, even though in fact He is in many cases only the remote, not the proximate, cause of things. Among the proximate causes listed by Maimonides are "voluntary causes", i.e. human choices or motives. From this passage Altmann and Pines infer 1) that human action is "subject to causation" and that 2) there is a "complete analogy between the necessities attending natural and volitional causes"; hence, they conclude, "Maimonides (is) a strict determinist" (p. 56). As is not unusual in the exegesis of the *Guide,* we have here a passage that is capable of several interpretative possibilities; indeed, in this very chapter Maimonides makes this very point about the Bible itself. The prophets wrote a book for popular consumption; hence, they often describe events or actions *as if* they were directly caused by God *ad gloriam Dei.* This mode of representation is quite understandable, since ultimately everything presumably is traceable to the will of God. In reality, however, these events or actions are brought about by more proximate agents, some natural, others volitional. Now I take Rambam's point to be that although it is the habit of the prophets to make God *the* cause of everything, more accessible things are the productive factors of natural and human phenomena. In the latter, man's own will is the agent of his actions. This will is "caused by God" in the innocuous sense that it was given to man *ab initio* with his creation. In *Guide* III:17 Rambam explicitly states that it was God's eternal will that man should have the absolute ability to choose and do whatever he wishes and that he bears the responsibility for such choices and actions. The prophets can therefore rightly say that God is the cause of Joseph's winding-up in Egypt (Gen. 45:8); but this is so because Joseph's brothers had been endowed by God with free-will, which is the real reason why Joseph turned-up in Egypt. Since man is God's creature, one might be inclined to say that human actions are directly caused by God, thus passing over the proximate causes. But this option Maimonides rejects and rightly so, since it can be dangerous, as the history of the problem of evil proves. For if God is really the cause of my eating ice-cream only one hour after my eating meat, then He should be guilty of this infraction of dietary laws. This is, of course, a theological hornet's nest that we have to flee from, at least in this review. Maimonides helps us find a refuge by telling us that in reality God is not the direct cause of any of my actions; hence, He is not responsible for them. I am. No wonder, Maimonides points out, that in these cases the Bible uses the language of "command" or "speak": God *commands* a widow to sustain Elijah. But after all, a commandment implies that the person to whom it is addressed *can* disobey. This is admittedly a thorny topic, and more needs to be said about it. Altmann's essay has been a welcome stimulant for such a discussion.

Altmann's next essay, "Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas: Natural and Divine Prophecy", is a good example of the use of the comparative method to highlight the distinctive features of the position held by a classic figure in the history of philosophy. Although Maimonides' prophetology has fared well in Maimonidean scholarship, Altmann still manages to say something helpful and stimulating. His main thesis is that whereas for Maimonides prophecy is primarily a natural phenomenon, for Aquinas it is supranatural. Maimonides' naturalistic account of prophecy is, according to Altmann, based upon an Avicennian emanation ontology; Aquinas' supranaturalistic doctrine of prophecy stems from his rejection of this metaphysics in favor of a conception of nature that emphasizes divine grace and will. In addition, the two great medieval *doctores* differed in their views concerning the Agent Intellect and angels and the respective roles these agents play in prophecy. Whereas Maimonides shared the general view held by most Muslim *falasifa* that the Agent Intellect is a transcendent being identical with an angel and that it exercises a crucial role in prophecy, Aquinas denied that the Agent Intellect is an angel. Altmann is quite illuminating on these points. My main difficulty[2] concerns his contention that for Maimonides Mosaic prophecy is still mediated through the Agent Intellect, although it dispenses with the imagination.[3] Again, such an interpretation has plausibility only by discounting the halachic works, to which Maimonides explicitly refers the reader of the *Guide* for his view on Mosaic prophecy. In those works Maimonides plainly states that in Moses' prophecy there was no mediation by any angel and that this is what was meant by the verse "God spoke to him mouth to mouth" (Numbers 12:8). Moreover, in this passage Maimonides claims that Moses attained an angelic state. Now if this is so, why would he need an angel to mediate his prophecy? He *is* an angel![4]

I now turn to the *Mendelssohniana.* With the exception of a few studies done in pre-Hitler Germany not too much attention was given to Mendelssohn either by general historians of European philosophy or by historians of Jewish philosophy. The former assumed that Mendelssohn had been eclipsed by Kant; the latter inferred from Mendelssohn's own emancipation of philosophy from religion that he had no Jewish philosophy at all. This relative neglect fortunately came to an end with a series of essays by Altmann throughout the 60's on different aspects of Mendelssohn's philosophy and then with his excellent biography of Mendelssohn published in 1973. One of the important features of the latter work is its demonstration that, although the majority of Mendelssohn's writings were not specifically Judaic in content, more than a few were. In the present work, Altmann has included two essays concerned with Mendelssohn's philosophical theology and two on his theory of church-state relations.

The first of these essays — "Moses Mendelssohn's Proofs for the Existence of God" — is perhaps the most philosophical in the entire book. It is based upon Mendelssohn's last and "most accomplished philosophical work", *Die Morgenstunden,* which was specifically devoted to the question of the provability of God's existence. Coming after both Hume's *Dialogues* and Kant's *Critique of Reason* one might wonder why and how Mendelssohn could have thought

that the provability of God was still a live question. However, as Altmann points out, Kant's *Critique* was not yet a "best seller" nor did Mendelssohn have first-hand or thorough knowledge of its devastating critique of philosophical theology. Thus, the *Morgenstunden* was then still relevant, so much so that Kant himself described it as the "most perfect product of dogmatizing metaphysics" (quoted by Altmann, page 121). In this essay Altmann describes how Mendelssohn attempted to rehabilitate the medieval *a posteriori* cosmological proof from contingency and the *a priori* ontological proof by drawing upon Leibnizian ideas. But Spinoza might have been equally relevant. Mendelssohn's version of the cosmological argument leads, as Altmann notes, to the ontological argument; and this characterizes Spinoza's own proofs for God's existence, where the notion of God as *causa sui* is the key to both the *a posteriori* and the *a priori* proofs. The Spinozistic flavor of Mendelssohn's version of the ontological argument is also apparent: the *ens perfectissum* is the being whose essence excludes existence as a mere mode; rather, for such a being existence must be an attribute, or a "positive determination". As Altmann has shown in another study,[5] Mendelssohn used Leibniz to "correct" Spinoza, thereby making it possible for him to absorb some of Spinoza's ideas into his own philosophy. Altmann concludes this useful essay with the interesting observation that Kant too believed in God on "practical" grounds, and that both he and Mendelssohn established their convictions on nontheoretical foundations, practical reason for Kant and divine revelation for Mendelssohn.

Today, however, this aspect of Mendelssohn's philosophical theology seems dated. Not many, including the religious, believe that philosophy can or should prove the existence of God. Hume and Kant, not Mendelssohn, prevailed. Perhaps for this reason Altmann's next essay, "Moses Mendelssohn on Miracles", is more pertinent. After all, biblical religion is based upon the belief in miracles, whose authenticity the devout must accept. In this short essay Altmann describes how Mendelssohn's views on miracles moved from an early "integrationist theory" to a middle-period "interventionist theory" and finally to a late adoption of the integrationist position. The terms "integrationist" and "interventionist" here connote the relative dominance of either divine reason or divine will in the occurrence of miracles. On the one hand, the integrationist affirms a pre-established plan of miracles, whereby miracles were pre-arranged *ab initio* into the natural course of events; the interventionist, on the other hand, stresses the role of God's voluntary infringement of the normal series of natural causes and effects. Assuming this account of Mendelssohn's intellectual journey on this topic, I want to ask two questions, which are unfortunately not asked by Altmann: 1) *Why* did Mendelssohn change his mind, especially since the integrationist view reduces miracles "to a superfluity"? (150); and 2) Is Mendelssohn's ultimate adoption of the integrationist view consistent with a very important doctrine enunciated in his *Jerusalem*? The latter question is especially pertinent, since Mendelssohn makes the uniqueness of Judaism and the authority of the Halacha depend upon the Sinaitic revelation, which is the miracle *par excellence*. Even in his earlier writings Mendelssohn seemed to have been ambivalent on this issue. For, on the one hand, he doesn't want to put too much theological weight on miracles, since it is one of the merits of Judaism as against Christianity not to "rely upon miracles"; yet, on the other hand, he admits that the miracle of Mt. Sinai confirms the authority of the Mosaic legislation. Despite the religious importance of this topic it seems that Mendelssohn's views were not particularly clear or consistent.

Altmann concludes this anthology with three essays on 20th-century German Jewish religious philosphy, thus rounding-off his own "survey" of the history of Jewish philosophy. The second of these essays, "Theology in Twentieth-Century German Jewry", is itself a useful travel-guide though some of the key stopping-places in this region of Jewish thought: Hermann Cohen, Leo Baeck, Buber, Rosenzweig, and a few remarks about Jewish neo-orthodoxy. Almost all of what Altmann says is to the point and helpful to someone not too familiar with this theological terrain. I want, however, to focus upon the more detailed essays on Rosenzweig and Baeck. In the former, "Franz Rosenzweig and Eugen-Rosenstock Huessy: An Introduction to their *Letters on Judaism and Christianity*", Altmann gives a very fine account of Rosenzweig's "state of mind" just before his fateful encounter with Rosenstock-Huessy in 1913, which almost resulted in his conversion to Christianity; he also attempts to explain why *prior* to that event Rosenzweig had already chosen a "religious orientation". According to Altmann's reconstruction of Rosenzweig's thinking during that period, Rosenzweig came to religion as the result of a philosophical analysis of the history of philosophy, particularly modern German philosophy. Rosenzweig concluded that Hegel had achieved two main results: 1) he had "ended" pagan philosophy; and 2) he had incorporated philosophy into Christianity, particularly in its "German Protestant-Romantic" version. After Hegel, Rosenzweig believed, pagan-secular philosophy was no longer possible and the way was open for a religious philosophy in a new, modern form. The apostate Jew Rosenstock-Huessy had already reached similar conclusions, and he was able to personify to Rosenzweig the new kind of religious philosopher that Rosenzweig himself was trying to find or become.

I am particularly grateful to Altmann for this description of a stage in Rosenzweig's thinking that has always troubled me. But I am still unclear why Rosenzweig should have thought that, assuming everything he says about modern German philosophy is correct, religion is the only answer after Hegel. Why should he have thought that Hegel was the "last philosopher", especially since he knew, at least in the *Star of Redemption*, of the existence of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche? Aside from their similar philosophical concerns and views both Rosenzweig and his friend seem to have been infected with a common intellectual bias — complete ignorance of non-European, especially non-German, philosophy. Throughout this whole period of their intellectual development these two German philosopher-historians show *no* awareness of the works of any of the British or American philosophers writing from 1860 to 1913! J.S. Mill, F.H. Bradley, the early Bertrand Russell and G.E. Moore; C.S. Peirce, William James, Josiah Royce and the early John Dewey — none of these names appears in the teutonic tomes of Rosenzweig and Rosenstock-Huessy. A pity! Were the situation quite different in contemporary Jewish theological thinking, this point would be of only historical interest. Yet, until recently, German philosophy still

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exerted its dominance over Jewish thinking. Perhaps Rosenzweig's blindness may be instructive.

The last essay in Altmann's book is a very fine piece on Leo Baeck's attitude toward Jewish mysticism. Not knowing too much about Leo Baeck I found this essay to be most informative and insightful. Inheriting the attitude of Die Wissenschaft des Judentums Baeck expressed a reserve towards Qabbalah and Hasidut in his earlier writings, including the first edition of the modern classic *The Essence of Judaism*. However, even before the work of Scholem, he began to develop a more positive position on Jewish mysticism, primarily by absorbing into his own religious thinking the new secular mysticism of contemporary German poetry and by differentiating Jewish mysticism from all other kinds of mysticism. According to Baeck the unique features of Jewish mystical thought are its ethical thrust and its denial of the *unio mystica* typical of most non-Jewish mystical thought. Given his characterization of Judaism as ethical monotheism, Baeck was able to make Qabbalah "Kosher" by stressing its ethical content; the theosophical (to use Scholem's term) Sefirot become for Baeck more God's ethical attributes, not so much metaphysical, or ontological, emanations. The later editions of *The Essence of Judaism* and some of his more scholarly studies reflect Baeck's "reversal". Ultimately he was to characterize Judaism as such as a religion of "Geheimnis und Gebot", mystery and commandment. Today, of course, this view is not novel; after the research of Scholem it has become a commonplace. In this sense Baeck is a good example of how the modern Jew reaches a deeper understanding of Judaism by recognizing the historical impact of mysticism upon Judaism and by assimilating at least some of this force in his own theological thinking. At the end of his life Baeck stressed the uniqueness of the Jewish People, a doctrine not typical of a German Liberal Jew, yet one quite characteristic of the Qabbalah. After reading Altmann's essay, I want to study Baeck.

With the exception of his two books on Mendelssohn and his joint study of Isaac Israeli with the late S.M. Stern, Altmann's *opera* have been in the form of monographs and essays. As the pieces in this anthology reveal, they cover the whole range of Jewish religious thought, from the Rabbinic period to our own day. Very few, if any, of the historians of Jewish thought have exhibited such scholarly scope and breadth. It is indeed a good thing that these diverse and illuminating essays have been collected together in one well-printed volume.

NOTES

[1]See his very fine monograph "Ibn Bajja on Man's Ultimate Felicity", originally published in the *Wolfson Jubilee Volume* and reprinted in Altmann's *Studies in Religious Philosophy and Mysticism* (Ithaca, 1969).

[2]A minor difficulty concerns Altmann's claim that Aquinas too recognized Moses as having attained "the ultimate degree of divine prophecy" (p. 89). In one sense this is true. But in the very same passage to which Altmann refers, Aquinas qualifies this claim by adding "When Moses is put before the other prophets, we should understand this is as referring to prophets of the Old Testament..." (Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 12 a. 14, ad. 5) Thus, New Testament figures reach a higher state of prophetic illumination. In fact, Aquinas says, there is a sense in which David was superior to Moses: he prophesied most clearly about Jesus (ad. 2).

[3]This was Abravanel's interpretation as well. I. Abravanel, *Commentary on the Guide*, II: 34.

[4]Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah*, Pereq Heleq, chapter 10, seventh principle.

[5]A. Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohns Frühschriften zur Metaphysik untersucht und erläutert* (Tübingen, 1969), 29-38.

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Judaism (8 articles); Rabbanite prayers cited by Karaite writers (2 articles); halakhic and midrashic fragments (5 articles).

Of special interest for the history of Geniza scholarship in its cumulative aspect is the series of studies on the Christian proselyte to Judaism, Johannes-Obadiah. Reading the various papers in chronological sequence — the first appeared in 1954 and the last was published in 1979 — one acquires a vivid sense of the slow but steady filling out of the intellectual biography of this fascinating figure. Extremely useful is the five-page bibliography of literature on this person included in Scheiber's 1975 essay entitled "Der Lebenslauf des Johannes-Obadja aus Oppido."

A particularly welcome feature of the collection is the reproduction of the scores of facsimiles that accompanied the original publications. Since Scheiber's work covers so many different types of manuscripts, the volume makes an excellent general introduction to the Geniza material and could serve, along with the book, *Fragments from the Cairo Genizah in the Freer Collection* edited by Richard Gottheil and William H. Worrell (reprinted by Johnson Reprint Corporation in 1972), which similarly contains excellent plates of a wide assortment of manuscripts, as a handy textbook for an introductory seminar on the subject.

The Geniza studies are supplemented by an appendix containing three papers representing other facets of the author's research: "The Prague Manuscript of Mishnat Ha-Middot"; "Immanuel Norsa's Defence"; and "Ein neueres Handschriftfragment der 'Sechs Märchen'".

May 20–22, 1984: A conference on university teaching of Hebrew language and literature, sponsored by the National Association of Professors of Hebrew, will be held at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This year's topic: "Art and Technology in the Teaching of Hebrew Language and Literature." A call for Presentations has been issued. For information, contact Gilead Morahg, Dept. of Hebrew and Semitic Studies, 1354 Van Hise Hall, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706.

At its April 1983 meeting the Institute for Islamic-Judaic Studies agreed to plan its next meeting to be held at the University of Denver in the Spring of 1984 around the theme of Islamic/Judaic law. Conference papers will address issues in Islamic and Jewish jurisprudence, legal theory, legal history and comparative case law.

Suggestions and proposals for paper topics for this meeting remain open; there is the possibility of travel funds for participants being available. Please contact the conference co-ordinator, Lenn E. Goodman, Department of Philosophy, University of Hawaii, 2530 Dole Street, Honolulu HI 96822 (telephone 808-373-4218).

Elliott Oring, *Israeli Humor: The Content & Structure of the Chizbat of the Palmah.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981. 295 pp.

Reviewed by Stephen Stern (University of California at Los Angeles)

At last we have a book on Jewish humor that does not demand the reader to search his psyche for hidden traces of sexual drives or repressed hostilities. The *chizbat,* a word derived from Arabic and meaning "lies," identifies a category of humor developed by the Palmah, an underground commando unit created in the 1940s to defend against potential Arab and Nazi invasions and to facilitate illegal immigration operations in British-occupied Palestine. The enormity and diversity of the jokes, anecdotes, and tall tales encompassed by the term *chizbat* (as evidenced by the 342 texts included in the appendix) creates a formidable challenge for any investigator of Jewish humor who seeks to discern underlying patterns of meaning. Oring tackles the problem with gusto and examines in minute detail the complex of emerging "values and traits" which Israelis espouse and which are embodied in the corpus of humor. He demonstrates conclusively that humor served as a commentary not only on the obvious realities of everyday life in Palestine, but also on the not so obvious difficulties Israelis faced in developing satisfying models of identification.

Oring argues that the Palmahnik (member of the Palmah) wanted to create a "positive" Jew, native to Israeli soil, who would be antithetical to the "galut," or diaspora Jew. Oring specifies clusters of features that he claims characterize the ideal images of sabra and galut Jews. The diaspora Jew is considered European, traditional, civilized, cultured, clean, disciplined, emotional, shy, and weak; he uses literary language in a rhetorical manner and with great competence. The Israeli pioneer reverses these characteristics in creating a self-image. He considers himself to be Levantine, secular, primitive, boorish, dirty, slovenly, unemotional, self assured, and strong; he uses slang, terse language, and has the ability to improvise.

Many of these oppositional pairs drawn from the two sets of "images" are contrasted by means of humor to highlight their incongruous nature, according to Oring. The Palmahnik, however, could not always clearly select which of the contrasting identities he was willing to espouse. Either identity of an oppositional set could be introduced as the "stance" of a joke against which is pitted a contrasting identity, thereby producing an incongruous situation. Oring shows how each identity and its opposite can be seen as potentially relevant and appropriate to the Palmahnik's conception of his situation. The investigator's task, then, is twofold: to uncover conflicting identities and to demonstrate how these identities are applicable to the predicaments featured in the jokes. This technique of discerning "appropriate incongruity" in a corpus of texts, Oring claims, has more merit than utilizing inferences drawn from preconceived psychoanalytical assumptions. By using such a technique we are able to deduce both the sources for potential humor and the reasons why they are so effective. On the one hand, the existence of myriad identity conflicts provides opportunities for the creation of humorous situations; on the other hand, the recognition by narrators and audiences that these conflicts are appropriate to the Palmahnik's predicaments results in laughter. For example, a Levantine mayor of a town is invited to the home of a European Jew and is offered a variety of fruits. Being unsatisfied, the Levantine asks his host why there is no fruit on the table. The startled host reiterates that fruit *has* been placed right in front of him, to which the Levantine responds that he does not see any cucumbers.

Oring rightly points out that the humor underlying the anecdote can be found in the conceived contrast between two different Jewish "cultures'" conceptions of what count as appropriate foods for guests. The assumed European perspective or "stance" adopted initially in this chizbat is that fruit is the most appropriate kind of offering, but this is challenged by the Levantine perspective in which vegetables are the more appropriate offering. Thus Levantine and European images are shown to be contrastive *and* appropriately applied. Such understanding could not easily be gained by outsiders not privy to these implicit value orientations, especially since the chizbat does not have a clear punchline and because the conflict between Levantine and European values is assumed by the teller and his audience.

In order to determine the nature and variety of these identity relationships reflected in the *chizbat,* Oring carefully elucidates the content, setting, and structure of the anecdotes. He notes that the *chizbat* was unique to the Palmah because it was generated by a group whose pioneering life style included underground military activity. Furthermore, the Palmah was not a stable organization, for it evolved from several prototypes and was in constant danger of being disbanded by the British or the Israeli military. Because of Oring's disdain for psychoanalytical models for understanding humor, he falls short of claiming that the precarious existence of the Palmah produced a feeling of frustration in its members and thereby led to release of tension via humor. Rather, the recognition of paradoxical situations renewed daily by the vicissitudes of physical survival, on the one hand, and the development of a clear identity, on the other, is sufficient to generate humor. Indeed, the *sabra* (Hebrew for *cactus*) image itself is based on the dual properties of a cactus—hard on the outside but soft on the inside. Thus the ultimate "message" of these anecdotes is that the Palmahnik is caught between the values of the sabra and galut ideals, and that no matter how hard he tries to dismiss diaspora images of the Jew, he cannot fully eradicate them.

While Oring's analysis is fresh and exciting because it tells us much about the difficulties of forming a consistent Israeli identity, it has shortcomings. The technique of "appropriate incongruity," as Oring readily admits in his chapter on "The Argument of Humor," is a structural principle that allows the investigator to view situations depicted in stories as something out of place, yet appropriate to the plot. Laughter is produced because of the recognition of this incongruity. But applying a structural principle to textual data does not enable one to deduce which identity features, whether positive or negative, are actually valued by sabras. The identities referred to in the narratives only indicate potential sources for concern among Palmahniks, but do not reveal which of the two identities in opposi-

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tion *is* favored by the Palmah. To take a neutral example from Oring's discussion of the argument of humor:

> A kangaroo walked into a drinking establishment, walked up to the bar and asked for a scotch and soda. The bartender looked him a bit curiously and then fixed the drink. "That'll be a dollar seventy-five," said the bartender.
>
> The kangaroo pulled a purse from his pouch, took out the money and paid. The bartender went on about his business, glancing at the kangaroo from time to time, who stood sipping his drink. After about five minutes the bartender went over to the kangaroo and said, "You know, we don't get many kangaroos around here."
>
> The kangaroo replied, "At a dollar seventy-five a drink, it's no wonder."

All that one can infer from this joke is that the kangaroo's presence is incongruous to this joke teller and his audience, but that it is appropriately applied to the situation described in the text. In no way can we know why kangaroos were selected as the subject of this joke or what people in that community think of kangaroos. The burden falls on Oring to show *how* such characteristics as secular, primitive, self assured, etc., *become* positively valued by Palmahniks. It follows, then, that without a proven value system, there is no way to demonstrate that sets of dualities placed in incongruous situations add up to a consistent field of moral values, that is, add up to either a sabra or a galut image. The burden falls on Oring to show how elements combine to form a positive or negative ethos.

Oring's only evidence for a consistent image rests on an extrapolation from a 1960 newspaper description of what constitutes a sabra image. As Oring remarks after enumerating the defining characteristcs, "This description was meant to apply to the sabra of the 1960s. If we were to expand the description only slightly, by including such values as Levantine and secular, we will have a rather complete image of the sabra of the 1940s, in general, and the Palmahnik, in particular." But Oring provides little corroborating evidence from such sources as ethnographic reports to demonstrate that such a listing had crystallized in the 1940s. He shows only that certain features were of considerable interest to the Palmahniks. In the example of the confrontation between the European host and his Levantine guest, Oring admits that the joke does not "necessarily imply an unmitigated criticism of the Levantine world view and an enthusiastic embrace of European cognitive categories." If nothing is ever embraced, how can a value system emerge? If Palmahniks did not actually choose one value over the other, then how can a list of characteristics differentiating Palmahniks from Europeans be devised on the basis of the repertoire alone? Indeed, in the last chapter, "Kezavim," we find a difference between the Israeli of the '40s and the '60s. The soldier of the '40s, despite a state of military preparedness, was generally inactive. It was only during the 1948 War of Independence that a real Israeli soldier emerged and by implication a true sabra image arose. Although the Palmah fought during this war, it was disbanded during that same year; and its members were absorbed into the Defense Forces of Israel. Thus, Oring should have made explicit what remains implicit in his book: because the Palmahnik in the 1940s could not totally reject his past, *no* clear identity set was formed. Rather, what we are witnessing is a struggle to formulate a consistent set of values; and such a struggle requires the opportunity for values to be challenged and later be either rejected or accepted. Thus, the challenges that Oring finds embedded in the texts are paralleled in the real world.

Armed with the realization that incongruity existed in the daily lives of the Palmahniks, can we explain humor beyond a reaction to an incongruous situation portrayed in a text? While generally resisting any formulation of humor as a result of psychological processes, Oring does conclude in his main chapter, "The Message," that the paradox itself, created by a sabra testing old and new images, produces laughter: "The identity of the native-born must remain a paradox, whose only solution is laughter," because no matter how much the sabra wants to dissociate himself from the past, he finds that he cannot do so completely. The tension between old and new will always be there. To admit that such ambiguity can be partially resolved through laughter is to concede to the psychoanalyst's insight that people need to challenge well-established preconceptions and provide alternatives in the form of parody. Thus Oring could have introduced psychoanalytical conceptions explicitly without undermining his allegiance to the structural technique of "appropriate incongruity," because both the psychoanalyst and the structuralist point to ways in which humans deal with paradox. Oring needs the psychoanalytical supplement because, as he admits, incongruity models "only provide a partial explanation of the phenomenon of humor, they tell us only of the techniques of humor, but not why such humor is generated." Oring's concentration on the structural properties of incongruities, however, is a welcome change from the overpreponderance of psychoanalytical works on Jewish humor with which the student of Jewish culture has been bombarded for years.

One final note. The author and the press are to be commended for including an appendix of texts, eighty-nine of which were recorded from oral sources and the remainder drawn from published references—all translated from the Hebrew by Oring. Readers are thereby given the opportunity to examine Oring's evidence in detail and to appreciate the multiple versions of these stories. The inclusion of this appendix, as well as one containing a glossary, serves as partial compensation for the glaring typographical errors occurring in the book.

The Committee on the History of Dutch Jewry of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences is presently preparing a Symposium on the History and Culture of the Jews in the Dutch "Mediene," to be held in Amsterdam in September 1984. Interested scholars should write to Joel Cahen, Jewish Historical Museum, Nieuwmarkt 4, 1012 CR Amsterdam, Holland.

A conference to take place at the Sde Boker campus on the tenth anniversary of the death of David Ben-Gurion will concentrate on problems of leadership in democratic countries on a comparative basis. The themes to be discussed include: The Role of Leadership in Nation Building; Leadership in National Defence; Leadership in the Reinstitution of Democracy; Typology of Leadership in Time of Crisis; and the Characteristics of the Leadership of David Ben-Gurion. For further information, contact Yeshayahu Jelinek, Ben-Gurion Research Centre, Kiryat Sde Boker, Negev, Israel.

Gershom Scholem, *Walter Benjamin. The Story of a Friendship.* Translated by Harry Zohn. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1981. 242 pp.

Reviewed by David Biale (State University of New York at Binghamton)

This is a curious book, lying uneasily somewhere in the borderland between biography and autobiography. Forty-one years after his death, the publication of this translation of the 1975 German edition demonstrates that the tug-of-war over Walter Benjamin's intellectual corpse remains very much alive. This book is yet another salvo in the battle between Scholem and, to a lesser extent, Hannah Arendt on the one side, and Marxist critics on the other to claim the "true" Benjamin. Extraordinarily complex in both his personality and his writings, Benjamin experimented by turns with philosophy of language, metaphysics, Judaism, Marxism and a whole grab bag of other ideas, but he never reached anything like a synthesis of the various systems which attracted him. As Scholem noted in his diary from 1916 or 1917: "The word *irgendwie* (somehow) is the stamp of a point of view in the making. I have never heard anyone use this word more frequently than Benjamin." Despite twists and turns of his thought, this observation remained true of Benjamin until his death by suicide in 1940.

In addition to a memoir of their relationship, this is, then, an argument about who the real Benjamin was. Scholem describes how his friendship with Benjamin developed first during the years of World War I when they were drawn together by opposition to the war and common anarchistic sentiments. They quickly discovered a mutual interest in philosophy and metaphysics. Scholem records in almost overwhelming detail the books they read and the authors they discussed. At times, the first section of the book almost verges on a parody of a memoir with its name-dropping, intellectual gossip and learned asides (the latter an unmistakable characteristic of Scholem's obsession with details, even those bordering on the trivial). Yet, put in perspective, what we witness here is Scholem's extraordinary debt to Benjamin. Both contemptuous of conventional academic life, Benjamin and Scholem were autodidacts who did a great deal to educate each other. The satirical "University of Muri" which they constructed in their imaginations became a symbol of their antipathy to academia and of their intellectual independence. Indeed, Scholem is well aware of the irony that he became a successful academic while Benjamin, who really did covet a university post, remained a freelance intellectual, often on the verge of poverty.

Despite Scholem's attempt to portray their early relationship as equal, it is probable that Benjamin, five years Scholem's senior, introduced Scholem to a type of theological and metaphysical speculation wedded to German philosophy. It was from Benjamin that Scholem received the foundation for his own theology which found expression in a number of later essays, notably in a polemic against the German-Jewish theologian Hans Joachim Schoeps and in a letter to Salman Schocken which I have published in my book on Scholem. Benjamin also inspired Scholem's thoughts on the philosophy of language in his 1916 essay on the subject. Indeed, in 1918 Scholem intended to undertake a study of the philosophy of language of the Kabbalah, a project he postponed until 1970. One is astonished on reading this essay, written so many years later, by how similar Scholem's formulation of the Kabbalah's theory of language is to Benjamin's position. Benjamin's influence on Scholem was so powerful that Scholem could still write in 1964: "What thinking really means I have experienced through his living example."

Thus, it is Benjamin as "a theologian marooned in the realm of the profane" (to quote Scholem from another essay on Benjamin) whom Scholem seeks to rescue in this book. Scholem hoped desperately to turn Benjamin's metaphysical energies toward Judaism and, in a touching letter, Benjamin confessed in a phrase which is the mirror-image of the one above: "Living Judaism I have certainly encountered in no other form than you." In order to solidify this connection, Scholem tried to arrange for Benjamin to come to Jerusalem, but these plans, which received the support of Judah Magnes, the chancellor of the Hebrew University, repeatedly came to naught.

Scholem's attempt to create a "Jewish" Benjamin failed in the 1920s. Following Scholem's emigration to Palestine in 1923 and the breakup of Benjamin's marriage, the latter became romantically involved with the Latvian Communist Asja Lacis. Thus began his romance with Marxism and it is no small irony that an intellectual whom women found sexually indifferent should have come to an ideological crossroads as the result of an emotional relationship. In 1929, he met Bertold Brecht who had a similar effect on him. Scholem hints darkly that his own distance from Benjamin allowed these Marxists to capture Benjamin's heart and mind. The two only met again in 1927 and 1938 and much of the second half of the book revolves around Scholem's futile attempts to influence his friend through letters and to arrange aborted meetings.

Yet, it seems to me that Scholem assumes too much about his own ability to have influenced Benjamin. Benjamin was an eclectic thinker by nature. He was the sort of character who was paradoxically susceptible to influence from any quarter but also stubbornly individualistic. His lack of a "definite point of view" was neither a transitory phenomenon nor a result of his external circumstances but rather endemic to his personality. Even in Jerusalem, under Scholem's thumb (perhaps one of the reasons for his reluctance!), Benjamin's Jewish development would have been syncretistic and idiosyncratic at best and he probably would have remained as intellectually multi-faceted as in Europe. It is possible that neither metaphysics nor Marxism represented his true essence: both were masks he wore to conceal, however unsuccessfully, a restless search for an undefined goal.

Here it is necessary to ask an heretical question: why has Benjamin become the object of such intense debate (one is tempted to say, fetish)? To be sure, there are flashes of genuine brilliance in his writings, such as the "Theses on the Philosophy of History." But much of his work is ponderous and unnecessarily obscure; sometimes one wonders if the results are worth the effort of reading him. For Marxists, Benjamin's attraction may lie in this very obscurantism: he proves that dialectical materialism need not be presented in simple-minded slogans and that Marxism in the

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twentieth century is as intellectually sophisticated and culturally variegated as bourgeois thinking. A martyr to Fascism, Benjamin also presents socialism with a cultured face.

But what about Scholem? Had he not been so close to Benjamin, one can imagine him responding impatiently to such work as *Die Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* with his favorite expletive: *"Quatsch!"* The difference between Benjamin's esoteric style and Scholem's extraordinary lucidity could not be more striking. Yet, in reading the letters they exchanged, one cannot fail to notice that Scholem reverts to a much more convoluted and unclear style, almost imitative of Benjamin himself. Here is evidence that Benjamin represented for Scholem, who was otherwise contemptuous of virtually everyone else, a voice of authority. Beyond Benjamin's "objective" merits as a thinker, which only critics with greater perspective than Scholem's will be able to determine, Scholem found in Benjamin a spiritual inspiration. How else can one explain the exegesis which Scholem devoted to some of Benjamin's writing, a kind of reverence for the canonical that he otherwise reserved for the Kabbalah?

Scholem treated Benjamin like a "secular Kabbalist" because Benjamin played such a key role in Scholem's life at a crucial time of his youth. Alienated from his family and eventually thrown out of his house in 1917, Scholem was at an age when deep friendship was not only possible but also necessary. In particular, the 1918-1919 period he spent in Switzerland with Benjamin and Benjamin's wife Dora emerges as critical in this regard. In addition to the intellectual exchanges between the two, one finds evidence of a profound emotional relationship such as most people experience only rarely in life. The relationship was never easy but it was always intense and perhaps made more so by the presence of Dora to whom Scholem may well have been attracted. Scholem himself hints at his awareness of this emotional component when he writes:

> Was it...that three young passionate, gifted people who were almost completely dependent on one another and were seeking the road to maturity had to use one another as release mechanisms in the private sphere? Were there in this 'triangle', of which we were unaware, unconscious emotional inclinations and defenses that had to be discharged...?

It is therefore on the psychological in addition to the intellectual plane that I would look for the true meaning of Scholem's attachment to Benjamin. This book tells us much about friendship between intellectual German Jews of this period. Intimacy was expressed by intellectuality and books were the coin of emotions. How else can one explain the ultimate seriousness and passion with which these adolescents discussed books and authors or the pretentious self-importance with which they saved their early correspondence? Yet, it is incredible that only in 1921, several years *after* the critical Switzerland period, that they began to use the familiar *du*! Given the singular connection between intellect and emotions in this friendship, it is no surprise that years after Benjamin's death, Scholem should remain so entangled in his intellectual legacy.

Scholem's debt to Benjamin reveals a side to Scholem generally unacknowledged by his Jewish readers: the "German" Scholem. Behind the extraordinary command of Jewish sources lay a German education and upbringing which no antipathy to the course of German history could erase. Where Scholem tries to rescue the Jewish side of Benjamin, his book inadvertently suggests that the Jewish and Zionist Scholem is not complete without the German. The metaphysical impulse behind his historical work, which makes some Jewish historians uneasy, remains a product of the European rather than the Jewish sphere, even though it is cast in Kabbalistic language. And even his Zionism was more part of the inner dialectic of German-Jewish history than at home with Jewish political nationalism in the Near East. (In a 1931 letter to Benjamin which relates despairingly the ascendancy of the Revisionist Party and remains uncannily relevant today, he wrote: "Between London and Moscow, we strayed into the desert of Araby on our way to Zion and our own hubris blocked the path that leads to our people.")

As an allegory of the fate of the German Jews, this book has few parallels. Beyond the ideologies of Zionism, Judaism and Marxism, intellectuals like Scholem and Benjamin were linked together by a rare sensibility, a belief in ideas and the power of language, and an intellectual seriousness which has no like today. One senses that although Scholem survived and became world famous while Benjamin perished and was only recovered from obscurity years later, they were both symbols of a vanished world. That their individual fates were so different was more a matter of personality, which Scholem captures beautifully in the following lines about the summer of 1916: "During my visit we played chess several times. Benjamin played blindly and took forever to make a move; as I was a much faster player, it was virtually always his turn."

Call For Papers

The Approaches-series of Brown Judaic Studies invites articles of any length up to 100 MS pages. Write to the following editors: ***Approaches to Ancient Judaism*** (next volume: VI), William Scott Green, Chairman, Religious and Classical Studies Department, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627; ***Approaches to Judaism in Medieval Times*** (next volume: II), David R. Blumenthal, Department of Religion, Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322; ***Approaches to Judaism in Modern Times*** (next volume: II), Marc L. Raphael, Department of History, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210.

PROOFTEXTS will devote its January 1985 issue to the topic: "The Storyteller in Jewish Tradition." Submissions are invited relating to the questions: To what extent is Judaism a storytelling tradition? How does the story differ from other forms of narrative, and what, if any, are the major literary trends in the biblical, rabbinic, medieval and early modern periods, and how does this tradition penetrate the modern period? What is the relative importance of storytelling within the wider cultural context of a given period? The deadline is May 15, 1984; information on the format of the manuscript and its submission can be found in any issue of the journal.