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TIKKUN

ISRAEL: CAN THE VIOLENCE STOP?

TANYA REINHART, MARSHALL WINDMILLER

A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY

MARCH/APRIL 2002

The End of Space

ZYGMUNT BAUMAN



PSYCHEDELIC SEDITION

Charles Hayes

ESTHER'S FAST

Bonna Devora Haberman

PATH OF A MENSCH

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CORNEL WEST

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After Kano Tan-Yu

Two screens meant to stand together
so that each one's set of six
hinged panels

sends the eye down, sideways, off
into a void where like a ghost
Mt. Fuji crowns

a gap in space. It's barely there,
as the eye knew right off, missing it
at first. I wonder

just what more I've missed, nosing
my way through days more tenuous
than this, distracted

by how tight my waistband feels,
or blisters on my feet, how one
who sits

across the room, not paying attention,
even then oppresses. In
the landscape,

human figures are too small
to count for much: a ripple
on a lake

or river, the thin lip of the water
raised where the boat's bow points a way
through what

is otherwise a dead white dis-
appearing act in all directions,
the land seen no friend.

—Elizabeth Arnold

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TIKKUN

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Letters to the Editor

Israel

To the Editor:

I just received my last issue of TIKKUN and would like to NOT renew my subscription. In the past year, partly because of subscribing to your magazine, I have put real effort into formulating an opinion about Mid East issues. I have read both mainstream and alternative histories of the region. I have read the Torah and Parts of the Koran. I have read both Arab and Israeli newspapers online, been to Socialist Worker sponsored Palestinian Rights meetings, and have actively sought out correspondence both written and oral with Arabs and (Israeli and American) Jews. My conclusion is that however much I may think Israeli policies aren't working, however much I question the use of blockades, I don't think that there really is a policy that would work. Arafat's, and the Arab countries' propaganda machines, though less sophisticated to Western eyes than Israel's, are

vile fonts of anti-Semitism and "anti-Westernism."

What the mainstream world press reports is, as I am sure you know, mere skimmings from what is really going on. One day before his famous televised speech (in December), Arafat told a crowd of Palestinians not to worry, that no matter what he said in his speech, the martyrs would not have died in vain, for one day there would *only* be Palestinian flags flying from the Temple Mount



Somehow I just do not see how you can claim to support Israel when you print articles like Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi's ("Sacred Space," Jan./Feb. 2002) that compares the motive behind the horror of the WTC terrorist attack on New York City with Israel's Yad VaShem taking pieces of Bruno Shulz's mural in Poland and transporting them to Israel. If Israel doesn't have a right to take it, (and that is an if) then at worst it is merely institution-sponsored vandalism, which is basically what

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all archaeologists do. To equate this taking with the ideals of mass murderers is Ezrahi's bizarre personal belief—for you to print this article was the final clincher for me.

It showed that you were willing to voice your disgust with Israel on every level possible, not just on its politics, economics, and environmental policies. I live in Ithaca, New York, as liberal as a community as Berkeley. I have considered myself a progressive liberal for most of my life. I now completely question my allegiance to this way of thinking and after digging through all the PC rhetoric that seems so "kind" and that pervades your magazine and my world, I have begun to question the hatred both of self and those with other points of view that lies hidden, barely out of view beneath the kind of liberalism you espouse. I am ashamed to have ever encouraged my friends to read your magazine.

VICTORIA SCHILONI
Ithaca, New York

Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi responds:

It is gratifying to see that at least some readers of *TIKKUN* pursue its concerns beyond its pages. Schiloni reveals herself as someone who delved deeply into the texts, the rhetoric and the records of many of the participants in the Middle East conflict before drawing radical conclusions about the absence of prospects for peace based on Arab intransigence. I can only regret, therefore, that she did not give equal "face time" to Arafat and Sharon; she would not have had to look very far to find statements made by the current Israeli prime minister about the fact that Jerusalem will always be sovereign to only one nation—i.e., that only one flag will ever fly over Jerusalem—and that Arafat should have been liquidated in 1982, etc.

I do not have to defend the outrageous behavior and declarations of the leader of the Palestinians in order to condemn those of the man who is the democratically elected leader of the country of which I am a citizen. I can only regret that any serious investigation of the bloody vendetta mentality that has replaced the peace process does not lead a morally imaginative individual such as Schiloni to the conclusion that no people are cut of whole cloth and that there are partners for peace among the Palestinians, that it is with them that we must build bridges rather than blockades, that it is with them that we must construct common water

resources rather than bulldozing homes—that there are forces for destruction, expulsion and murder on both sides and that a very evil genie has been let out of the bottle that must be contained if anybody is ever to be able to claim a liveable life in that region again. But that was, after all, not the direct subject of my column.

It is only if one gazes from a myopic distance at what I wrote and sees that I mention the WTC attack and the appropriation of the Bruno Schulz murals on the same page that she can come to the conclusion that I compared those events or the intentions behind them. I am, therefore, saddened to discover that a serious reader as Schiloni seems to have missed my point entirely, and I welcome this opportunity to restate in stark terms the argument that was perhaps articulated too subtly.

What should be obvious at the outset is that the only moral struggles we can engage in are those within our own community. If I were a Palestinian, I would be fighting against the perpetrators of violence among my own people; as a Jew and an Israeli, my focus is defined by my own allegiances. There is a logic behind exclusive claims to holy sites and it is one of the most pernicious forces driving the current conflict between fundamentalist and liberal notions of religion and civil order in the Middle East—and, since September 11, in the world at large. In its most benign version, the claim to exclusive ownership of sites of authenticity or holiness can lead to the "repatriation" of works of art; in its most demonic form, it can lead to the mandate to uproot the infidels and all manifestations of their gods and their shrines.

The lesson that Jews learned, through painful centuries of wandering and negotiating with surrounding cultures, is that living at a distance from the sacred preserves humility. It is the lesson that diaspora Jews can offer to Israelis in this terrible time: that even when we stand directly in front of the Wailing Wall, at the base of the Temple Mount, site of the most contentious claims between Jews and Moslems, we should all have the humility to know that God is never in our hands, that God's majesty fills the universe and that it is our distance from the sacred that allows us to do God's work in those dark places where the battles are being fought in our time.

To the Editor:

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tique of politics, culture, and society. Yet your recent articles on Israel accept the false history that Arab governments invented after failing at another attempt to destroy the Jewish nation in 1967. Occupation? Whose land is it Israel is occupying? Palestinians? I didn't hear anything about Jordan or Egypt occupying Palestinian land even though Jordan in fact occupies 76 percent of what was formerly Palestine.

As hard as it is for you guys to understand, there was never a nationality of Palestinians. But assuming that, unlike other nationalities that developed over hundreds of years, the Palestinians took less than thirty, there is still no reason for them to have a state within Israel, bordering another Palestinian state. *How many do we need?*

Face the facts, the whole Palestinian nonsense is just a step of the Arab/PLO phased plan to destroy Israel. People read your magazine and are influenced by its "Jewish" critiques, but imagine the guilt you will feel if the Arabs do get their state and you turn on your TV one day and see Tel Aviv in ruins as Syrian, Iranian, and Jordanian rockets are flying down at it from the hills of your peaceful Palestinian state.

ARTHUR DONOSHAYTIS
Northfield, IL

The Editor responds:

We will almost certainly face war and worse if we rely on force and power to ensure Israel's survival among the 100 million Muslims in surrounding states. Israel's only "realistic" path is to create a decent relationship with the Palestinian people and with other Arab states—and that will never be possible until Israel gets out of the West Bank and Gaza, and does it in an open-hearted and generous way that compensates Palestinians for the losses of 1948 and that provides economic strength and political security for the Palestinian people. The route it is following now will guarantee the disaster you and I both fear.

To the Editor:

You have said in the past that Israel should get out of the West Bank and Gaza and, except for the Jewish quarter of the Old City, return to the 1967 boundaries. Further, you have said Israel should give economic support to create a Palestinian state and provide international leadership for reparations for Palestinian refugees. You argue that, if done in a generous and open-hearted way, involving

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compassion and repentance for our past misdeeds, doing so will generate a climate in the Palestinian world that would give support to wiping out the Hamas, just as it is the Afghans themselves who are now acting to destroy Al Qaeda.

Yet, if it should happen in the future, G-d forbid, that Hamas attack again the day after Israel does all this, you say that Israel should do the same thing the United States does when it deals with a terrorist attack like the bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building—use all necessary police power to identify the specific perpetrators and punish them, not the entire group from which they derived. But the Oklahoma bombing was different. Oklahoma is part of the United States so we have police powers there. But Hamas is operating in Palestinian territory (and perhaps Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt, Yemen, Sudan, Oman, U.A.R., Kenya, South Africa, Mali, Chad, Ivory Republic, France, Britain, Germans, etc.)!

Are you advocating the violation of Palestinian sovereign rights and territory for Israel to use all necessary police power to identify the specific perpetrators and punish them within the Palestinian state (or France)? And, why should anyone cooperate with Jews?

DAVID KLAUSNER
Redwood City, CA

Editor responds:

If Israel provides reparations to Palestinian refugees, ends the Occupation, brings the settlers back to the pre-1967 borders of Israel, helps rebuild the parts of Palestine that it is daily destroying, punishes those who have engaged in acts of torture and violation of human rights, and helps build Palestine as an economically independent and flourishing state, it has the right at the same time, and as part of the treaty estab-

lishing a Palestinian state, to insist that Palestine use its police force against acts of violence with the same determination and seriousness that, say, the New York police force uses to find murderers.

When murders occur in New York or any other city, and the perpetrators are not caught, we don't assume that the police are collaborating with the murderers—we assume that it's hard to stop all the murderers, and we should assume the same in regard to the Palestinian state. But if a pattern of assaults on Israel is not met with cooperation and determination by Palestinian police to capture and prevent such assaults, then Israel should have the right, built into the treaty, to directly intervene to protect its own citizens—the same right of "hot pursuit" that any other sovereign state would claim for itself. Under circumstances in which Palestinians were enjoying the benefits of Israeli generosity and repentance for past crimes, Israeli intervention would find a much more cooperative response than when Israel is the face of occupation, torture, and denial of human rights.

To the Editor:

The peace plan proposed by Jerome Segal (November/December 2001) looks fine, except for one problem. It talks about compensating Palestinian refugees, and possibly resettling some within Israel, without mentioning compensating Jewish refugees from Arab countries. Such a one-sided solution would never be accepted by the Israeli public. If Palestinian refugees need to be compensated, then Jewish refugees also must be. After all, both groups were evicted from their homelands, and had their property confiscated. The difference is that the Jewish refugees were permanently resettled in Israel, whereas the Palestinian refugees still don't have a home. I've thought about this and come to the conclusion that, since Arab countries will never be willing to compensate the Jews that they evicted in the 1950s, then the Palestinians will just need to accept that they will never get the compensation that they feel they deserve. According to Clinton, this was the issue that killed the Camp David peace talks, and I don't see much progress in this area. It's true the Palestinians have suffered a great deal during this century, but so have the Jews, and there is not going to be a completely fair solution to this problem. That's life.

ALEX KAPLANSKY
Hillsborough, NJ

Unity of All Being?

To the Editor:

Zygmunt Bauman ("Global Solidarity," Jan./Feb. 2002) quotes Michael Lerner as saying that a critical step in building trust, love, and goodness in the world is "to reorganize ourselves as part of the Unity of All Being." Bauman adds, "One could hardly say it better." Well, yes, one could, and Levinas did: "The face of the Other obligates me." I am as sympathetic to pantheism as the next woman, but it's a mood and not a policy; we have intimations of the unity of all beings, but trust is based on knowing the differences between them. It wasn't classical Judaism that first taught me this, but lesbianism: the irreducible difference of someone who, according to feminist ideology, was supposed to be "like" me. "The Unity of All Being" as a political organizing principle elides too many differences, and is finally presumptuous. We don't need metaphysics in the global crisis so much as we need attention.

CATHERINE MADSEN
Amherst, MA

Editor responds:

We've had thirty years of various "identity politics" movements insisting on "irreducible difference." We've been taught to distrust our common humanity and to focus

on that which separates us, the "incommensurable discourse" between different ethnic, religious, gender, and racial groupings. The result has been a splintering of the progressive forces. Levinas himself seemed better able to see the obligation to fellow Jews than to see the Jewish obligation to Palestinians (something that we discussed when I met with him in Paris in 1987)—after all, those were faces he really didn't see. The identity politics movements made an important contribution to our consciousness, and many of their insights need to be incorporated into the next stage of progressive movement, but that stage must be one which returns to the kind of focus on our common humanity that made the appeals of Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, and the anti-Vietnam war movement of the Sixties so much more powerful than anything that has happened since.

Waking Up to Evil

To the Editor:

Andrew Kimbrell's article, "Confronting Evil" (November/December 2001), gives reality to the word "evil," defining it in a way that fits today's world. I, too, have been aware of the passions aroused in people by the September 11 tragedy—the "Hot Evil" act described by Kimbrell. When it's in your face, you have to notice. But I have been disturbed, almost subliminally, by the other evil he discusses, which he calls "Cold Evil." To my way of thinking, this evil is much worse, because it envelops us almost without our being aware of it. When thousands of people die in Africa or India, we "feel sorry," but

we are not touched in a way that results in action in most cases. We may donate a few dollars to relieve our conscience but we are not directly impacted. Most people holding stultifying jobs do not realize that we have become, as Kimbrell states, "autistic to nature." Thanks to Kimbrell for his wakeup call.

MAGGI SULLIVAN GODMAN
Sutter Creek, CA

Beware of the Kool-Aid

To the Editor:

I am very enthused by your project to reinvigorate society with a new vision of caring and love. I am a student at U.C. Berkeley, and I attended a teach-in after September 11 in which you spoke about the genuine hope that we can extend this vision to the rest of the world, changing the painful cycle of materialism and self-centeredness which plagues us all. I deeply respect you and your goals, both of bringing a spiritual dimension back into people's lives, and to create this commune in which people share ideas and resources. But I strongly encourage you to be careful about the language you use. As someone who agrees with your goal, I can candidly say that some people may be scared away from the project in fear that this is a cult. I only say this because I want you to be successful, and I am worried about the reactions of those who are not informed.

MATT RATHBUN
Berkeley, CA

Editor responds:

Dear Matt, just say "om" and drink the Kool-aid. □

Correction:

In our January/February 2002 issue, we mistakenly left Nan Cohen's name off our table of contents. Her poem, entitled "At the Festival of Booths," can be found on page 13 of that issue.

The Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF) Seeks Executive Vice President

The congregational organization of the Jewish Reconstructionist movement (www.jrf.org) is seeking a visionary Jewish communal leader with strong management skills to be its top professional. Organized in 1955, the JRF is growing at more than 10% per year, with 100 affiliates currently located across North America. Candidates must be Jewishly knowledgeable, have organizational leadership experience and a good understanding of synagogue life, and be committed to Reconstructionist values and practice. You must be able to work effectively with an active and diverse board of lay leaders, with rabbinic and non-rabbinic staff, and with congregational rabbis and their boards. You should have excellent oral and written communications skills. Consideration of applicants is not limited to rabbis.

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Fast for Peace and In Solidarity With Israeli Reservists

Michael Lerner

Over 150 reserve officers in the Israeli Army have issued a statement refusing to serve in the West Bank and Gaza. They refuse to enforce the Occupation. We congratulate them and their demonstration of courage and wisdom—and commend them to all who will, years from now when this terrible tragedy of immoral behavior by the Jewish people becomes a matter of collective shame, attempt self-justification by saying “there was nothing we could do, we didn’t know, and we couldn’t stand up alone.”

To make sure people do know that there is something that they can do, and to get out the message that a more balanced approach is possible (because we also continue to reject the view that this conflict is one-sidedly Israel’s fault, just as we reject the demonization of Palestinians), the TIKKUN Community will be taking the following steps (if it gets your support):

Advertisement In Support of the Reservists

We intend to take advertisements in support of the reservists and in support of an end to the Occupation in some American and Israeli newspapers—if we can raise the money needed to finance that. If you help us, it may be possible. Send contributions (check or credit card info) to: The TIKKUN Community, Attn: Reservists Ad, 951 Cragmont Ave, Berkeley, CA 94708. Or email us at community@tikkun.org or call Liat at 415-575-1200. Send your checks by March 15. If we don’t get enough money by then to run an ad, we will tear up your check or credit card info unless you specifically tell us “save this and use it for future ads in support of Middle East peace.”

Fast For Peace

A grass-roots Israeli-Palestinian movement in Israel is organizing an ongoing Fast for Peace for people who seek peace, and believe that the Mitchell Plan will

put us back on that road. In support of that group in the Middle East, we at TIKKUN are calling for a one-day fast (no food or water) from sun-up to sun-down on March 27. The focus of the fast: End the Occupation, End the Violence. Please get as many people as you can in your community to know about this fast, get media to write about it, and join us in doing it. The fast is a global fast—called for by forces in the Israeli peace movement, and may start before March 27 or go beyond, but in the United States it makes most sense to focus our energies on a one-day fast that might actually catch on.

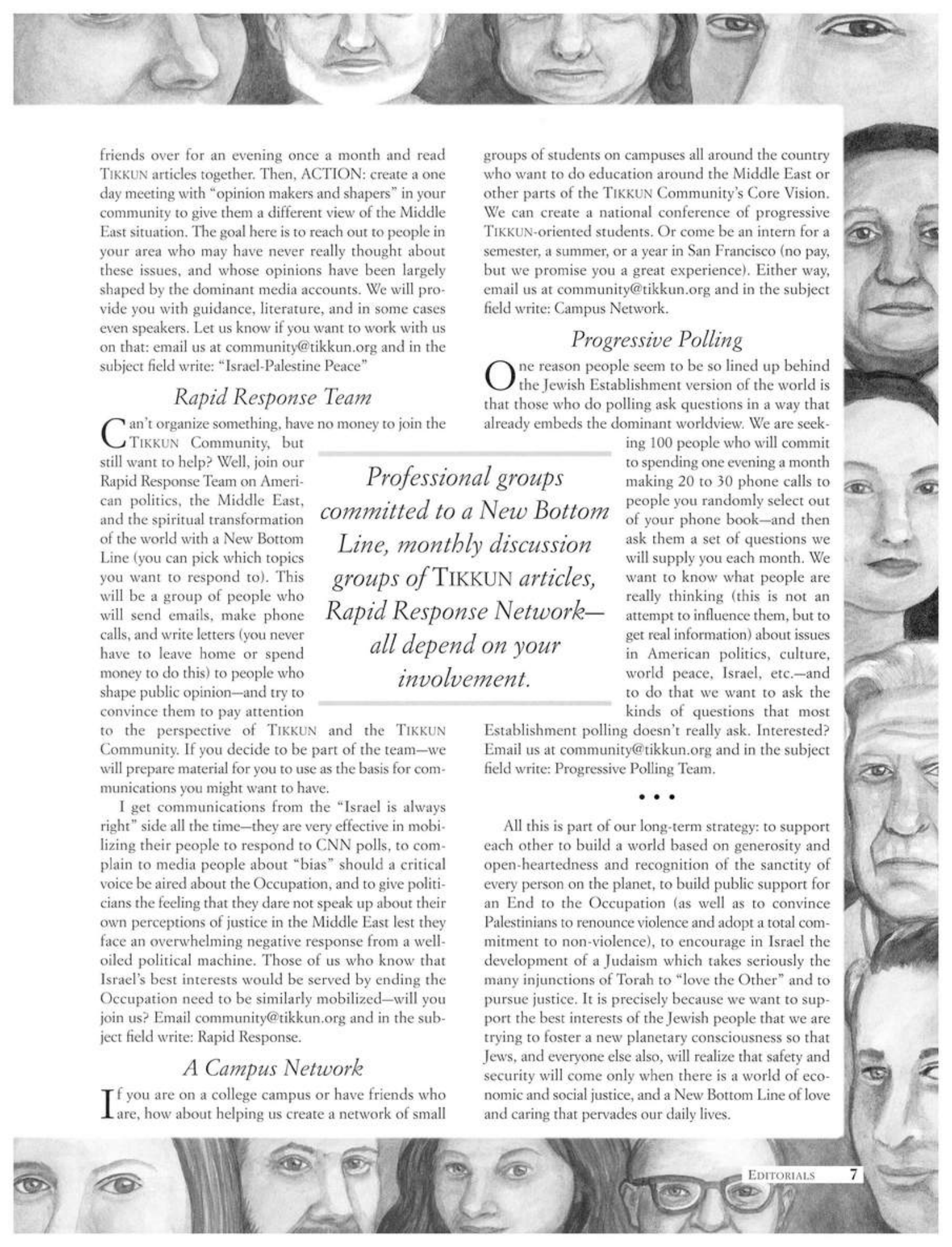
Passover: Not Letting Israel Become Pharaoh

After dark on March 27, we are asking people going to a Passover Seder to raise the issue of the Occupation—and Israel’s role as Pharaoh to the Palestinian people—during the Seder. We ask you to use for that purpose the Passover Supplement to the Seder which you’ll find in this issue of TIKKUN magazine (along with a powerful article by Israeli writer Tanya Reinhart on the current situation). Please make copies of the Supplement and bring them with you and circulate them to your friends and others in your community. If you live in or can get to the Bay Area, you can come to our second night Seder, March 28, in San Francisco—\$55 if you register before March 15 by calling 415-575-1432 (space will be very limited). You can also raise these issues at any Easter gatherings you may be attending in your church, or at any other events you may be attending in March/April—the issues in the Supplement are not just for Jews.

Create a TIKKUN Discussion Group or Salon

And help us create a day in your area dedicated to information about peace in the Middle East. Help us create a local group of the TIKKUN Community. Invite

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUSS ANDO



friends over for an evening once a month and read TIKKUN articles together. Then, ACTION: create a one day meeting with “opinion makers and shapers” in your community to give them a different view of the Middle East situation. The goal here is to reach out to people in your area who may have never really thought about these issues, and whose opinions have been largely shaped by the dominant media accounts. We will provide you with guidance, literature, and in some cases even speakers. Let us know if you want to work with us on that: email us at community@tikkun.org and in the subject field write: “Israel-Palestine Peace”

Rapid Response Team

Can't organize something, have no money to join the TIKKUN Community, but still want to help? Well, join our Rapid Response Team on American politics, the Middle East, and the spiritual transformation of the world with a New Bottom Line (you can pick which topics you want to respond to). This will be a group of people who will send emails, make phone calls, and write letters (you never have to leave home or spend money to do this) to people who shape public opinion—and try to convince them to pay attention to the perspective of TIKKUN and the TIKKUN Community. If you decide to be part of the team—we will prepare material for you to use as the basis for communications you might want to have.

I get communications from the “Israel is always right” side all the time—they are very effective in mobilizing their people to respond to CNN polls, to complain to media people about “bias” should a critical voice be aired about the Occupation, and to give politicians the feeling that they dare not speak up about their own perceptions of justice in the Middle East lest they face an overwhelming negative response from a well-oiled political machine. Those of us who know that Israel's best interests would be served by ending the Occupation need to be similarly mobilized—will you join us? Email community@tikkun.org and in the subject field write: Rapid Response.

A Campus Network

If you are on a college campus or have friends who are, how about helping us create a network of small

groups of students on campuses all around the country who want to do education around the Middle East or other parts of the TIKKUN Community's Core Vision. We can create a national conference of progressive TIKKUN-oriented students. Or come be an intern for a semester, a summer, or a year in San Francisco (no pay, but we promise you a great experience). Either way, email us at community@tikkun.org and in the subject field write: Campus Network.

Progressive Polling

One reason people seem to be so lined up behind the Jewish Establishment version of the world is that those who do polling ask questions in a way that already embeds the dominant worldview. We are seeking 100 people who will commit to spending one evening a month making 20 to 30 phone calls to people you randomly select out of your phone book—and then ask them a set of questions we will supply you each month. We want to know what people are really thinking (this is not an attempt to influence them, but to get real information) about issues in American politics, culture, world peace, Israel, etc.—and to do that we want to ask the kinds of questions that most

Establishment polling doesn't really ask. Interested? Email us at community@tikkun.org and in the subject field write: Progressive Polling Team.

...

All this is part of our long-term strategy: to support each other to build a world based on generosity and open-heartedness and recognition of the sanctity of every person on the planet, to build public support for an End to the Occupation (as well as to convince Palestinians to renounce violence and adopt a total commitment to non-violence), to encourage in Israel the development of a Judaism which takes seriously the many injunctions of Torah to “love the Other” and to pursue justice. It is precisely because we want to support the best interests of the Jewish people that we are trying to foster a new planetary consciousness so that Jews, and everyone else also, will realize that safety and security will come only when there is a world of economic and social justice, and a New Bottom Line of love and caring that pervades our daily lives.

Bush's America and Enron

President Bush's State of the Union address was a true masterpiece of manipulation of good ideas for bad purposes. Returning over and over again to liberal and communitarian themes, Bush at times spoke to the highest values of American experience. His call for every American to donate 2000 hours to public service was a valuable contribution—taking the ideas of the Clintons and asking Americans to actually respond to them. We want to be the first to invite the public to volunteer with TIKKUN in service to the public good.

All the more dangerous, then, that Bush was so good in much of the way he framed his ideas. Because when he came down to specifics most of the time he was advocating an ultra-right political agenda: endless warfare (first targets: Iraq, Iran, or North Korea), huge increases in defense spending, escalation of tax rebates to the rich (allegedly to help a failing economy), ecological indifference, an American chauvinism that seems to know no bounds, and a general indifference to the health and welfare of most people in the United States and around the world.

But if we hoped for an alternative voice, it certainly was not forthcoming from the Democrats. We were astounded to learn from Minority Leader Richard Gephardt that "our values require tax cuts." This is the old Clinton trick that created the political groundwork for the resurgence of Republicans: take the ideology of the Right and then try to restrain its excesses. Whatever short-term victories are won thereby will eventually be offset by the long-term crediting of a worldview whose best exponents are the political Right.

Indeed, it's all too easy to blame Bush and his administration for the ethical scandal surrounding the financial collapse of the Enron corporation. It's easy to understand the temptation to rejoice in the come-uppance that may be ahead for Vice President Cheney and others in the Bush circle who allowed Enron to shape America's energy policies. It's all too often these kinds of scandals, rather than serious discussion of the underlying policy issues, that shape political outcomes in the United States. But let's not

deceive ourselves. The influence of big money on policy was just as decisive in the Clinton administration—only it was different sectors of America's elite who benefited. The rush to corporate globalization, the introduction of productivity measured by "objective tests" in education, the dismantling of welfare, the refusal to sign or implement the Kyoto treaty to prevent global warming—these were all reflections of the huge corporate influence on the Democratic Party of the 1990s.

Of course, the excesses of Enron do seem to fit best with the unhidden selfishness the Bush administration has encouraged with its "return the taxes to the rich" philosophy. Corporate leaders' shameless impulse to enrich themselves while screwing their investors and their employees has reached a new nadir of despicable insensitivity and lawlessness in the Enron case.

Yet the truth is that the ethos of selfishness and materialism which we have been critiquing since our inception over fifteen years ago is not unique to Enron—it is an accepted and even glorified part of the daily ethos of American corporate life, and pervades every aspect of our society. How could it be otherwise in a country which contains 5 percent of the world's population yet has accumulated 25 percent of the world's wealth, a society that daily closes its eyes to the two billion people on this planet who live on incomes of less than \$700 a year, or the one billion who are living on less than \$365 a year (tens of millions of whom die each year through diseases related to malnutrition)? It is hardly a surprise that Enron executives felt they were acting "normally" in a society in which both Democrats and Republicans insist that taxes be reduced rather than respond to TIKKUN's plea that the \$1.4 trillion tax rebate be used instead to build the economic infrastructure of poor countries. After all, the Enron execs were acting the way everyone does in our society: look out for number one and screw anyone who stands in my way.

That's why America needs a New Bottom Line and a new spiritual foundation that we call Emancipatory Spirituality, a foundation we will seek to build in the TIKKUN Community.

The ethos of selfishness and materialism which we have been critiquing since our inception over fifteen years ago is not unique to Enron—it is an accepted and even glorified part of the daily ethos of American corporate life.



Personal Reflections on the Founding Conference of The TIKKUN Community

In the May/June issue of this magazine we will print selections from some of the talks at the Founding Conference of the TIKKUN Community held in January in New York City. Here, I want to try to give you a quick and very subjective feel of the event as I experienced it.

Despite a nasty snow storm that began an hour before the conference opened on Saturday, over 700 people came to participate in what was a truly amazing spiritual event. The participants were very diverse. They ranged in age from college students (about forty came) to seniors (at least one person was eighty-five). In religion, participants were mostly Jews, but about 25 percent were Christian, about 5 percent Buddhist, and 2 percent Muslim.

It's hard to convey in words how high this was—how many people talked about it as a life-changing experience, how many people told us that they had been in the midst of despair for years, intensified by the move to right-wing politics in America after 9/11 and the move to cynicism about peace in the Middle East, and how this gathering had given them a renewed hope about everything. I really got a strong sense of how much people would love to have a national movement that was talking about love and caring, about the deprivation of meaning and the spiritual crisis generated by the ethos of selfishness and materialism of American society, and how much they'd love to have a movement that could legitimate our desire to respond to the universe with awe and wonder and could transcend the narrow utilitarian and manipulative frameworks that dominate most politics (including even Green or leftist politics). After 9/11, people are hungering for deeper answers than those provided by the mainstream and even by the mainstream alternatives to the mainstream.

The energy and excitement about creating a national organization of spiritual and social transformation was amazing. It was very unlike conferences that are primarily political or intellectual or professional! There was singing, dancing, meditation, prayer—combined with brilliant presentations on complex and difficult issues. Robert Thurman, a Buddhist scholar, started it off with a very deep talk about the relationship between Buddhism and social transformation, Arthur Green talked about

Kabbalah and its relevance to contemporary spiritual thinking, and a Baptist minister from Brooklyn, Rev. Gary Simpson, gave a thoughtful presentation on Christianity and social transformation.

A set of short talks and workshops followed: Richard Landes on "Must Modernity Be Secular?," Annie Lederberg and Idit Klein on Bi/Gay/Lesbian/Transgender Advocacy and Education, Michael Kimmel on Changing Men's Roles, David Seidenberg on Ecological Issues, Andrew Samuels on Aggression, Masculinity and the Shadow of Spirituality, and Alanna Hartzok on a Spiritual Land Ethic. Saturday night was a cultural celebration, starting with a musical composition by Meira Washauer. We then gave the TIKKUN Award for her contribution to healing and transforming the world to Grace Paley, who offered us in return a delightful reading of her writings. Naomi Wolf talked about her struggles to publicly affirm spiritual values in a culture that is deeply cynical. Thane Rosenbaum and Amy Wilentz read from their fiction, Irena Klepfisz and Joshua Weiner from their poetry.

Sunday morning was when sparks began to fly. Yossi Sarid sent remarks from Israel (a telephone talk we taped on Friday) in which he critiqued Ariel Sharon's government, and then laid much of the blame for Sharon's continued popularity on the activities of Yassir Arafat and Shimon Peres. Jerome Slater, Arthur Waskow, Cherie Brown, a Muslim speaker named Iftekhar Hai, and Debora Brous all gave powerful talks—but there was obvious tension when Jerome Slater defended the right of Palestinians to use violence as self-defense against the violence of the Israeli occupation. I later emphasized that we were holding this event on Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend because we wanted to say very clearly that the TIKKUN Community was opposed to all violence, hence we were calling upon the Palestinian people to stop all acts of violence against Israel, and all acts of violence by Israeli settlers and soldiers against Palestinians.

Nevertheless, some attendees felt it was weird to be for principled nonviolence for Palestinians without simultaneously opposing the U.S. violent response to 9/11, and some questioned how TIKKUN could be for nonviolence in the Middle East when we had not ever condemned the use of

violence by the Haganah and Irgun to create the State of Israel in the first place. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of people seemed to be quite supportive of the TIKKUN Community's reaffirmation of our commitment to the State of Israel—and for that very reason, our commitment to ending the Occupation because it is a violation of our Jewish values, and because it is self-destructive to Israel, and because of the cruelty it imposes on the Palestinian people. We in the TIKKUN Community consider ourselves the true pro-Israel voice, as opposed to those who support the current Israeli government even when its policies are self-destructive and a disgrace to the Jewish teachings of a world based on love and justice and peace.

I gave an overview talk in the afternoon called the State of the Spirit Address—and it was received with an enthusiasm that blew me away. My sister Trish and her husband George were given an enthusiastic welcome after they spoke explaining why they have become publishers of TIKKUN (George is a libertarian Republican, my sister a centrist Democrat). There was a panel on globalization with Tsvi Blanchard, Marshall Berman, and Andrew Kimbrell, but although I was told it was very good, I had to miss most of it to do interviews with various media covering the event. (There was one very good story on the conference by Carol Eisenberg in *New York Newsday* on Saturday, Jan. 24—worth reading if you can get it online).

Sunday night was another high moment—with Amy Goodman of "Democracy Now" giving a long and powerful talk on the struggle at Pacifica Radio (we all celebrated their victory). The rest of the evening was dedicated to Spiritual Visions—with Arthur Waskow, Muzamil Siddiqui (President of the Islamic Society of North America), Rev. Tony Campolo (a Baptist minister and leader of the Christian Evangelical organization A Call to Renewal), Yitz Husbands-Hankin, and Susannah Heschel. There was lots of conference buzz around the idea, presented by Yitz Husbands-Hankin, of attempting to create a project that would label products "eco-kosher" based on their having proved that the company that produced them was doing a decent job environmentally and in terms of how they treated their workers and the communities within which they functioned.

Afterwards, Sunday night, we had a party at the apartment of Jim Vrettos, and I had to throw out about fifty people at 2 A.M. because I wanted them to show up for the next morning's program; since about twenty of them were in their mid-twenties and showed no signs of stopping their singing with guitars and drums, I had to push hard for them to go home. David Schneyer played music for the conference—and Gabi Meyer showed up on Monday afternoon for some of his wonderful singing.

Monday (Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday celebration)

was the day dedicated to actually turning this whole thing from a conference into an ongoing organization that would have some reality in the coming year. I'm not sure we succeeded—it was a big task for eight hours, plus we still had some remarkable speakers. I won't give the whole list, but some that particularly stand out in my memory were: Mordecai Liebling, who gave a really wonderful talk about the role of money in spiritual thinking and in creating a spiritually grounded world (he drew on Jewish tradition), Marcelo Bronstein (rabbi of B'nai Jeshurun) who discussed the situation in his native Argentina, Joshua Levine Grater on teaching awe and wonder in schools, and Michael Ratner whose analysis of the assault on civil liberties by the Bush Administration was truly frightening. (For the second day in a row, we provided a really delicious lunch to all the participants—catered by Manna of Manhattan)—plus a presentation on the newest developments in Jewish feminism by Danya Ruttenberg. And Roly Matalon's prayer/song plus spontaneous sharing lifted everyone's spirits high, as did spontaneous dancing which occurred throughout the day to Carlebach melodies. Yet another high was the talk given by Hebrew University professor Edy Kaufman, who accepted the TIKKUN Award on behalf of B'Tselem, the Israeli Human Rights Organization.

The guts of that day was the creation of some national project groups. Perhaps the best attended TIKKUN Community project group was that aiming at educating people to a more balanced view of the Israel-Palestinian crisis and how to end it. We are planning to develop a sixty-page booklet to tell the whole story of this struggle in a balanced and compassionate way so that people can come to understand how it is possible for decent people in both communities to have gotten themselves in such a mess; plus we are launching a national campaign to End the Occupation, and will try to create a group in each city that can help us reach out to "opinion makers"—and we raised enough money due to the incredible generosity of conference participants to hire an organizer to coordinate the Middle East peace work of the TIKKUN Community, though we will have to raise quite a bit more to make this campaign a reality.

We also had a group interested in working on The Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, a group working on media issues, a group working to create a network on college campuses, a group working on gay/lesbian/bi/trans advocacy, and several groups of professionals interested in building A New Bottom Line in their own professions (lawyers, doctors/health care workers, psychologists/social workers, high-tech workers, and several other such groupings. I have no idea which of these New Bottom Line groups will be successful in the long-run—that all depends on the follow-through of the participants—but it seemed like a good start). If you are



interested in being part of one of these groups, or starting one in your own arena of work, contact Liat at: community@tikkun.org with the subject field: New Bottom Line groups or call her at 415-575-1200.

Some people expressed an interest in creating regional TIKKUN gatherings (I hope they do), others in creating "salons" once a month in which people get together and discuss some articles from the current edition of the magazine (some people attended who belong to a TIKKUN salon that was formed near Boston some ten years ago, and has been functioning every month since then—that was a high to hear about them), and some people are going to help us create local meetings with opinion makers to get them familiar with an alternative perspective on Middle East peace.

Overall, I'd say that this was a very terrific gathering.

In the final analysis, we don't really know whether this will have turned out to be "merely" a wonderful and hope-inducing event, or whether it will actually create an ongoing reality. That is largely going to depend on the individual decisions not only of those who came, but of you who are reading this and trying to decide if you should just "wait and see" (in which case, nothing much will happen) or if you should actually join and get involved in making it happen.

If you are only willing to "wait and see," it would still be worth having the TIKKUN Community as a way of connecting once a year with people in other parts of the country who are engaged in social change. In fact, it is fine that some people are doing nothing more than joining (the basic membership rate is \$120—send your checks or credit card info to the TIKKUN Community, 2107 Van Ness Ave., Suite 302, San Francisco, CA 94109). Many members of the TIKKUN Community are already engaged in activities of healing and repairing the world. What they get through being part of the Community is the opportunity to support the kind of projects mentioned in this report, plus the opportunity to come to a yearly gathering with others who share their values. As many people pointed out, the kind of support that they actually experienced here makes it easier for them to continue to do their social change work the rest of the year even when they feel a bit isolated.

I have some inkling of the massive forces toward inertia and not really taking this project seriously that you might face in your own situation. I imagine that your life is already over-filled with commitments, and that the last thing you need is yet another "obligation." But I also came away from this weekend feeling that if you had been there, you would have felt that this was not a drag but actually an elevation of your life, something that would have made you feel generally more hopeful and happy. So, for that reason, I'd like to invite you again to consider

joining and even becoming active with the TIKKUN Community. Get the detailed information about our Core Vision at www.tikkun.org and info on how to join. Or send us the \$120 fee for members (which includes a year subscription to TIKKUN; if you already subscribe, we will extend your subscription by one year).

For people who feel deeply committed to the vision already, who really agree with the Core Vision or are already involved as leaders in social change activities, we are planning some follow-up activities:

Leadership Development—There will be a training for people who wish to become leaders in this movement July 3–7 at Walker Creek Ranch, about an hour north of San Francisco in a beautiful country setting. I'll be there, along with many other people playing a leadership role in our community. (Because of limited space, people have to "apply" for this one—by writing a detailed self-revealing letter and explaining what part of the TIKKUN Core Vision moves you most and which of the first year projects are the ones you actually want to work on; send this letter to community@tikkun.org or by mail to: The TIKKUN Community, 2107 Van Ness Ave., Suite 302, San Francisco CA 94109.

Activist Training—Spend five days with me (Michael Lerner, editor of TIKKUN) at the Omega Retreat Center in Rhinebeck, NY (in the Catskills, about two hours north of NYC) in a very beautiful country setting Aug. 12–16. To register call: 845-266-4444

For those of you who missed the conference (or even for those who came), many of the talks from the conference are available on tape. You can order the tapes at www.conferencerecording.com or call 800-647-1110. You can also order TIKKUN Community t-shirts from the TIKKUN office by calling us at 415-575-1200.

In any event, I wanted you to know that our conference far surpassed my own expectations of what would be possible in this difficult period. And it gave me a real sense of how many people there are out there who are just waiting for the chance to connect to something that is politically progressive, intellectually serious, spiritually deep, psychologically sophisticated, and yet retains its sense of humor and fun, and its commitment to treating people with real respect and caring. □

**New England TIKKUN Community / Call to Action
Building Peace & Justice After September 11**

April 14 at the Belmont United Methodist Church
421 Common St., Belmont, MA 1–7 P.M.

with Rabbi Michael Lerner and Cornel West

Register at the door 12:30 P.M. (\$20)

To register in advance:

603-778-0310 bbroderick@medione.net

A Strategy for Palestine

Marshall Windmiller

The Palestinians, reputed to be the best educated and most sophisticated people in the Arab world, continue to pursue a policy toward Israel which has resulted in one disaster after another. Palestinians have not succeeded in ending the settlements, and they have not moved closer to independence. Their suicide bombings are thinning the ranks of their most idealistic youths, and the casualties they are inflicting on the Israelis are grossly outnumbered by their own. The more they attack the Israelis, the more the Israelis blow up their police stations, assassinate their leaders, and bulldoze their houses, their orchards—even the Gaza International Airport. Anyone who keeps score on this violent struggle can see that the Palestinians are losing, and losing big. With each slaughter of Israeli innocents in buses, cafes, or discotheques, world opinion excuses Israeli atrocities and turns more and more against the Palestinians.

It's easy to understand why many Palestinians persist in believing that terrorism will eventually cause the Israelis to withdraw from the settlements and grant them independence. They need only look at the precedents. First, they can look to the founding of the Jewish State itself. Irgun and Lehi wrote the book on terrorism. The blowing up of the King David Hotel, and the assassination of Lord Moyne contributed to the British and UN decisions to create the Jewish State. Palestinians reason that if Jewish terrorism could end British occupation, why can't Muslim terrorism end the Israeli occupation?

More recently, guerrilla warfare caused the Israelis to withdraw from their occupation of Southern Lebanon. So why not try a guerrilla war? Is that what the arms aboard the ship intercepted by the Israelis in the Red Sea were for? If so, who among the Palestinians is so shortsighted as to think that this pitiful cargo of small arms could defeat the combined might of Israeli Defense Forces backed up by the United States? Do Palestinian elites really believe that the precision bombing that the United States has visited on Afghanistan would not work on the West Bank and Gaza? Or do they think the United States would never do it, and the Israelis couldn't learn how?

The Palestinians are pursuing a suicidal strategy which can only result in more deaths and suffering, ending the dream of a Palestinian state. Is there a better way?

Marshall Windmiller is Professor Emeritus of International Relations, San Francisco State University.

Some Basic Facts

The Israelis are determined to control the West Bank. The main reason is water. They believe that they cannot permit another nation to control the rivers and aquifers upon which their prosperity and economic survival depend. Similarly, they believe that their spiritual survival depends on their perpetual sovereignty over Jerusalem.

After the Six Day War, the Israelis had three basic options. They could withdraw in victory in accordance with UN Resolutions 242 and 338; they could annex the West Bank as a trophy of conquest; or they could treat it as an occupied territory. They felt they couldn't withdraw, because the area could then be used to launch further attacks against them in another Arab-instigated war. They couldn't annex the area, because then they would have to grant citizenship to the Arab population, and eventually an Arab majority would mean the end of the Jewish state. So they chose occupation.

The Israelis don't refer to the West Bank as "the occupied territories." They say simply, "the territories," and this reveals their awareness of an important vulnerability. There is a substantial body of international law relating to occupied territories. The Geneva Conventions of August 1949, for example, make extensive demands on occupying powers which the Israelis have not fulfilled. Instead, the Israelis insist international law does not apply to "the territories."

Meanwhile, the Israelis are attempting to "solve" the problem of the territories by using settlements to divide the West Bank into numerous non-contiguous Bantustans, with the aim of making Palestinian life so economically untenable and miserable that the Arabs will be forced to leave. In this way, the late Meier Kahane lives in Ariel Sharon. As it becomes increasingly clear to Europe and America that Israeli policy is designed to expel Arabs from the territories, however, pressure builds on Israel to make compromises. This is the point of Israeli vulnerability. Palestinian violence plays into Sharon's hands by demoralizing moderate Jews in Israel and the diaspora, and by disarming Palestinian sympathizers in Europe and the United States. Especially now, after September 11, there is no tolerance in America for terrorism, no matter how just the cause. Afghanistan should make that clear.

If the Sharon-Kahane strategy succeeds in forcing thousands of Palestinians to flee, this may destabilize Israel's Arab neighbors, and make it less likely that Israel can ever have peace. And because of America's support for Israel,



The next generation?

the United States will continue to be a target of growing hostility throughout the Islamic world. American corporations, airlines, and tourists beware.

A Radical New Strategy for Palestine

If violence cannot end the Israeli occupation, is there any alternative? Yes. The Palestinians—and the Jews who support them—must change their strategy. The current violent strategy of terror is a simplistic answer to the goals of ending the Occupation and establishing Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem. To find a nonviolent alternative, those of us who support peace must rethink how we phrase these demands. Simply asking the Israelis to back out of the Occupation will not work.

I suggest that new demands take advantage of Israel's vulnerabilities, and they be formulated in this simple slogan: Annex or Exit. Israel must either annex the West Bank and Gaza and grant full citizenship to its inhabitants, or withdraw from the occupied territories altogether. Meier Kahane said to the Arabs: accept Israeli rule or get out. The Palestinians should stand Kahane on his head and say to Israel: Grant full rights of citizenship to Palestinians or get out.

Of course, annexation with Arab citizenship is no less frightful to Palestinian Arabs than it is to Israelis. No one wants it. Asking for annexation is a poker play designed to push Israelis into exiting. But even if the Israelis agreed to annexation, would that fate be more horrible than this continued tit-for-tat terrorism on both sides which has the potential of turning the West Bank and Gaza into another bombed-out Afghanistan, and Israel into a brutal, brain-drained, authoritarian state whose best citizens have fled to Brooklyn and Los Angeles?

Is Non-Violence Relevant?

Gandhian non-violence had roots in ancient Hindu culture in which fasting and shaming were a common and often effective weapon against injustice. Gandhi built his concept of Satyagraha on deep, historic traditions. He also confronted a humane viceroy who was nothing like Ariel

Sharon. There is no such tradition of non-violence in Islam, in which revenge, violence, and jihad seem more characteristic. Allah may be "the compassionate and merciful," but most of his modern followers don't appear to adopt those values in their present-day *Sharia*-based governance (how merciful are the rulers of Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia?).

Whenever nonviolent resistance is suggested to Palestinians, they insist they have tried it, and it doesn't work. Settlers use violence against peaceful demonstrators, and the Israeli police do nothing. An increasingly brutal IDF attacks protesters with bullets not always made of rubber. Palestinians argue that the nonviolent breaching of unjust laws in the Satyagraha tradition would be suicidal in Israel.

This argument is difficult to refute. But nonviolence has never had easy opponents, nor functioned in totally supportive environments. Satyagraha is hardly compatible with the American fascination for violent movies, computer games, professional wrestling, and strategic bombing. Nevertheless, this is the culture into which Martin Luther King, Jr. imported and modified Satyagraha, and made it work despite George Wallace, Orval Faubus, Bull Connor, the Klan and the whole racist southern power structure. Is Sharon more formidable than that?

If Palestinian leaders would adopt a nonviolent "Annex or Exit" strategy, Israelis have two vulnerabilities they could exploit. The first is inherent in Judaism—the spiritual commitment to law and justice. While often obscured under threat, this commitment to justice runs deep in the Jewish tradition and can be brought to the service of politics within Israel (witness, for example, Peace Now). A strategy like "Annex or Exit" that asks Israelis to abide by international conventions would tap right into this value.

The second Israeli vulnerability is the dependence of Israeli policy on the support of American Jews. The major American Jewish organizations constitute the fourth most powerful lobby in Washington, according to *Fortune* magazine. Their support or opposition can make or break political careers, and on U.S. policy in the Middle East they own

(continued on page 64)

Evil Unleashed

Tanya Reinhart

"Arafat is a Threat"

In mainstream political discourse, Israel's recent attacks on Palestinian civilians, villages, and governmental institutions are described as "retaliatory acts," answering the latest wave of terror attacks on Israeli civilians. But, in fact, these "retaliatory measures" are part of a systematic assault on the Palestinian Authority that had been carefully prepared for long before the current "war on terrorism." Already in October 2000, at the outset of the Palestinian uprising and before the terror attacks had started, military circles were ready with detailed operative plans to topple Arafat and the Palestinian Authority.

In a statement published in Israel's major newspaper, *Ha'aretz*, on October 18, 2001, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared, "Oslo [the peace accord] is not continuing; there won't be Oslo; Oslo is over." Oslo is now widely considered in Israel to be "an historical mistake." Since March of 2001, the Israeli media has openly discussed plans to reestablish full military control of the territories. Alex Fishman, the senior security correspondent for *Yediot Aharonot*, has explained that, after the Oslo accords, "The IDF [Israeli army] regarded the occupied territories as if they were one territorial cell," and that this placed some constraints on the IDF and enabled a certain amount of freedom for the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian population. Now, however, the army has returned to a concept of military administration that prevailed in the pre-Oslo years. They plan to divide the occupied territories into sixty-four isolated cells, each of which will be assigned a special military force, and "the local commander will have freedom to use his discretion" as to when and whom to shoot. The aim is to isolate Palestinian communities from each other, in preparation for a full takeover.

The apparent change in the official Israeli position on Oslo did not occur as a result of Palestinian terrorism. The first Palestinian attack on Israeli civilians in the current uprising did not occur until November 3, 2000, in a market in Jerusalem. Yet a month earlier, on October 15, 2000, a document prepared by the security services at the request of then-Prime Minister Ehud Barak stated that "Arafat, the

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Palestinian boys face off with an Israeli tank during clashes in Beit Hanoun at the northern end of the Gaza Strip.

person, is a severe threat to the security of the state [of Israel] and the damage which will result from his disappearance is less than the damage caused by his existence" (details of this document were published in *Ma'ariv* on July 6, 2001). The operative plan to topple Arafat, known as "Fields of Thorns," had been prepared as far back as 1996, and was then updated in early 2000 once the Intifada began, as reported by Amir Oren in *Ha'aretz* on November 23, 2001. The "Field of Thorns" plan includes everything that Israel has been executing lately, and more. (For details of the "Field of Thorns" plan see Anthony Cordesman, "Peace and War: Israel versus the Palestinians A second Intifada?" Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), December 2000, and its summary in Shraga Eilam, "Peace With Violence or Transfer" in *Between The Lines*, December 2000.)

Starting in the fall of 2000, politicians and functionaries in Barak's circles worked on preparing public opinion for the eventual toppling of Arafat. The key step in that propaganda war occurred on November 20, 2000, when Nahman Shai, then public-affairs coordinator of the Barak government, released a sixty page document prepared by Barak's aide, Danny Yatom, titled "Palestinian Authority non-compliance... A record of bad faith and misconduct." Informally referred to as the "White Book," this document argued that Arafat's present crime—"orchestrating the Intifada"—was just the latest in a long chain of evidence that Arafat had never

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deserted the "option of violence and 'struggle.'"

Here is an example of the sort of evidence the "White Book" cites: "As early as Arafat's own speech on the White House lawn, on September 13, 1993, there were indications that for him, the D.O.P. [declaration of principles] did not necessarily signify an end to the conflict. He did not, at any point, relinquish his uniform, symbolic of his status as a revolutionary commander" (Section 2). It's true that Arafat wore the uniform on that occasion. This uniform, however, is the only "evidence" that the report can cite of Arafat's hidden war-like intentions on an occasion that readers will recall was part of the Camp David peace process.

A large section of the "White Book" is devoted to establishing Arafat's "ambivalence and compliance" regarding terror. Here's an example: "In March 1997 there was once again more than a hint of a 'Green Light' from Arafat to the Hamas, prior to the bombing in Tel Aviv... This is implicit in the statement made by a Hamas-affiliated member of Arafat's Cabinet, Imad Faluji, to an American paper (*Miami Herald*, April 5, 1997)." No further "hints" are provided to link Arafat to this bombing. One wonders what history would look like if every statement by an opposition member of the Israeli cabinet were taken to reflect the views of the Israeli prime minister. Yet these kinds of accusations—particularly that Arafat has given the "green light to terror"—succeeded in becoming the mantra for mainstream Israeli propaganda: "Arafat is still a terrorist and is personally responsible for the acts of all groups, from Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to Hizbollah."

If the Barak administration paved the propaganda path, the plans to oust Arafat grew more detailed under Ariel Sharon. The *Foreign Report* of July 12, 2001 disclosed that the Israeli army had updated its plans for an "all-out assault to smash the Palestinian authority, force out leader Yasser Arafat and kill or detain its army." Titled, "The Destruction of the Palestinian Authority and Disarmament of All Armed Forces," this plan was formally presented to the Israeli government by chief of staff Shaul Mofaz on July 8, 2001. In this plan, the Israeli assault on Arafat would be launched, at the government's discretion, after a big suicide bomb attack in Israel had caused widespread deaths and injuries; the bomb attack would be cited as the justification for the Israeli attack.

Many in Israel suspect that the assassination of the Hamas terrorist Mahmoud Abu Hanoud in November 2001 was designed to create the appropriate "bloodshed justification." The timing, in any case, is deeply suspect. First, Abu Hanoud was assassinated just when the Hamas was upholding its two-month-old agreement with Arafat not to attack targets inside of Israel. Second, the assassination took place on the eve of Sharon's visit to the United States. Everyone in

the Israeli government was aware that the assassination would result in a terrorist response. Indeed, that expectation was public, as Alex Fishman observed: "Whoever decided upon the liquidation of Abu Hanoud knew in advance that [a terrorist attack inside of Israel] would be the price. The subject was extensively discussed both by Israel's military echelon and its political one, before it was decided to carry out the liquidation" (*Yediot Aharonot*, November 25, 2001).

Israel's recent moves to destroy the Palestinian Authority, thus, cannot be viewed as spontaneous "acts of retaliation."

They are part of a calculated plan, long in the making. This plan first required a propaganda war against Arafat, which was begun under Barak. The next step was to weaken the resistance of the Palestinians, which Israel has been doing systematically since October 2000 through bombarding their infrastructure, imprisoning people in their hometowns, and bringing them close to starvation. All Israel

needed to complete the plan was for international conditions to "ripen," permitting Israel to act without disapproval from the United States and other world bodies.

By December 2001, conditions seem to have "ripened." In the power-drunk political atmosphere in the United States, anything goes. If at first it seemed that the United States would try to keep the Arab world on its side by moderating the Israel-Palestine conflict as it did during the Gulf war, it is now clear that it couldn't care less. U.S. policy is no longer based on building coalitions or investing in persuasion, but on sheer force. The smashing "victory" in Afghanistan has sent a clear message to the Third World that nothing can stop the United States from targeting any nation for annihilation. From now on, fear should be the sufficient condition for obedience.

The U.S. hawks who are pushing to expand the war on terrorism to Iraq and further view Israel as an asset—there are few regimes in the world like Israel, so eager to risk the life of their citizens for some new regional war. As Prof. Alain Joxe, head of the French CIRPES (peace and strategic studies) put it in *Le Monde*, "the American leadership is presently shaped by dangerous right wing Southern extremists, who seek to use Israel as an offensive tool to destabilize the whole Middle East area" (December 17, 2001). The same hawks are also talking about expanding the future war zone to targets on Israel's agenda, like Hezbollah and Syria.

Under these circumstances, Sharon got his green light in Washington. As the Israeli media keeps raving, "Bush is fed up with this character [Arafat];" "Powell said that Arafat must stop with his lies" (Barnea and Schiffer, *Yediot Aharonot*). Since December, Arafat has been, for all practical purposes, under house arrest, surrounded by Israeli tanks. Even so, he has tried to appease the Israelis, but to no

What is the rationale behind Israel's systematic drive to eliminate the Palestinian Authority and undo the Oslo accords?

avail. On December 17, from his bunker, Arafat issued a televised call to all organizations to refrain from any terror or armed activities. The various Palestinian organizations complied, understanding the gravity of the situation, and a relative calm was maintained. Sharon, apparently needing another "bloodshed justification" to advance his reoccupation plan, assassinated another Palestinian leader on January 14—Raed Karmi, head of a Tul Karem militia belonging to the mainstream Fatah organization. The horrible revenge taken by Palestinian militants—the bombing of a bat mitzvah celebration in Hadera—did not take long to follow.

Arafat's Security Record

But what is the rationale behind Israel's systematic drive to eliminate the Palestinian Authority and undo the Oslo accords? It certainly cannot be based on "disappointment" with Arafat's performance, as is commonly claimed. The fact of the matter is that, from the perspective of Israel's interests in maintaining the occupation, Arafat did fulfill Israel's expectations.

As far as Israeli security goes, there is nothing further from the truth than the accusations in the "White Book" or subsequent Israeli propaganda that Arafat has aided the cause of the terrorists. To take just one example, in 1997—the year mentioned in the "White Book" as an instance of Arafat's "green light to terror"—a security agreement was signed between Israel and the Palestinian authority under the auspices of the head of the Tel Aviv station of the CIA, Stan Muskovitz. The agreement commits the PA to take active care of the security of Israel—to fight "the terrorists, the terrorist base, and the environmental conditions leading to support of terror" in cooperation with Israel, including "mutual exchange of information, ideas, and military cooperation" (clause 1, as translated from the Hebrew text by *Ha'aretz*, December 12, 1997). Arafat's security services carried out this job faithfully, by assassinating Hamas terrorists (disguised as "accidents"), and arresting Hamas political leaders. (For a survey of some of the PA's assassinations of Hamas terrorists, see my article "The A-Sherif Affair," *Yediot Aharonot*, April 14, 1998, http://www.tau.ac.il/~reinhardt/political/A_sharif.html.)

Ample information was published in the Israeli media regarding these activities, and "security sources" were full of praises for Arafat's achievements. For example, Ami Ayalon, then head of the Israeli secret service (Shab"ak), announced, in a government meeting on April 5, 1998 that "Arafat is doing his job—he is fighting terror and puts all his weight against the Hamas" (*Ha'aretz*, April 6, 1998). The rate of success of the Israeli security services in containing terror was never higher than that of Arafat; in fact, it was probably much lower.

In fact, it is because Arafat worked so hard to answer Israeli demands that in left and critical circles one can hardly find compassion for Arafat's personal fate (as

opposed to the tragedy of the Palestinian people). This position is well summed up by David Hirst, writing in *The Guardian* on December 14, 2001:

When Arafat returned to the occupied territories in 1994, he came as collaborator as much as liberator. For the Israelis, security—theirs, not the Palestinians'—was the be-all and end-all of Oslo. His job was to supply it on their behalf. But he could only sustain the collaborator's role if he won the political quid pro quo which, through a series of 'interim agreements' leading to 'final status', was supposedly to come his way. He never could.... [Along the road], he acquiesced in accumulating concessions that only widened the gulf between what he was actually achieving and what he assured his people he would achieve, by this method, in the end. He was Mr. Palestine still, with a charisma and historical legitimacy all his own. But he was proving to be grievously wanting in that other great and complementary task, building his state-in-the-making. Economic misery, corruption, abuse of human rights, the creation of a vast apparatus of repression—all these flowed, wholly or in part, from the Authority over which he presided.

From the perspective of the Israeli occupation, however, Arafat's failures meant that the Oslo plan was, essentially, successful. Arafat did manage, through harsh means of oppression, to contain the frustration of his people, and to guarantee the safety of the settlers as Israel continued undisturbed to build new settlements and to appropriate more Palestinian land. Indeed, Arafat's own security forces were formed and trained in collaboration with Israel. Much energy and resources were put into building this complex Oslo apparatus. It is often admitted that Israeli security forces cannot manage to prevent terror any better than Arafat can. Why, then, was the military and political echelon so determined to destroy all this already in October 2000, even before the terror waves started? Answering this requires a look at history.

Another View of Oslo

Right from the start of the Oslo process, in September 1993, two conceptions were competing for dominance in the Israeli political and military system. One, led by Yossi Beilin, aimed to implement some version of the Alon plan, which the Labor party has been advocating for years. The original plan consisted of annexing about 35 percent of the territories to Israel, and installing either Jordanian-rule, or some form of self-rule, for the rest—the land on which the Palestinians actually live. In the eyes of its proponents, the Beilin/Alon plan represented a necessary compromise, compared to the alternatives of either giving up the territories altogether, or eternal bloodshed. It appeared that Rabin was willing to follow this line, at least at the start, and that in return for Arafat's commitment to control the frustration of his people and guarantee the security of Israel, he would allow the PA to run the enclaves in which the Palestinians still reside under some form of self-rule—perhaps even going to the point of calling these enclaves a Palestinian "state."

But those opposed to the Alon plan objected even to that much. This second camp came mostly from military circles, and their most vocal spokesman in the early years of Oslo was then Chief of Staff, Ehud Barak. Another center of opposition was, of course, Ariel Sharon and the extreme right-wing, who were against the Oslo process from the start. This affinity between the military circles and Sharon is hardly surprising. Sharon—the last of the leaders of the “1948 generation” was a legendary figure in the army, and many of the generals, like Barak, were his disciples. As Amir Oren wrote in *Ha'aretz* in January 1999, “Barak’s deep and abiding admiration for Ariel Sharon’s military insights is another indication of his views; Barak and Sharon both belong to a line of political generals that started with Moshe Dayan.”

This breed of generals was raised on the myth of redemption of the land. A glimpse into this worldview is offered in Sharon’s interview with Ari Shavit in the *Ha'aretz* weekend supplement, April 13, 2001. Everything is entangled into one romantic framework: the fields, the blossom of the orchards, the plough, and the wars. The heart of this ideology is the sanctity of the land. In a 1976 interview that was only published in 1997, Moshe Dayan, who was the defense minister in 1967, explained what led, then, to the decision to attack Syria. In the collective Israeli consciousness of the period, Syria was conceived as a serious threat to the security of Israel, and a constant initiator of aggression towards the residents of northern Israel. But according to Dayan, this view of the role of Syria in those years is “bull-shit”—Syria was not a threat to Israel before 1967: “Just drop it.... I know how at least 80% of all the incidents with Syria started. We were sending a tractor to the demilitarized zone and we knew that the Syrians would shoot.” According to Dayan (who at a time of the interview confessed some regrets), what led Israel to provoke Syria this way was the greediness for the land—the idea that it is possible “to grab a piece of land and keep it, until the enemy will get tired and give it to us” (*Yediot Aharonot*, April 27, 1997).

On the eve of Oslo, most Israelis were tired of wars. In their eyes, the fights over land and resources were over. Most Israelis believe that the 1948 Independence War, with its horrible consequences for the Palestinians, was necessary to establish a state for the Jews, haunted by the memory of the Holocaust. But now that they have a state, most Israelis long to just live normally with whatever they have. However, the ideology of the redemption of land has never died out in the army, or in the circles of the “political generals” who switched from the army to the government. In their eyes, Sharon’s alternative of fighting the Palestinians to the bitter end and imposing new regional order—as he tried in Lebanon in 1982—may have failed because of the weakness of a spoiled Israeli society. But given the new war-philosophy established in Iraq, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, they believe that with the massive superiority of the Israeli air force, it may still be possible to win this battle in the future.

While Sharon’s party was in the opposition at the time of Oslo, Barak, as Chief of Staff, participated in the negotiations and played a crucial role in shaping the agreements, and Israel’s attitude to the Palestinian Authority. Did he change his mind as he entered the negotiations, and become a supporter of the Beilin/Alon position of Israeli-Palestinian coexistence? It is more likely that Barak believed that Oslo would weaken the Palestinians and pave the way for their eventual destruction.

I quote from an article I wrote in February 1994, because it reflects what anybody who carefully read the Israeli media could see at the time: “From the start, it has been possible to identify two conceptions that underlie the Oslo process. One is that the process will enable us to reduce the cost of the occupation, using a Palestinian patronage regime, with Arafat as the senior cop responsible for the security of Israel. The other is that the process will lead to the collapse of Arafat and the PLO. In this scenario, the humiliation of Arafat, and the amplification of his surrender, will gradually lead to loss of popular support. Consequently, the PLO will collapse, or enter power conflicts and Palestinian society will lose its secular leadership and institutions.

In the power-driven minds of those eager to maintain the Israeli occupation, the collapse of the secular leadership would be interpreted as an achievement, because it would take a long while for the Palestinian people to get organized again, and, in any case, it is easier to justify even the worst acts of oppression when the enemy is a fanatic Muslim organization. Most likely, the conflict between the two competing conceptions is not settled yet, but at the moment, the second seems more dominant: In order to carry out the first, Arafat’s status should have been strengthened, with at least some achievements that could generate support of the Palestinians, rather than Israel’s policy of constant humiliation and breach of promises.” (To read the entire article—available in Hebrew only—go to <http://www.tau.ac.il/~reinhart/political/01GovmntObstacleToPeace.doc>).

Nevertheless, the scenario of the collapse of the PA did not materialize. Instead, Palestinians resorted once more to their marvelous strategy of *zumud*—sticking to the land and sustaining the pressure. Right from the start, the Hamas political leadership, and others, warned that Israel was trying to push the Palestinians into a civil war, to make the nation slaughter itself. All fragments of Palestinian society cooperated to prevent this danger, and to calm conflicts as soon as they began to deteriorate into armed struggle. They also managed, despite the tyranny of Arafat’s rule, to build an impressive amount of institutions and infrastructure. The PA does not consist only of the corrupt rulers and the various security forces. The elected Palestinian council, which operates under endless restrictions, is still a representative political framework, some basis for democratic institutions in the future. For those whose goal is the destruction of the Palestinian identity and the eventual redemption of their land, Oslo was a failure.

In 1999, the army got back to power, through the so-called "political generals"—first Barak, and then Sharon. The road opened to correct what they continue to view as the grave mistake of Oslo. To fix this "mistake," it was first necessary for the generals to convince a "spoiled" Israeli society that the Palestinians are not willing to live in peace and threaten our existence. Sharon alone could not possibly have achieved that, but Barak did succeed by making a so-called "generous offer," an offer that Palestinians and others supportive of Palestinian rights, immediately understood to be a fraud (see Michael Lerner's editorial in the September/October 2001 issue of *TIKKUN* or see my article, "The Peace That Kills" at www.tau.ac.il/~reinhart/political/PeaceThatKills.html).

After a year of horrible Palestinian terror attacks, combined with the Israeli generals' massive propaganda and lies and now with U.S. approval for action against terrorists, Sharon and the army feel that nothing can stop them from turning to full execution of their plan.

Why is it so urgent for them to topple Arafat? Shabtai Shavit, a former head of the Security Service ("Mossad") who is not bound by the usual restraints posed on official sources, explained this openly in a December 2001 interview in *Yediot's* weekend supplement: "In the thirty something years that he [Arafat] leads, he managed to reach real achievements in the political and international sphere... He got the Nobel peace prize, and in a single phone call, he can obtain a meeting with every leader in the world. There is nobody in the Palestinian gallery that can enter his shoes in this context of international status. If they [the Palestinians] will lose this gain, for us, this is a huge achievement. The Palestinian issue will get off the international agenda." Israel's immediate goal is to get the Palestinians off the international agenda so that the killing, starvation, forced evacuation, and forced "migration" of the Palestinian people can continue undisturbed.

A Way Out

In contrast to the spirit of blood and revenge which is now dominating Israeli public discourse, for years there has been a wide consensus in Israeli society that peace with the Palestinians requires withdrawal from the occupied territories and evacuation of the settlements. Many of the supporters of such a withdrawal did become confused and paralyzed by Barak's offer and the massive propaganda surrounding that offer. But a process of sobering up has begun. According to a poll published in *Ha'aretz*, July 4, 2001, 40 percent of Israelis support the evacuation of all settlements; 52 percent support the forceful evacuation of part of the settlements in a unilateral withdrawal.

Despite the wide support, implementation of this sensible plan seems further away every year. Since Oslo, the dream of peace was replaced by the myth of negotiations. The theme in the Oslo days was that we are facing difficult and complex problems which require years, maybe generations, of negotiations, and until the whole deal is agreed

upon, it is impossible to evacuate even one tiny settlement. Since then, the number of settlers has doubled from 100,000 to almost 200,000, and the negotiations have only become more and more entangled and complicated.

This route of eternal negotiations has failed. Even if Arafat would agree to resume them, the Palestinian people are no longer willing to listen to vague promises about a future which never materializes. For true negotiations to begin, we must first withdraw—as we did in Lebanon. It is astounding how simple it is to do this. Most of the occupied territories can be evacuated immediately, within two or three months.

The only clear element of Barak's plan in Camp David was the immediate annexation by Israel of about 10 percent of West Bank land. This area would include the settlement blocks which are close to the center of Israel and in which there are already over 150,000 Israeli settlers. What did not receive any attention in Israeli public debate was the fate of the remaining 90 percent of the land which was supposed to belong to a "Palestinian State." These lands are cut up by thirty-seven isolated Israeli settlements which were purposely built there to enable Israeli control of these areas. As a result, two million Palestinians are crowded into enclaves which consist of only about 50 percent of the West Bank, while the other 40 percent is blocked by some 40,000 settlers.

These 40,000 settlers who are sprinkled in and among Palestinian enclaves, taking up to 40 percent of the land that is designated as the future Palestinian State, can and must be evacuated immediately. Many of the residents of these isolated settlements are speaking openly in the Israeli media about their wish to leave. It is only necessary to offer them reasonable compensation for the property they will be leaving behind. (For evidence: shortly after Oslo, Labor M.P. Haggai Merom tried to organize an evacuation from the settlements with compensation for settlers who were willing to evacuate. Thousands enrolled in the office he opened. But Prime Minister Rabin announced: "Not now!") The rest, the hard core of land-redemption fanatics, will have to accept the will of the majority, and they can be evacuated forcefully, as done before in Yamit, at the eve of peace with Egypt. Immediately after the evacuation of the settlements, the army will also leave all its bases and outposts.

This withdrawal will leave under debate the large settlement blocks, which cannot be evacuated over night, as well as the problems of Jerusalem and the interpretation of the right of return. For these, negotiations will still be needed. However, during the negotiations Palestinian society will be able to begin to recover, settle in the lands which will be evacuated, construct democratic institutions, and develop its economy based on free contacts with whoever it wants. Under these circumstances, it should be possible to carry out the negotiations in mutual respect, and to reach also the core issue: What is the right way for two peoples who share the same land to build, jointly, their future. □

Is Religion the Problem?

Martin Marty

The year 2002 should find Americans looking ahead, despite our natural instinct to revisit the scenes of the year past. Yet past and future are wedded, and facing some unfinished business of 2001 can help us face, though of course not finish, some of the business of the years ahead.

The business I am most interested in is that of religion, which has been my profession and vocation. So preoccupied have we become with asking why religion has been so central to killing that most of us have neglected to explore the potential for people acting in its name to heal. In such times, it also seems particularly easy to single out one religious tradition for criticism. Islam appears to be the candidate of the moment, followed by the other monotheistic religions. However, having spent six years on the Fundamentalist Project, where my colleagues and I explored and compared fundamentalist-like movements in a score of religions, I can say with confidence that the killing dimension of religion is an interfaith phenomenon. It's not only something that "they" do, something that is only in "their" scriptures. Nor is the lethal side of religion a monopoly of monotheists, the peoples of the Book, as a quick look at religions of the world will reveal.

Thanks to Osama bin Laden, 2001 was the year in which awareness of terror in the name of God went global. But the voice you will hear next is not bin Laden's voice: "Take up arms and protect religion. When one is face to face [with the enemy] they should be slaughtered without hesitation. Not the slightest blame attaches to the slayer." Though these words may sound familiar, they are not said in the name of Allah, but in the name of a goddess: "Lay down your life but first take a life...." "The worship of the goddess will not be consummated if you sacrifice your lives at the shrine of independence without shedding blood."

Eighty years ago in India, Hindu extremists, using the *Bhagavad Gita* as a sacred script, used these words as they invoked Kali, the "Black Goddess," in their fight against the



British Raj. In 1948, a former member of one such extremist group, RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh), assassinated Mohandas Gandhi. In 1992, led by the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), some 200,000 Hindu militants destroyed the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya. Hundreds of Muslims were among those killed in subsequent riots.

Are Eastern religions peaceful? Some self-critical Westerners think so. Yet Theravada Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka, long active in Sinhalese affairs, have been at war with Tamil Hindu separatists since 1983. The monk Anagarika Dharmapala (d. 1933) had urged "Young Buddhists of Asia" to "Arise, awake, unite and join the Army of Holiness and Peace and defeat the hosts of Evil." They did.

As for Sikhism, followers of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a Punjabi maverick preacher, believe their enemies "are perpetrating atrocities on us, ... burning our Holy Book.... There is no need to get a license for arms." Bhindranwale, who was killed when the Indian government sent its army to attack the Golden Temple at Amritsar in 1984, accused the Hindus of trying to enslave Sikhs and to commit atrocities, so he urged his followers to "prepare for war." He told them that the concept of "peaceful means" "cannot be found together in any part of the Sikh scriptures, in the history of the Gurus, nor in the history of the Sikhs."

Elsewhere in Asia, Japanese Buddhism "has never declared a holy war," says a scholar, yet "it has nonetheless proclaimed all Japanese wars holy." The religious atrocity of

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SPIRITUAL PATHS

devotees of Shinto, which inspired Japanese militarism through World War II, is too notorious to be overlooked.

Does one look South for religious peace? Traditional or “tribal” African expressions characteristically invoke their gods and spirits to wage war, as do counterparts in Latin America.

Pointing a finger closer to home, at the “peoples of the Book”—Islam, Judaism, and Christianity—finds a similar story. Monotheists, as mentioned, have no monopoly on violence. But it is true that scripturally revealed monotheism can serve those minded to be lethal in distinctive ways. Believe in one all-powerful God. Believe that this God has enemies. Believe that you are charged to serve the purposes of God against those enemies. Believe that a unique and absolute holy book gives you directions, impulses, and motivations to prosecute war. You have, then, the formula for crusades, holy wars, jihads, and, as we relearned in the year just passing, terrorism that knows no boundaries.

Thus, in Allah’s name, some Muslim fundamentalists have fought other Muslims, and, as everyone knows and in ways that need no further documentation at year’s end, non-Muslims.

The Muslim fundamentalists’ enemies in Israel, Jews in movements such as Gush Emunim (“Bloc of the Faithful”), have in turn cited the Torah to define the boundaries of their Israel and to inspire militant policies and actions. They don’t need Muslims to point out the many Bible stories, such as those in the Books of Joshua and Judges, that tell of divinely sanctioned war for ancient Israel and were used for battle in the birth of mainly secular modern Israel.

As for Christians, Muslims, especially Arabs, retain a fresh memory of the Crusades, the blood-shedding disasters that, beginning in 1095, rallied troops with the cry “God wills it!” Modern Christians will protest that these desecrations occurred very long ago; indeed, some Christians contend that Christianity at its root lacks a tradition of violence. But even the Jesus of the gospels, who blessed the peacemakers, still did speak at times of bringing not peace but the sword. Later, followers sang, “Onward, Christian soldiers....” Christians have used Christianity to justify the slavery of Africans and the removal to reservations, or death, of Native Americans. In the American Civil War, the North acted with God’s “terrible swift sword” and the Southern cause came to be “baptized in blood.” Afterward, Protestants in the Ku Klux Klan employed chaplains, read Bibles, and mounted crosses as they set out against blacks, Catholics, and Jews.

Today, with the exception of some attackers of abortion clinics, almost no American Protestant Fundamentalists have appealed to arms. Fundamentalist rhetoric, however, is often violent in its calls for action against the infidel at home and abroad. Meanwhile, on the left, only two decades ago some Latin American Catholic “liberationists” allied themselves with terrorist movements in the name of God. For

decades Protestants and Catholics have fought each other in Northern Ireland.

So much for the map of sacred belligerency. Killers in all faiths cite their scriptures against those they attack. It is hard to find durable and complex communities of religious faith that in their extremes have never killed in the name of the gods. The faithful who admit that fact may seem guilty of contributing to bad public relations for religion. But the first call for the religious is to be honest and, honestly, the record is full of violent chapters.

Get rid of religion! counsel the weary and the cynical alike. And replace it with what? The twentieth century’s ideological replacements, Soviet Communism, Nazism, Fascism, Maoism, Shintoism, and the other ‘isms’ were the greatest ideological killers. The record of people acting in the name of Democracy and Capitalism is also not unstained.

Get rid of religion, faith, and spiritual communities? They will not disappear. They are in fact prospering in the new millennium, as year-end polls show. Why? Those of us who do commit ourselves to one or another of these faiths perceive that the positive side of each offers benefits to billions who would not do without them. In the name of God, millions minister to each other and serve publics beyond their circle. Their faiths offer patterns of meaning and community in a world of alienation. They comfort, console, offer hope, inspire humanitarian endeavors, and can inspire work for justice. Witness their roles in New York, Washington, and nationally after the destructions of September 11. Listen to the appeals by Christians to “the Prince of Peace” in this season to hear the dream of reconciliation repeated.

At the end of this year such citizens are busy trying to understand exactly what moves factions within faith communities to erupt with terrorism, as those in al-Qaeda’s version of Islam have done. The mix of motives behind such violence includes many impulses that are not particularly religious in themselves: the impulse for revenge against those who represent real or imagined threats; the desire to enlarge one’s own territory; the desire to rally behind charismatic leaders who promise a future full of hope in the face of manifest injustice; the all-too-human tendency to be seduced into blind followership, to succumb to simple hatred. Not all killing in the name of God *begins* with a claim on God’s will. Armies fight for whatever reason—to purge outsiders or claim turf or effect revenge—and *then* call on divine powers. Doggerel from World War I made cynical fun of such madness:

*Gott strafe Enland, England, and God save the King.
God this, and God that, and God the other thing.
“Good God,” said God, “I’ve got my work cut out.”*

Yet, if we are to be honest, we will find that some of the impulses to violence do have their roots in religion itself.

Religious people base their commitments on founding myths, decisive stories, inspiring narratives, and forthright commands in their scriptures. It is clear that in all religions that are durable and complex, these myths and stories display what I call a dark nether- or under-side. In the earliest records of religion, from Babylon and Assyria, theologies of war identify the Enemy with the evil powers that God has set out to vanquish. Ever since, some have heard God call for human allies, who are goaded to conquer the enemies and bring order where there had been chaos.

This "dark underside" survives because satisfying myths or stories must account for the full scope of good and evil, laughter and tragedy, despair and hope, and whatever else human existence brings. Sunny, pastel, promise-everything myths would not endure or satisfy.

Most scholars agree that religion has to do with awe, with the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, with something like Moses at the burning bush hearing "Take the shoes off your feet, for the ground on which you are standing is holy ground." That awe, that wonder, which can be transmitted through texts and oral traditions where there is no immediate experience, is empowering. The one who has something revealed is in possession of something others do not have, and can well be possessed by it.

That power can be used to reconcile or to kill.

Second, the religious follow up their response by forming community. The originating experience is too strong to be borne alone, or is in need of reinforcement. Did you see what I saw? And as community forms, it can easily create the "we" that heals as well as the "they" who become the repulsive other, the infidel, the abhorrent, to be distanced, persecuted, or killed.

Third, as already noted, religion gets transmitted through myths and symbols, rites and ceremonies. And these serve to bond the group and push the other, the different far away. Their stories get to be seen as second-rate, as threats to what one believes. But the same myths and rites almost always have healing dimensions which can be shared. They are also empowering.

Making war in the name of the gods is easy. People need justifications for their most vile acts, and crediting or blaming God is the strongest way to do it. Making peace in the name of the gods is difficult. It means going against the grain of conflicted societies and human impulses to protect and enlarge territory or to find evil in the other.

Fortunately, the dark underside of religion is not the only side.

Most adherents of religions envision ultimate shalom, peace, and reconciliation under a benign God or gods. They know they will not fully realize this peace within history, but they see themselves called to help produce it. They often

need and sometimes find allies. And at their best, people of faith drawn by their faith to a better, more peaceful world, minister to others in sick rooms, act as counselors, as empathic fellow-sufferers, and as institutors of healing agencies. And doing all that demands self-examination, repentance, and resolve.

Some features of political arrangement can help make possible the opportunities for healing. So many Americans have difficulty understanding sacred violence in others because they have seen religion moderated closer to home. The forces of "secularization," "modernity," and "Enlightenment" in the guise of "the American way of life" have, it is true, often made it possible for Americans to fail to examine themselves; yet these forces have also helped American Christians, Jews, and others of faith reach for latent resources that promote peace in their own scriptures and traditions. The outcome has been the development of freedoms and new forms of tolerance, of calls to "live and let live," and, among believers, resolves such as "let's understand each other; let's cooperate."

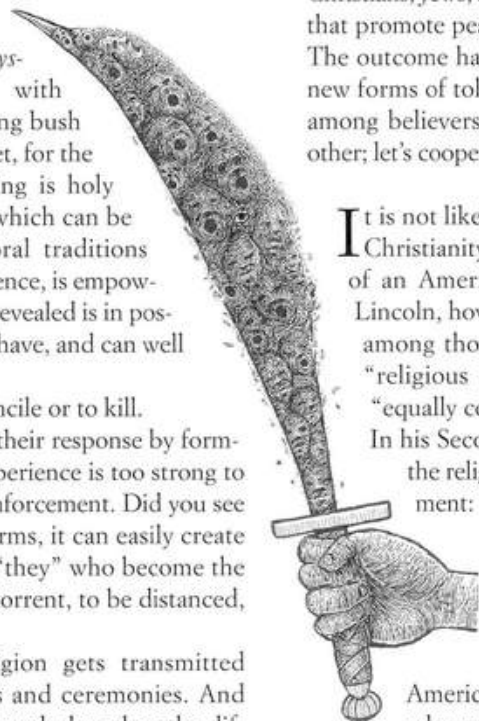
It is not likely that global militants in Islam, Judaism, Christianity, or any other faith will bow to the words of an American President. The words of Abraham Lincoln, however, should at least find some resonance among thoughtful Americans. He complained that "religious men" of his time opposed each other, "equally certain that they represent the Divine will."

In his Second Inaugural Address Lincoln dismissed the religiously self-confident with the simple statement: "The Almighty has his own purposes."

Today citizens are being told by some that *we* represent that Divine will. In its name, we are told to counter-attack terrorists by converting our necessary military tasks into elements of a Holy War.

Americans who do this are not likely to acknowledge evils in their own religious past or present. They will not find any resolve to go beyond the "dark side" of their founding stories and devote themselves to the positive or healing sides.

In one terse line of his First Inaugural Address, President Lincoln made an appeal, unheeded during the next five years, for people in the North and South to look for a time when they would be "again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature." I like that phrase about human nature and like to apply it by analogy to the nature of their beliefs. Do the religions themselves have "better angels of their nature" on which followers might draw for inspiration? Those who profess faiths affirm that they do. The early years of this new millennium should find them acting on such affirmations. Otherwise, those who call on the dark underside will prevail unchallenged, and only devastation will result. □



Will I Go For the Deeper Happiness in the Face of My Death?

Fred Branfman

"Think of somebody whose main activity of life is to act out his attachments and aversions. Such a person may become very powerful, very famous, he can even go down in history. But what has such a person attained? He has merely attained his name's going down in history. He has not become happy, he is dead."

—The Dalai Lama

"People are happy; they get what they want and they never want what they can't get. They're well off; they're safe; they're not afraid of death. And if anything should go wrong, there's soma."

—World Controller Mustapha Mond,
Brave New World

"The pursuit of happiness in itself is doomed to failure. Happiness can only be a by-product of facing the tragic dimensions of life and investing oneself in goals that go beyond the narrow confines of one's self and family."

—Dr. Robert Firestone, *Combating Destructive Thought Processes*

As incredible as it may sound, there is at this very moment an inner voice encouraging you to move in new directions to find a happiness beyond your present wildest imaginings. Our challenge is to quiet down enough to listen to it. If we do not we not only deprive ourselves of what might have been, we settle for a life of fleeting pleasures and unconscious despair.

There is, it turns out, something even more painful than the idea of oblivion for all eternity: the despair we largely repress at how we have not reached our full potential for happiness and fulfillment in our firefly lives before we must die.

We can do nothing about our mortality. But facing the feelings it arouses in us can motivate us to do far more to experience the inner states I call the "deeper happiness." As we approach the end of life—for example, we baby-boomers who are willing to admit, at least to ourselves if not to others, that we have settled for far less than the dreams of our youth—we confront the toughest question of all: will we raise the stakes? In the face of our impending death, will we risk going all-out for the deeper happiness? Or will we continue to settle for less until the grave?

Fred Branfman directs For Generations to Come and Gifts of Death Awareness Project, and works on a variety of other spiritual and psychological issues. In a previous lifetime he exposed the secret U.S. Air war against Laos.



The deeper happiness has little to do with the outer satisfactions offered by power, wealth, or fame. Nor is it an isolated, inward kind of "bliss," achieved at a cost of removing ourselves from the suffering of the world with all its complications.

Rather, the deeper happiness is a transformed state of being marked by *both* inner peace *and* action to serve others and life itself. Happiness comes from experiencing our potential for love, compassion, feeling, aliveness, inner peace, joy of service and connection to others, and deep opening to life's mysteries, absent the craving and grasping of ego. It is not that a politician's power, CEO's wealth, or movie star's fame do not bring real pleasure. But such pleasures are to genuine happiness what anonymous sex is to lovemaking with our beloved.

Although happiness is ultimately a deep inner experience, it is not an inward experience. As Robert Firestone emphasizes, and the Dalai Lama demonstrates with his life, we can only truly experience the deeper happiness within if we work for the benefit of others and fully experience life's tragic dimensions. As light does not exist without dark, we can only experience our full potential for love, empathy, understanding, bliss, and compassion if we are also willing to experience the feelings of horror that naturally arise at the sight of a starving child, the idea of death, the destruction caused by war.

We cannot achieve genuine happiness by seeking it in the abstract. It comes as a byproduct of doing work which matters, making profound connections with others, and/or

ILLUSTRATION BY CAREN BELLE LOEBEL-FRIED

following a spiritual practice that takes us beyond attachment and aversion.

Nothing makes us as defensive as facing the gap between our present lives and the happiness we might have had. But facing this anxiety can be the single most liberating event of our lifetimes. And experiencing the cloud of pain has another silver lining. Happiness is a matter of quality, not quantity. Once we do achieve it, we are so transformed that the years we feel we wasted no longer gnaw away at us.

Will I myself go for the deeper happiness? It is important to ask the question this way. We can read every tome on happiness written since the time of the Greeks, and still not be one whit closer to experiencing it. The deeper happiness only begins with understanding. What matters most is challenging our own conditioning, fears, and anxieties—the defenses that keep us from going for it. Here are some questions that might be useful in deciding whether to take the risk.

Is Going For Personal Happiness Legitimate?

Because it is far easier to rationalize our current life than undergo the pain of changing it, we must begin with one of our most common defenses: isn't seeking personal happiness "selfish"? Isn't the Dalai Lama wrong in suggesting that my personal happiness is more important than my contributions to humanity? There is some truth to this view. We all benefit from the penicillin, electricity, railroads, autos, oil, and software that generally miserable human beings have brought us.

But in the end the true benefactors of humanity are those who do both the inner and outer work. It is no coincidence that we honor Martin Luther King Jr. more than LBJ, Sakharov more than Lenin, the Dalai Lama more than Bill Clinton, Gandhi more than Winston Churchill, Mother Theresa more than the Pope, and Moses, Christ, and the Buddha far more than Alexander, Julius Cesar, or Napoleon.

While pursuing social and material goals is important, the most essential service we can perform for others, not to mention ourselves, is to achieve—and share—the deeper happiness. "Gaia is more interested in your process than your function," says Hungarian spiritual teacher Laszlo Honti. Happy, content people don't destroy their biosphere, wage war, abuse others, or use more resources than they need. And these problems won't end until more people are happier. We cannot, of course, defer working on social problems until we attain a critical mass of fulfilled people capable of saving the planet. But neither can we delay our highest priority: achieving our own version of the deeper happiness, and sharing it with others.

What Do I Mean By "Happiness"?

As the quotes by the Dalai Lama and Huxley indicate, "happiness" means many things to many people. To the Dalai Lama it is state of aliveness in which one deeply feels both the pain and ecstasy of living. To Huxley and

activists of all kinds, it connotes a kind of blissful idiocy and brain death, that C. Wright Mills used to criticize by referring to Americans as "cheerful robots."

What does it mean for you? One suggestion is to replace the overused word "happy" with a less common word such as "fulfilled" or "satisfied," and then fill in the blanks. What would your life look like for you to be truly fulfilled?

Am I Willing to Welcome Pain?

Once we decide what we mean by "happiness," we arrive at the crux of the issue: how much am I willing to risk changing my life to achieve the happiness I seek?

There is no way around it: seeking to be truly happier involves pain. It means abandoning the comforts we have spent a lifetime accumulating, challenging defenses against deep feeling and anxiety of which we are largely unaware. It is not only that few seeking it can be sure of success when they begin. It is that the search *necessarily* involves abandoning the familiar, and facing the dozens of fears—hunger, shame, loneliness, death—that haunt our sleep and limit our waking hours.

But, in the end, we have nothing to lose but our defenses. If the Dalai Lama and so many others are right, when we do find happiness, we discover that the very defenses that we think protect us are in fact our prison walls—and that our liberation lies on the other side.

How Do I Look For What I Cannot Know?

If we are willing to go for the deeper happiness, we confront a final obstacle: we may have no idea what it is. A good rule of thumb is this: "whatever we think the deeper happiness is, it isn't." We form our idea of happiness from our previous experiences of satisfaction—the moments we fell in love, finished a creative project, received a raise, took a walk in nature, appeared on television—and our projections about the happiness of others.

And yet once we admit that our present path isn't bringing us the deeper happiness, it becomes clear that our previous experiences and projections no longer apply. So what to do? Though our minds cannot answer this question, a deeper kind of knowledge is available to us. An inner voice is telling us every second what we need to do next. Our problem is that our lives are so busy, our minds so active, our hearts so fraught, that we cannot hear it. If we can slow things down, empty out, breathe deeply, relax, get healthy, and just listen, the answer usually appears. Our work is not to "figure it out." Rather it is to quiet down long enough so that we can bring to consciousness what our unconscious, or something even deeper, already knows.

What is important is not seeking a particular path, but rather committing to a *process* of searching in new areas foreign to our previous experience, quieting down enough to hear our inner voice, and progressively opening to the Mystery.

The deeper happiness awaits you.

Will you go for it?

□

Is Taking a Psychedelic an Act of Sedition?

Charles Hayes

The disturbances of September 11 have sent us reeling, driving many to seek relief from anxiety and depression through socially-sanctioned psychotropics such as Prozac, Xanax, and alcohol. But some of the so-called psychedelic drugs (cannabis, LSD, peyote, psilocybin, ayahuasca, and MDMA or Ecstasy), targets of America's deeply misguided War on Drugs, could have a more profound and healthful effect, if used responsibly. The very idea of going off on a psychedelic "head trip" in this hour of national crisis might be seen as self-indulgent folly, or worse, an act of cerebral sedition. Yet a cold and sober look through the smoldering smoke of Ground Zero leads me to believe that, depending on individual circumstances, of course, there are now even more compelling reasons to sanction the practice of judicious psychedelic use.

If combat readiness is an issue, if your function is to evacuate a building in a hurry, screen airline passengers, detect the presence of microscopic pathogens, analyze forensic evidence that could lead to the apprehension of culpable or would-be terrorists, or execute a commando raid on an Afghan mountain, this is probably not the season for psychedelics. But if you're not sure who the *real* enemy is, if you're inclined to ask more questions about the nature of the reality that's just swung out into a broad new arc, or if you're seeking solace and healing from trauma or debilitating stress, it could well be the time to venture out into new psychical frontiers by means of certain time-tested plants and chemicals. In fact, for some especially scarred, it might even be foolish not to, given that there might not be as much time to lose as we thought we had.

Granted, a state of war, or any other condition in which physical security is under threat, is not the ideal circumstance to explore inner realms. The removal of base concerns for food, shelter, and bodily safety has been a key factor in the evolution of human consciousness from such immediate distractions to plans for future (inner and outer) space exploration. To paraphrase Terence McKenna, the late shamanologist and outspoken champion of psychedelic

consciousness, if you remove stress and threat, add a lot of alkaloids, and perturb the brain, it will transcend three-dimensional space and unfold into a four-dimensional matrix. In an era in which Terror and the War Against It are being waged, the safe and supportive setting long advanced by psychedelic gurus and pundits would seem harder to provide.

But let us not suppose that psychedelics are only for the serene and that their impact on the psyche is purely pacific and unobtrusive. Because they dissolve boundaries to cognitive, emotional, and spiritual understanding, there is, in fact, something uniquely *destructive* about them, particularly the sort that effectively "kills" the ego through a symbolic death that blows the hatch on one's clinging obsessions and deconstructs one's entire perception of reality—a nuclear fission of the psychological world with impacts not unlike some of the far-flung effects of September 11. Aldous Huxley's proposed invocation for psychedelic sessions includes the admonition: "Your ego and the [fill in your name] game are about to cease."

Deployed with ill intent, along psychotomimetic lines (the first use of LSD and mescaline earmarked by the scientific community), such an assault could wreak havoc on individuals and populations. The CIA tested LSD as a weapon for immobilizing enemies and extracting secrets from them. Conversely, hashish was allegedly used to induce visions of paradise and thereby stoke the courage of a secret order of Muslim guerrillas called the People of the Old Man of the Mountain, which terrorized Christians during the Crusades by stealthily killing their leaders; hence the term "assassins" from the Arabic *Hashshashin* for "hashish smokers." Subject to the wrong input, the vulnerability of the psychedelized mind can be grossly abused. History is rife with such examples of the perversion of technology or magic.

Still, the CIA and the Saracen assassins were onto something, albeit in the most unwholesome of ways. Psychedelics *are* a weapon of war, the war of perceptions, priorities, and values. More readily than the reverse, they can be used to erode the will to use military force, so long as survival isn't at stake. How many thousands of Americans in the Sixties, tripping out on acid, grass, mushrooms, or mescaline, got a heightened sense of the utter absurdity of killing Vietnamese in their own country? Anti-war activists declared openly that

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LSD was a guerrilla weapon of pacifist resistance, and one that ultimately helped to end that war.

For Paul Krassner, a cofounder of the Yippies, taking acid was a political act, something he did on the occasion of his testifying at the Chicago Conspiracy trial. His new book, *Psychedelic Trips for the Mind* (High Times Books), celebrates the synchronicity of the crystallizing counterculture, a profusion of spontaneous acts of elation kindled by psychedelics that helped to consolidate the unified mind of a generation. "The CIA originally envisioned LSD as a means of control," says Krassner, "but millions of young people became explorers of their own inner space with it instead. Acid was serving as a vehicle to help deprogram themselves from a civilization of inhumane priorities. Rand Corporation researchers speculated that LSD might be an *antidote* to political activism, but the CIA's scenario backfired."

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If death is another name for the process of undoing to which all of our doings must and do lead, then the psychedelic experience is most certainly concerned with death, with endings that, if we could only see, become beginnings in other forms. McKenna once wrote that psychedelics anticipate the dying process, and just four months from his own passage, he told a group at Esalen, "If psychedelics don't prepare you for the Great Beyond, I don't know what really does." In revealing that the emperor wears no clothes, that things fall apart, psychedelics decrypt the death bound into things and offer us a chance to capture—or recover—the rapture of union, to snap out of the trance that sustains the illusion of our separateness. There is a diaphanous quality to things seen on the psychedelic, a sympathetic blurring of the lines, an overdrape of molecular fabric that suggests that we are a part of everything.

Such a vision proved to be the stuff of psychic liberation for the late Israeli Holocaust survivor Yehiel De-Nur, who tells, in *Shivitti* (Gateways Books and Tapes) of a miraculous breakthrough during a 1976 LSD-assisted psychotherapy session in Leiden, Holland with Dr. Jan Bastiaans, the psychiatrist who identified Concentration Camp Syndrome. During the session, De-Nur relived the hell of Auschwitz and then saw his own face over that of his tormenter, deducing that all of humanity—including himself—was complicit in



the Nazi horror, that it could have been him on the other side of the dynamic, herding people into the ovens, that there was a collective burden of guilt for all to share. Far from being a "bad trip" in which he recoiled at identifying with a fiendish executioner, the epiphany catalyzed a redemptive rebirth for his stricken soul, dissolving the victim/perpetrator dichotomy.

A thirty-year belief in the power of psychedelics to confer such transformations spurred Rick Doblin, president of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS; see www.maps.org) to submit an historic protocol for MDMA-assisted psychother-

apy in the treatment of patients afflicted with chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) brought on by criminal deeds. The protocol, approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on November 2, 2001, surprisingly with no snags over the issue of neurotoxicity, will be used for the first U.S. study ever to evaluate if MDMA can have actual mental health benefits.

The FDA ruling may clear the way for an Israeli study of the efficacy of MDMA-assisted psychotherapy in the treatment of PTSD caused by terrorism or war. MDMA manufactured by Israeli syndicates is used in raves and clubs there, as well as by a growing colony of disaffected young army veterans and other Israeli escapists settling in Goa, India. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) suspects the Israeli mafia of being, along with dealers in Holland, behind the spike in worldwide MDMA production, some of it smuggled as "Ecstasy" tablets—often by Hassidic couriers—into the United States, hence the Israelis' hesitation to proceed with MDMA research until the United States approved a protocol for it first. Now, however, according to Jorge Gleser, Deputy Director of Mental Health Services at the Israeli Ministry of Health, the Ministry will welcome the submission of a slightly revised version of the MAPS protocol. If approved, the study will probably be supervised by Dr. Moshe Kotler, former chief of psychiatry for the Israeli Defense Forces.

Doblin was in Tel Aviv fresh from meetings with Gleser and Kotler when he learned of the September 11 attacks. News of the disaster brought home his sense of "Zionist duty to bring psychedelics to Israel," a nation he sees as a traumatized society where a succession of shocks over the last century has left many of the people "frightened and

unable to trust, even when trust should be given." Declares Doblin, "I honestly believe that psychedelics used sensibly and therapeutically can help bring peace to the Middle East, by reducing both personal and social conflicts."

Those in power who could take hemispheric strides toward peace and accommodation if they surrendered their armor and reactionary impulses are not likely to use MDMA, LSD, or other psychedelics, in therapy or otherwise. But Doblin holds out the hope that they can learn by example, by seeing that more and more people can go through the psychedelic ego death and rebirth without losing touch with their cultures. Dr. Charles Grob, a child psychiatrist at UCLA, who in 1994 conducted the first FDA-approved study of the effects of MDMA on human volunteers, asserts that MDMA's capacity to promote empathy could have a powerful impact on geopolitical affairs. "Well, you're not going to get Sharon and Arafat to take MDMA together," he grants, "but let their children get together one day to do it in a medical setting and have a mutually empathetic experience, seeing the humanity of the other side." Grob thinks that MDMA could have a healing effect on Americans rocked to varying degrees by the September 11 attacks, by fostering empathy for the families of victims, and, less directly, for the bereft and disenfranchised anywhere in the world.

MDMA has already proven to be a bonding agent on a vast scale, within the rave movement, which is international in scope, and pacific, empathic, and celebratory in nature. Just as LSD was a bedrock for the Yippie ethos nearly two generations ago, Ecstasy could well become the social glue for a new activism, should an urgent and well-articulated need arise. MDMA dissolves boundaries for the individual's immersion into a communal group mind, according to author and media theorist Douglas Rushkoff in an essay entitled "Ecstasy: Prescription for a Cultural Renaissance" (included in *Ecstasy: The Complete Guide* by Dr. Julie Holland, Inner Traditions). "On E, lies are inefficient," he writes, "and the peculiarities and weaknesses they are meant to obscure no longer seem like offenses against nature." Hence the doors of perception are cleansed, but without blowing them off their hinges. MDMA is unique among so-called psychedelics for leaving the ego unthreatened by inducing a pervasive sense of peace and trust that enables fruitful self-inventory, therapeutic healing, and a powerful feeling of appreciation for one's fellows.

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Prior to September 11, the nation was beginning to enjoy an increasingly rich dialogue about the role of psychoactive drugs and the impact of the War on Drugs, led most notably by Bill Maher of ABC's "Politically Incorrect," whose comic quips roasting government drug policy complemented the dignified propriety of calls for reform by the Republican Governor of New Mexico, Gary Johnson. Nick Bromell, author of *Tomorrow Never Knows: Rock and Psychedelics in the 1960s* (University of Chicago Press),

observed, optimistically, in a June 2001 essay on the "New Cultural Assent to Drug Use" in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that "more and more Americans are unwilling to take a hard line against drugs if that means simplistically refusing to consider why people actually take them."

The ironies of the drug war are everywhere today. "If [September 11 hijacker] Mohammed Atta had been a dope dealer," Grob complains, "we would have been on him. Since he was only suspected of terrorism, he eluded our watch. Our preoccupation with illegal drugs has contributed to our head being in the sand. Last spring we gave \$43 million in food aid to the Taliban for suppressing poppy production. It's affected our value system, our ethics, our intelligence-gathering ability. The government could tax drugs to subsidize its war on terrorism." Grob, who objects to Ecstasy use at raves and clubs, says he does not advocate an open market for all drugs, but notes, "Controlled drugs are completely out of control! Anybody can do them under any circumstance, whereas trained professionals can't. Who's being controlled?"

Recent trends in medicine are redrawing the map of human consciousness as an interaction of specific biochemical agents and processes. The new study of neurotheology is examining the causal relationship between brain chemistry and spirituality. Dr. Rick Strassman, author of the briskly selling *DMT: The Spirit Molecule* (Inner Traditions; see www.rickstrassman.com) focuses the search for a biochemical catalyst for spirituality on a single endogenous compound, DMT, the most powerful hallucinogen known. In the early Nineties, he conducted FDA-approved research on human subjects with the material. In his book, he posits the theory that blasts of resident DMT from the pineal gland at key moments of stress, including birth and death, are responsible for spiritual awakenings. Contemplation of the grisly carnage of September 11 has strengthened his belief that upon death, bodies should not be disturbed, so that this process is able to play out and facilitate the soul's transfer to a noncorporeal state.

Funnily enough, in a May 2001 cover story that examined "How We're Wired for Spirituality" ("This is your brain on God") *Newsweek* managed to dance around the issue of psychedelic drugs as mediators of mystic states. The magazine's religion editor, Kenneth Woodward, strained reason when he wrote that the emotions of "losing oneself in prayer ... have nothing to do with how well we communicate with God." Such a dismissal of peak experiences is tantamount to saying that the flush of joy felt by a child in the realization of his parents' love could never translate into a deepened understanding and appreciation of life. Recently, no less an authority on religion than Huston Smith has said, "If religion cannot be equated with religious experiences, neither can it long survive their absence." As he and others, including myself, have documented, extraordinary changes in brain chemistry induced by psychotropic

substances can, under the proper circumstances, occasion such experiences.

The going may be rough, of course, though that, says Smith, is no reason to discount the results. In *Cleansing the Doors of Perception* (Council on Spiritual Practices; see www.csp.org), he points out that religious experiences *in general* have fearsome properties. Those brought on by psychedelics are no different. "The drug experience," he writes, "can be like having forty-foot waves crash over you for several hours while you cling desperately to a life raft which may be swept from under you at any moment." Thus, he refutes the claim that the expansive relief from ordeal that some psychedelic experiences feel is an invalid path to religion, because we do, after all, accept battlefield conversions and those made in the throes of physical crises.

Nor should we discount drug-abetted awakenings because they're one-time affairs. Echoing the great religion scholar William James, Smith notes that the ephemeral nature of peak experiences sparked by psychedelics makes them no different from any other sort of mystic encounter with the *mysterium tremendum*. Such soul-rocking events are indelible in spite of their transient nature, whether you're a born-again Christian or an acid mystic turned Buddhist monk. But the degree to which they will affect you over time, and the tenacity of your newfound conviction, depend on how well you integrate the often alien or *otherly* vision into your daily life.

So long as such stormings of heaven are outlawed and dismissed, the greater the likelihood for relapse from the cosmic consciousness they engender to the coarse materialist outlook that is consensus reality. It takes a prolonged commitment to mindfulness to prevent the sort of recidivism epitomized by Yippie Jerry Rubin's high-profile conversion to yuppieism, just as it will require high vigilance and honesty to ensure that profiteering doesn't befoul the surging waters of heart-felt patriotism, as has already begun to occur just weeks after September 11.

With religion-inspired hatred on the loose, many see religion itself as a culprit for the September 11 troubles, and point to psychedelics—or *entheogens*, divine-generating agents—as a means of bypassing religion to get to the well-spring of spirituality. Because they produce the primary experience on which faith is inspired, "entheogens prove that no intermediary is necessary," states Clark Heinrich, author of *God Without Religion* (yet unpublished) and *Strange Fruit* (to be published in the US by Inner Traditions), a speculative history about the role of the *Amanita muscaria* mushroom in several world religions. After his own drug-induced awakening, the late British Ecstasy advocate, Nicholas Saunders (see www.ecstasy.org), surmised that religions may very well have been invented to explain entheogenic experiences.

Still another nondenominational yet transcendental usage

seen for psychedelics is as a tool of hyper-ratiocinative perception, a means to deconstruct media charades and help the intellect to cope with ambiguity and uncertainty, according to Erik Davis, author of *Techgnosis: Myth, Magic + Mysticism in the Age of Information* (Three Rivers Press). "I wouldn't necessarily want to trip in the aftermath of September 11," concedes Davis, "but I can now use my psychedelic training for coping with the epistemological cyclone of a cataclysm such as this. I grew up in the cushiest reality in the history of the planet. Now I see demons pouring over the lip of my existence, but I've learned through psychedelics how to breathe through it and not believe its story."

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In a subtle sense, September 11 has had the effect of a virtual psychedelic experience, breaking up the world and reorganizing it. In this respect, says Krassner, the event was "an instant 'trip' for many who are now face to face with what to do with their lives, what their concept of God is." In the wake of the attacks, we have witnessed that a cataclysm can have a positive outcome. A tangible new sense of tighter community has come into being, woven from the supplest fibers of the human spirit rebounding from the obliteration of the old order. For those with the courage to trust, the psychedelic experience can orchestrate a sort of manageable in-house cataclysm—wreaking only epistemological havoc, not mortal carnage—and one that can heal by enlivening these same regenerative psychical tissues. Used wisely, psychedelics can thus open the heart to compassion and enable the mind to decouple itself from neurotic or burdensome patterns.

Because of this potential for unsettling the already shakable self, if only temporarily, the tool of psychedelic consciousness is certainly not an imperative, and not for everyone; it must be utilized, managed, and regulated skillfully. In order to fill the sensorium with as much preternatural light as can be metabolized, and liberate the psychedelic experience from the underworld darkness of proscription, the practice should be sacramentalized and institutionalized under the administration of the scientists, doctors, psychologists, and spiritual leaders most knowledgeable about its propensities and potentials.

Psychedelic sessions would then be structured and guided by the collective wisdom generated from centuries of shamanic ritual, as well as from modern clinical research and lessons learned from more informal practices. Select, certifiably pure psychedelics could then be placed once again in the service of private therapy for individuals, couples counseling, and the treatment of drug or alcohol dependency, depression, and other mental maladies. And they could also be shared in settings for congregational worship, as the Native American Church uses peyote and the Santo Daime and Uniao de Vegetal churches in Brazil use ayahuasca.

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Medicine at the Millennium

Still Caught between Descartes and Spinoza

Raymond Barglow

In the aftermath of the destruction of the World Trade Center in September, followed by the anthrax attacks in the same month, public health officials are promising to take the threat of biological/chemical terrorism more seriously. But this new concentration will not address global dangers to human health such as epidemic diseases, environmental pollution, and the overuse of antibiotics in agriculture and medicine.

Nor is medical care in the United States capable of coping adequately even with everyday illnesses. Medical expenses are rising to intolerable levels, while forty-three million Americans currently have no health care coverage at all. And the aging baby boomer generation will soon place extraordinary demands on the system.

What can be done? Medicine today, like Judaism as this magazine suggests, needs renewal. But in what direction? Legislation to bring down costs and establish a single-payer plan that covers everyone are certainly worth fighting for. But such reforms do not address what is fundamentally wrong with health care in this country and may not even be winnable in the absence of more fundamental change. In place of the orthodox medical model that focuses narrowly on biological repair, we need a much broader, prevention-oriented and ecologically aware approach – one that remains scientific while encompassing all the relationships that are essential to human health.

If we look at the history of medicine, we can see that it became what it is today because of a sweeping social transformation that modernized Europe centuries ago. Urbanization and commerce, along with Protestantism and the Catholic Counter-Reformation, encouraged new ways of conceiving and interacting with nature. It was within this context that “scientific medicine” was invented and elaborated. The particular scientific model that became predominant in Europe in the seventeenth century accepted the mind-body dualism of René Descartes, for whom the human body is a self-contained, entirely material machine. His contemporary, Baruch Spinoza, on the other hand, held a more relational view, stemming from a Jewish tradition that regards mind and body as the same being expressed in different dimensions, and all beings as mutually dependent.

Spinoza’s perspective is no less compatible with scientific medicine than the Cartesian view. For science has two complementary ways of explaining: by taking apart—as atomic physics mainly does—and by bringing into relation—as Einstein’s relativity theory does. Spinoza was quite aware of the power of the first approach, as advocated by Descartes and advanced by technologies such as the newly invented microscope. Spinoza acknowledges that the human body is composed of parts, and those parts of smaller parts still. But he recognizes also that bodies are encompassed by, and can be adequately understood only in relation to, unities larger than themselves, until we reach the widest system of all, which is “the whole of nature.”

Medicine in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could have taken a more integrative path, in keeping with Spinoza’s insight that we are guardians not only of our bodies, taken individually, but of the entire domain of nature with which they are continuous. Instead, for reasons that this essay will explore, mainstream medicine adopted the Cartesian machine model. Today, nearly four centuries later, the contradictions between these two approaches to health care remain unresolved.

The Seventeenth-Century Origins of Medical Science

In the European Middle Ages, healing had been regarded mainly as women’s work. Midwives presided over the birth process, mothers attended to the illnesses of their children, and adults too relied upon women to feed and comfort and restore their bodies. Then in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the body became the object of medicalizing concepts and practices. When manufacturing and banking interests in European urban centers threw off the fetters of feudalism, they embraced not only the new rules of a market economy, but also an innovative way of knowing the world—“natural science,” it is called today. Empirical inquiry is presumed to reveal how the body—now thought of as a marvelously intricate machine—really works, what causes it to malfunction, and what can be done by way of repair.

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The beginnings of this new alliance of scientific with social authority can be observed in Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp*, painted in Amsterdam in 1632. During the Middle Ages, the anatomy of the human body had been interwoven with astrological meaning. The character and optimal timing of surgery were figured according to the zodiac, as in the early sixteenth-century print at the right.

Leaving this medieval tradition behind, seventeenth-century anatomical inquiry re-inscribed the human body scientifically. The body became something individual—a bordered territory, so to speak, possessed by its owner.

But becoming individual didn't mean that the body was no longer subject to social interpretation. Anatomy demonstrations such as the one Rembrandt portrays were political as well as scientific events, attended not only by students of medicine and academics, but also by prominent citizens of the community. In his painting, Rembrandt focuses upon only a handful of figures, but in fact such demonstrations were held in large anatomical theaters. Around the dissecting table were arranged concentric circles of seats, to which visitors were assigned according to social rank.

The cadaver on display in Rembrandt's painting is that of Aris Kindt, a criminal who had been tortured, condemned, and executed by the state. His body lying on the table, foreshortened, is expressive of passivity and death. The shadow of one of the leaning spectators darkens its brow. Living subjectivity has fled from the corpse, to be expressed—with an intensity that is characteristic of Rembrandt's art—in the surrounding figures. Dr. Tulp in particular is singled out in the painting by his broad-brimmed hat, distinctive garb, and masterful gesture. A conch shell, which had been a token of spiritual elevation in earlier representations of religious themes, surrounds his head as if

with a halo. The doctor is confident that what he says to his listeners will be empirically corroborated both by the observed body and by the open anatomy textbook at the feet of the cadaver, just as the Creator's plan, revealed in the Bible, is daily confirmed by events on earth. In his inaugural speech for Amsterdam's anatomical theater, Casper Barlaeus declared: "Here addresses us the eloquence of learned Tulp, while with nimble hand he dissects livid limbs. Listener, learn for thyself even in the smallest part God is enshrined."

God so enshrined was a form of science that regarded the structure of the body—and by metaphorical extension the structure of society as well—as divinely ordained.

Consequently, medicine's practitioners had no reason to look into the ways that "civilization" itself might contribute to human illness, since its fundamental rightness was



theologically guaranteed. If all law is authorized from on high, then the laws that govern society are, as Descartes suggested, no less valid than those of science and mathematics. Hence the lawfully governed human body could serve well as a metaphor legitimating social law and order. Even colonial authority seemed to receive support from scientific anatomy in this way. In England at this time, exploration and mastery of the New World were often compared to voyaging

into the *terra incognita* of the human body. Francis Bacon's view of science as the possession and subjugation of nature was of a piece with his enthusiasm about colonial exploration and conquest. Indeed, the wealth of Holland's Golden Age was built at the expense of the new nation's underclasses and of "primitive" peoples overseas.

The Social Contradiction within Scientific Medicine

What struck me when I saw Rembrandt's painting some years ago in The Hague was its unified expression of scientific inquiry, social authority, and light. Yet, I perceived also a contradiction. Yes, the scientific perspective represented here pays homage to a sometimes cruel social regime. But its view of human nature is affiliated with certain ethical ideals as well. The laws of science are deemed to hold universally—to describe, for example, every person's physiology: the same intricate structure of muscles and tendons that operates the hand of a criminal also enables the gesture of the doctor's hand, as he presses his forefinger against his thumb.

In Rembrandt's day, the awareness that all human beings are constructed very similarly, with the same essential needs, limitations, and vulnerabilities, was associated with humanist values of altruism and tolerance—values that were officially recognized by the newly formed Dutch Republic. In most parts of the country, citizens could, for example, practice the religion of their choice, or no religion at all. Amsterdam was home to Spinoza, a Jew, and to Descartes, who had emigrated from Catholic France. Spinoza embraced this humanist tradition. Aware of the complex and partly unconscious motivations that drive human behaviors, he could view with compassion even a “hardened criminal” like Aris Kindt in Rembrandt's painting.

Humanism regarded scientific method as liberating partly because it implies that the authority to say what is true or false, good or evil, does not belong to any one person, not even to a monarch or a pope. The older, pre-scientific account of the human body had regarded a person's worth and social rank as destined by nature. Noble blood, for instance, was linked to nobility of spirit and social status, base blood to depravity and criminality. The new medical science did away with such distinctions. For William Harvey, who published his treatise on the circulatory system in 1628, blood is simply a fluid that flows in every human body and that no longer differentiates high from low birth. Hence the study of anatomy was sympathetic to democratic aspirations. With its emphasis on empirical rather than magical explanations, science also played a role in dispelling superstitions such as the belief in witchcraft. Early in the seventeenth century in Holland, witch trials were done away with.



But the affinity of seventeenth-century humanism and science for egalitarian ideals came into conflict with the division of society into social classes. Although science revealed that, on a physical level, human beings are very similar, their life opportunities and social destinies turned out to be quite different. Accounting for such different outcomes—that one individual becomes, for example, a highly respected doctor and another a condemned criminal—was one of the aims of the Cartesian mind-body distinction: although our bodies are nearly identical, our minds differentiate us. One person pursues a higher path than another, and that explains why one enters the light and another falls into darkness. In Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson*, a deep shadow covers the brow of the cadaver.

Later in Rembrandt's life, following personal misfortunes and conflict with the Calvinist Church, he would adapt the Italian *chiaroscuro* (play of light and shadow) to masterfully contrast the illumination and darkness within a single soul, as in his self-portraits.



The ambivalent moods characteristic of Rembrandt's later works are less evident in the *Anatomy Lesson*, in which light articulates a divinely inspired, scientific reason that shines upon men. It is not accidental that no women attend the lesson. Officially authorized healing was regarded as men's work, and although childbirth, for instance, remained the work of midwives, the seventeenth-century Dutch legal system subjected them and folk healers to the authority of male surgeons and physicians. A restructuring of medical authority occurred in the name of Cartesian science, which sharply distinguished the active, knowing subject from the passive, known object. Advocates of this science identified it with a disembodied, objectifying point of view—as exemplified in Albrecht Dürer's illustration of single-point perspective shown below on the left—that represents hierarchical relationships (male versus female, reason versus emotion) as belonging to the stable and natural way of the world.

These binary oppositions were natural to a medical world view that took for granted a Cartesian mind-body dualism. But medicine could have accepted a more egalitarian philosophy such as Spinoza's. He criticized Descartes' view that humans are “lords and masters of nature,” and that their mastery mirrors God's dominion over His creation.

Spinoza's philosophy, unlike that of Descartes, didn't adapt well to modernity's framing of hierarchical distinctions, and therefore wasn't found suitable as a basis for medical science. That science continued to support universal humanist ideals to some extent, but at the same time became allied with social interests that were anything but universal. This predicament has divided medicine against itself ever since.

The Rise and Fall of Public Medicine

The Cartesian machine model of the human body, along with the idea of medical treatment as repair of the machine, has led to important discoveries and technologies for reducing human suffering. But this approach has also contributed to a narrow-minded focus on physical states inside the body rather than on the body's less easily quantifiable relationships with the surrounding social/natural world.

Yet the evidence linking illness to these relationships is overwhelming. In the past decade, researchers Richard Wilkinson, Michael Marmot, and Nancy Adler, among many others, have documented high correlations between economic inequality and rates of illness in modern societies. Limited access to professional health care services partly explains this correlation, but most of it is due to literally sickening life circumstances. Addressing these circumstances, which include unsanitary living conditions, unsafe workplaces and meaningless work, toxic environments, inadequate nutrition, and social isolation, isn't nearly as profitable as biomedical, individual-centered care, and is therefore neglected by mainstream medicine.

An environmental approach to health care, on the other hand, would not disregard the underlying etiologies of illness. Such an approach is not new. A century and a half ago, the German anatomist and pathologist Rudolf Virchow organized public campaigns to address the fundamental causes of disease. When in 1848 he investigated a devastating epidemic of typhus in Upper Silesia, a territory under the domination of Prussia, he concluded that its cause was the economic and political subjugation of the Polish inhabitants, whose powerlessness and apathy contributed to the rapid spread of the illness. Only "full and unlimited democracy ... education, freedom, and prosperity," he said, could address the underlying causes of the epidemic and prevent it from recurring in the future. The physician's natural role and responsibility was to serve as an "attorney for the poor." While Virchow became famous for his discoveries in cell biology, he should be given equal credit for what he called "sociological epidemiology."

Virchow was not alone. In the United States, many physicians embraced a broad interpretation of their profession's responsibilities, one that would integrate scientific advances with a primary commitment to community medicine. Their statistical research documented dangerous working conditions, unemployment, urban

squalor, malnutrition, and general poverty as major disease agents. (Had this approach to illness been taken in Spinoza's day, it might have saved his life. He made his living by grinding lenses, and suffered from a lung condition common at the time among lens makers, caused by inhaling fine glass dust. This illness contributed to his death at the age of forty-four.) At the end of the nineteenth century and during the first two decades of the twentieth, a broad coalition of researchers, care providers, and trade unionists advanced a workers' rights and human rights agenda to remedy these basic problems.

But public medicine, as they understood it, came into conflict with conservative interests, including the American Medical Association and its corporate sponsors, that gained control over medical school education and credentialing, and essentially restructured the medical profession. Implementation of the recommendations of the Flexner Report published by the Carnegie Foundation in 1910 made medicine more scientific and more effective in certain areas, but also created a monopoly by sharply reducing medical school admissions and limiting the range of services that could be offered by nurses and other non-MDs. Although this reorganization did not entirely silence the profession's more socially minded practitioners, officially sanctioned medicine would henceforth focus upon already existing individual pathologies. So-called "preventive medicine," which earlier had been willing to examine and criticize the broader economic and social circumstances of illness, turned its attention to less controversial measures such as medical screenings for disease susceptibility. Such screening can reveal, for instance, that a patient with elevated blood pressure is at greater risk for heart disease, and medication may be prescribed to bring his or her blood pressure down. But medical care that is more than palliative will consider as well the prior and crucial relationship of high blood pressure to such originating conditions as poverty, diet, and powerlessness. (Hypertension is epidemic in inner city neighborhoods.)

Health Care and Globalization

In Virchow's day, medicine's scope of knowledge was small enough, and its technologies simple enough, that he could pretty much master the entire field. Therefore he could effectively fill the roles of family doctor, research scientist, environmentalist, and political activist. Today, medicine has become much more specialized, but at a time when, as Kenny Ausubel points out, conscientious medical care can no longer overlook the larger—even global—web of relationships that links human bodies. Widening social inequalities, along with practices such as the misuse of antibiotics and the uncontrolled dissemination of synthetic chemicals, are contributing to new illnesses and exacerbating old ones. Joshua Lederberg, Nobel Prize winning bacteriologist, notes that "The world really is just one village. And our tolerance of disease in any place in the world is at

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our own peril. Patients are dying because we no longer have antibiotics that work.” Malaria, tuberculosis, AIDS, and other modern plagues have become more widespread, if not pandemic. Such problems are made worse by global warming, which incubates pathological microbes and subjects food production to conditions of drought and flood, among its other harmful consequences. (Lederberg reminds us, though, that microbial environments are essential to our health. He recommends that we “shift from a war metaphor to an ecology metaphor” in confronting diseases, since the human immune system interacts in such complex ways with its surroundings.)

Economic globalization, too, endangers human health. Multinational firms, like infectious diseases, do not respect boundaries between nations. Because many corporations are no longer tied to local communities or regions, they have less of a stake in the health of their workers than ever before. Workplace safety standards, for example, tend to be neglected when it becomes easier to replace one worker with another. Given the planet-wide oversupply of labor—too many working people pursuing too few jobs—businesses and governments are increasingly unwilling to subsidize adequate health care for employees, let alone for the rest of the population. Hence achievement of reforms such as universal health care will require that we take up issues of international commerce, demographics, population growth, and the earth’s limited carrying capacity.

This global context is not directly implicated in every illness, of course, but it does structure the overall availability of medical resources and services. For this reason, serious efforts to reform the health care industry and establish adequate health care as a fundamental human right have to be organized on an international basis. Recently it was an international outcry that compelled the pharmaceutical companies to lower the prices of HIV/AIDS medications. Remedying the impoverished living conditions that foster this disease is a greater challenge, but this too can be accomplished if the world’s communities work together to find solutions.

There are widely shared principles that we can draw upon. The United Nations, in a number of resolutions and covenants, has reaffirmed a commitment originally made in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted by the General Assembly in 1948:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Note that health care is brought into relation here with the broad circumstances of people’s lives—circumstances that protests in Seattle, Washington, Prague, Montreal, and

Genoa have also addressed. Health care activism is naturally allied with international opposition to the policies of world banking and trade organizations. And our most compelling argument is that these policies contradict the ideals that almost all of the member nations of the United Nations have themselves endorsed.

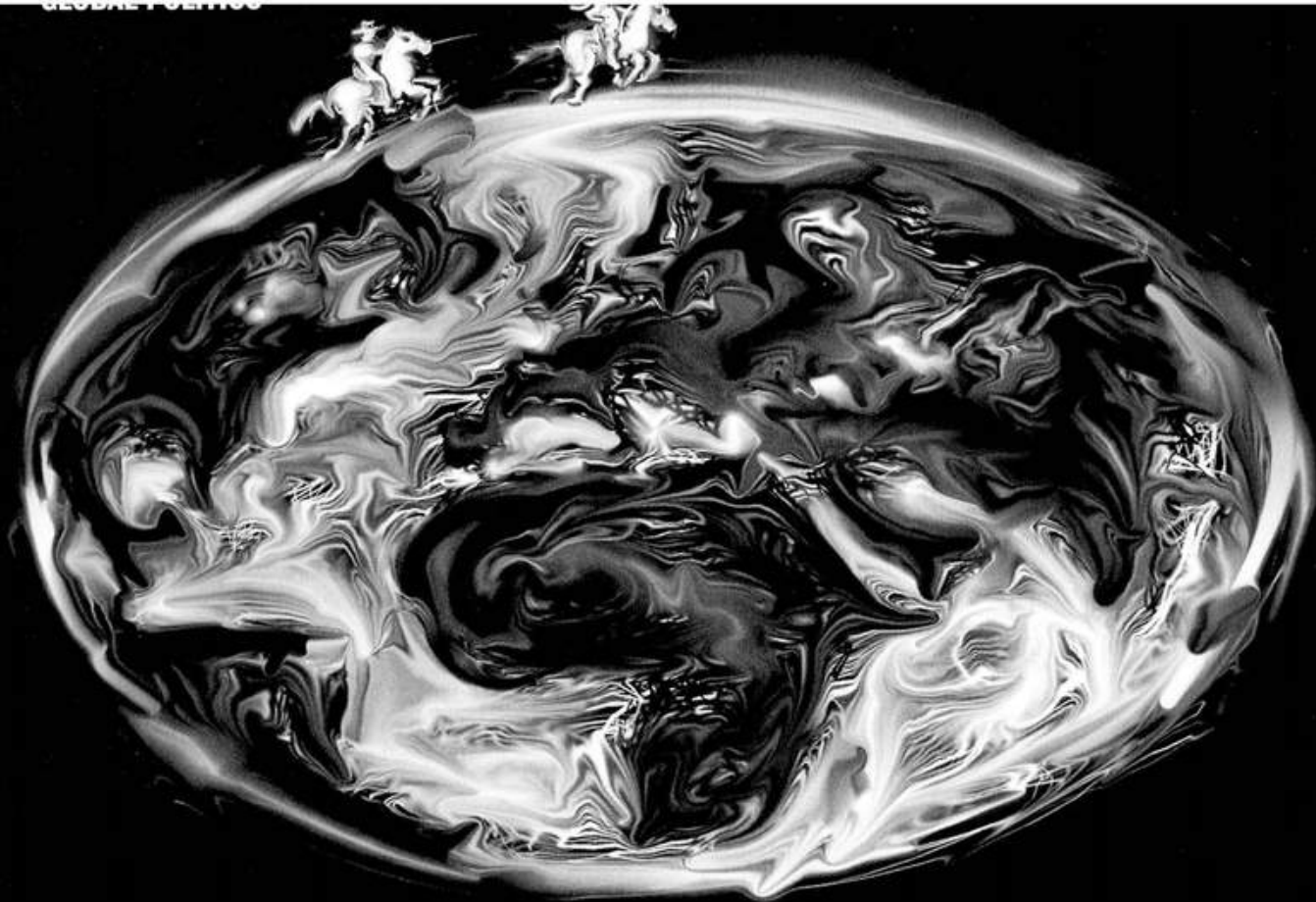
Although the United Nations is a very imperfect association that has too often served the narrow interests of its most powerful members, its human rights agreements provide a framework for a worldwide health care agenda. Advancing that agenda will require the participation of lay communities as well as professional health care providers prepared to hold governments and corporations accountable to basic ethical norms of behavior. This is the larger project that can bring us together—providers and patients, medical researchers and environmentalists, workers and unemployed—within a global movement that takes a truly holistic approach to health care. □

PSYCHEDELICS: AN ACT OF SEDITION? (from page 27)

On a more massive scale, I can envision devoting a single day in the near future on which, say, five million people worldwide took a good healthful dose of MDMA (or hashish, psilocybin...) and opened up their hearts and minds to each other and to the universe. Such a rite of pure Dionysian grace, involving communal song, dance, and invocations of prayer, would strum the invisible wires of the emergent global consciousness network, striking a harmonious chord from Chicago to Bangkok, Sydney to Sao Paulo, London to Delhi, Durban to Tehran.

What immediate effect this would have on our disposition toward the war would most certainly not be a tauter clench on lethal weaponry but rather a quickened pulse in the bond of human kinship we’ve begun to feel more acutely in the wake of September 11. Such a communal connection, kicked home by a deep, soul-tickling intoxication with the Breath of (all, nonpartisan) Life, would strengthen the resolve to oppose terror in *all* of its guises, not just those our respective governments don’t like. The weapon that psychedelic consciousness brings to the War on Terrorism is as a perceptual laser that dissolves the blind rage of which it is a symptom, dispelling the rumor of our disparateness.

By deploying psychedelics sensibly, not for jaunts of recreational escape but for mindful meditations, more and more people would come to appreciate the treasure of life *here and now*, in a time and place of war or not—and know, as William Blake observed, that such “gratitude is heaven itself.” Humanity’s failure to exploit such opportunities for life’s gratuitous graces will only prolong the condition of war. □



Living and Dying in the Planetary Frontier-Land

Zygmunt Bauman

Though events of September 11, 2001 have many meanings, it is tempting to suggest that their most seminal and longest lasting significance will ultimately prove to be the *symbolic end to the era of space*. To avoid misunderstanding: it is the *era* of space that has ended, not space itself. Space has lost its past importance; no longer is space and everything space-related—bulkiness, heaviness, entrenchment, size—cast into the center of human concerns.

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September 11 signified a symbolic, rather than the historically correct end of the era—since what happened on September 11, 2001 has only forced into public attention subterranean developments that went on for quite a long time before and took a few decades at least to mature. The jets stolen on their routes from Boston, like pebbles thrown into a container filled with an over-saturated solution, caused substances that had already, surreptitiously and unnoticed, radically altered the old chemical composition of the compound to abruptly crystallize and so to become suddenly visible to the naked eye. The terrorist assault on the best known landmarks of the globally best known city, committed in front of the most numerous TV cameras the modern media was able to gather in one place, easily won

the stature of globally legible signifier which other events, however dramatic and gory, could not dream of. The tragedy of September 11 showed, dramatically and spectacularly, how *global* events can truly be. It gave flesh to the heretofore abstract idea of global interdependence and the wholeness of the globe. For all those reasons, it fits the role of the symbolic end to the era of space better than any other event in recent memory.

The era of space started with the Chinese and Hadrian Walls of ancient empires, continued with the moats, drawbridges, and turrets of medieval cities and culminated in the Maginot and Siegfried lines of modern states, the final expression of which was the Atlantic and Berlin Walls of supra-national military blocks. Throughout that era, territory was the most coveted of resources, the plum prize in any power struggle, the mark of distinction between the victors and the defeated. One could know who emerged victorious from the battle by finding out who stayed on the battlefield when the fight fizzled out. But above all, territory was *the prime guarantee of security*: it was in terms of the length and the depth of the controlled territory that the issues of security were pondered and tackled: as, for example, the motto that Englishmen's homes were their castles. Power was *territorial*, and so was the privacy and freedom from power's interference. "*Chez soi*," (being at home, at your own place) was a place with borders that could be made tight and impermeable; trespassing could be effectively barred and entry could be strictly regulated and controlled. Land was a shelter and a hideout: a place to which one could escape and inside which one could lock oneself up, "go underground" and feel safe. The powers-that-be which one wished to escape and hide from stopped at the borders.

This is all over now, and has been over for a considerable time. There was no dearth of signals to the end of an era of space (as one can easily gather from the antiquated flavour of the last paragraph's stories)—but that it is indeed definitely over became dazzlingly evident only on September 11. The events of September 11 made obvious that no one, however resourceful, distant or aloof, could anymore cut themselves off from the rest of the world.

It has also become clear that *the annihilation of the protective capacity of space is a double-edged sword*: no one can hide from blows, and blows can be plotted and delivered from however enormous a distance. Places no more protect, however strongly they are armed and fortified. Strength and weakness, threat and security have become now, essentially, *extraterritorial* (and diffuse) *issues that evade territorial* (and focused) *solutions*.

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Until September 11, the search for solutions to globally-gestated threats tended to be replaced with (vain and ineffective) attempts to find localized and personalized exemptions from danger (think for instance of the huge demand for family nuclear shelters during the cold war period of "assured mutual destruction," or of the unstoppably growing popularity of "gated communities" in times of rising urban violence and crime). The sources of this present day global *insecurity*, however, are located in what Manuel Castells has dubbed the "space of flows," a curious non-space space that can be characterized as un-colonized, politically uncontrolled, de-regulated, extraterritorial. Because global insecurity has its roots in this space of flows it cannot be accessed, let alone effectively tackled, as long as the measures undertaken to cure or mitigate that insecurity are confined to but one or a selected few of the places it affects.

Because the global roots of this new *insecurity* seem so inaccessible, security concerns have shifted to the action field of safety, prompting a "safety overload." Safety is the only aspect of the certainty/security/safety triad that can be acted upon (whether effectively or not, is another matter) in the narrow frame of a single place. Above all, the safety-promoting action is the only one that can be *seen* as a proof that something is being done.

The difficult to master and awkward to use language of *global insecurity* (a semantically impoverished language with few if any syntactic rules) has been translated into the all-too-familiar, daily deployed and easily understood language of *personal safety*. In the longer run that translation may help us grasp the link between two all-too-often separately considered issues (global space and personal space), and may even enable the reverse translation (of local safety concerns into global security issues). For the time being, though, the one thing that seems to have become the current "common sense" is the new condition of the *mutually assured vulnerability* of all politically separated parts of the globe.

What has become more evident than ever before is that our degree of vulnerability can no more be measured by the size of the arsenal of high-tech weapons once developed with the (by now old-fashioned) *territorial wars* in mind. As Eric le Boucher wrote in *Le Monde* (October 25, 2001, p.17), "the world cannot divide itself into two separate parts—one rich and secure behind its modern anti-missile system, the other left ... to its wars and 'archaisms.'" After September 11, it has become clear that the "far-away countries can no more be left to their anarchy"—that is, if the rich and allegedly secure want to stay rich and be secure indeed.

Global Frontier-Land

The new experience can be best summed up in the following thesis: *the global space* (that “space of flow,” that “non-spatial space”) *has assumed the character of a frontier-land.*

In the frontier-land, agility and cunning count more than the stack of guns. In the frontier-land, fences and stockades announce intentions rather than mark realities. In the frontier-land, the effort to give conflicts a territorial dimension, to pin divisions to the ground, seldom brings results. Suspected from the start to be ultimately ineffective, these territorial markers tend to be half-hearted anyway; wooden stakes signal the lack of self-assurance that stone walls embody and manifest. In the frontier-land warfare, trenches are seldom dug. The adversaries are known to be constantly on the move—their might and nuisance-making power lie in the speed, inconspicuousness, and secrecy of their moves. For all practical intents and purposes, the adversaries are *extraterritorial*. Capturing the territory they occupied yesterday does not mean today's victory, let alone the “termination of hostilities.” Most certainly, it does not assure a secure tomorrow.

In the frontier-land, the alliances and the frontlines that separate one side from its enemy are, like the adversaries themselves, in flux. Troops readily change their allegiances, while the dividing line between non-belligerents and those in active service is tenuous and easily shifted. As coalitions go, there are no stable marriages—only admittedly temporary cohabitations of convenience. Trust is the last thing be offered, loyalty the last to be expected. To paraphrase Anthony Giddens's memorable concept, one could speak of “confluent alliance” and “confluent enmity.” Confluent alliance starts in the expectation of gain or more convenience and falls apart or is broken off once satisfaction fades off. Confluent enmity—even if burdened with a long history of animosity—tends to be nevertheless willingly and keenly suspended (for a time at least) if only the cooperation with the enemy promises more benefits than a showdown.

Starting the war against the Taliban, Donald H. Rumsfeld, the American secretary of defense, warned that this war “will not be waged by a grand alliance united to defeat an axis of hostile powers. Instead, it will involve floating coalitions of countries, which may change and evolve” (*International Herald Tribune*, September 28, 2001). His deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, seconded such a strategy, vindicating the return to the frontier-land conditions (or rather helping to reshape the global space after the frontier-land pattern), when he anticipated “shifting coalitions,” predicting that in the coming war “some nations might help with certain operations, and other could be called upon in a different capacity.” As he summed up the new military wisdom—“to be effective, we



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have to be flexible. We have to be adaptable” (*International Herald Tribune*, September 27, 2001). And flexible the operation that followed was indeed—though, inevitably, flexi-

bility cut both ways, and it was soon proved to mean something considerably less straightforward than what Rumsfeld or Wolfowitz meant it to mean.

The American air offensive against the Taliban proved to be an excellent example of confluent alliance. It began with the slogan “with Pakistanis against the terrorists” and with grooming Pakistan for the role of “crucial ally.” But as the air attacks began to drag on with little to show for the money and effort spent and a trail of destruction left behind, the alternative of paving the way for the ground assault by the vehemently anti-Pakistani Uzbeks and Tadjicks of the Northern Alliance became increasingly seductive. Indeed, the temptation proved to be irresistible—and the application of this changed strategy ended up with the new masters of the Taliban-cleansed Afghanistan proclaiming war “against

terrorists and *against* Pakistanis”... Similarly, in preparing for war, the American secretary of state, with the help of the British Prime Minister, courted Arab governments. The first stage of the war, however, wound up with a massacre of Arabic Taliban fighters perpetrated by the victorious gangs of the former ‘Northern Alliance’ and with it the demand that the country be cleansed of “foreigners,” whether friendly or hostile in their genuine or putative intentions.

When I write these words, the saga of shifting coalitions is far from reaching its denouement. United for the time being by the prospects of ample perks of office and the fresh memory of the awesome power of the Pentagon's reprisal for disobedience, the new rulers of Afghanistan are nevertheless as they have been before—the kind of bedfellows unlikely to share the bed for long. They probably are marking time, waiting for America's military targets to shift elsewhere.

And America's targets will shift. Once a bureaucratic institution acquires the capacity of performing a certain kind of task successfully, it will actively seek new occasions for that task to be performed again. When operating in a frontier-land, the chances are that America will seek and discover many more targets—many more terrorists—for the spectacularly efficient air-force that would allow it to do just that. Gary Young, the perceptive columnist of *The Guardian*, observed in his column on December 10, 2001, “defining a terrorist ... is entirely dependent on the balance of forces at any time. Those the Americans once financed they now seek to execute.”

Under frontier-land conditions, any war against *terrorists* can be won, given enough flying weapons and enough

money to goad and/or bribe “floating” and “flexible” allies into the role of foot soldiers. But the war against *terrorism* is un-winnable (not winnable conclusively) as long as the global space retains its ‘frontier-land’ character. The desire to keep coalitions ‘floating’ or ‘shifting’ is itself one of the paramount factors contributing to the perpetuation of the frontier-land nature of global space. The strategy of temporary coalitions of transient interest, the concomitant avoidance of firmly institutionalized structures empowered to elicit permanent obedience to universal rules, the resistance against the establishment of long-term, mutually binding and authoritatively supervised commitments—all stand between the present-day frontier-land and any prospect of replacing it with a global, politically serviced and controlled order. There is simply no prospect of gain in building and cementing global legal and political structures if, thanks to superior weapons and apparently inexhaustible resources, a superpower can reach its objectives without them more swiftly and at much lesser cost. And global authorities, once entrenched, may sooner or later pile up obstacles against that power’s unilateral determination of targets and the most expedient ways of hitting them; they will constraint the freedom of the attackers, or at least render their choices costlier to make.

It is indeed easy to understand why the ‘flexible coalition’ strategy, coupled with an emphatic rejection of any long-lasting and universally binding structures, may be tempting for those that have the wherewithal to fight on their own. By relying on their competitive superiority, they hope to benefit from the resulting uncertainty and would not wish to share their anticipated gains with the less resourceful and fortunate. The point is, though, that *this strategy can serve more than one master*—and once applied, may be widely used by all sorts of unintended, unanticipated, and undesirable actors. The ‘shifting alliances’ of the old-style frontier-land served equally well the cattle-barons and the lonely gunslingers with a prize on their heads.

Indeed, the perpetuation of global disorder suits the purposes of the terrorists as well as it serves the world-domination of those who wage war against them. One of the principal reasons for which the war against terrorism is un-winnable is the fact that both sides have vested interests in the perpetuation of the frontier-land conditions. There is, one may say, the un-gentlemanly agreement which neither side of the “war against terrorism” shows any intention of breaking: both sides militate against the imposition of constraints on their freedom to ignore or push aside the “laws of countries” whenever such laws feel inconvenient for the purpose at hand. This one coalition—the coalition against an equitable, universally binding, and democratically controlled global order—seems to be the sole one that staunchly resists “flexibility” and shows no inclination to “float.”

A couple or so centuries ago, when the pre-modern *ancien regime* (of societies sliced into poorly coordinated,

often separatist localities, and of law fragmented into an aggregate of privileges and deprivations) fell apart, blazing the trail for state- and anti-state terrorisms and making society a dangerous place, a vision of a new, supra-local, nation-state level of social integration emerged. That vision triggered and kept on course the nation-building and state-building efforts. Whether the practical effects of those efforts matched the visionary ideal or not, and in how many details, is another matter. What did matter in the long run was the fact that there was *a vision*, and with it an urgency to invade and conquer the emergent frontier-land in order to tame it, domesticate it, and otherwise make it safe for human habitation (that hard and by no means uniformly successful effort was to be called in retrospect the “civilizing process”). We may say that nation-state politics *preceded*, and *guided*, the establishment of the nation-state: in a sense, politics created its own object.

No comparable vision has emerged so far in our times, when the fluid-modern rendition of the *ancien regime* (in the shape of the planet sliced into sovereign nation-states with no universal law binding them all) is falling apart, blazing the trail for global state- and non-state terrorisms. There is no “politics of global order” in sight, boasting a vision wider than that of an average police precinct. In the absence of such a wider vision, the sole strategy for creating order consists of rounding up, incarcerating, and otherwise disempowering the agents who have been declared illegitimate by those unhampered in their own presumptions. Most certainly, little thought and even less political will have been thus far dedicated to the possible shape of democratic control over the forces currently emancipated from the extant institutions of legal and ethical control and free to deliver blows of their choice to the targets of their choice.

As Carl von Clausewitz put it, war is but a continuation of politics by other means. Of the war declared by the United States and Britain on terrorism, Jean Baudrillard has said that it is but a continuation of the *absence of politics* by other means” (*Le Monde*, November 3, 2001). In the absence of global politics and global political authority, violent clashes are only to be expected. And there will be always someone eager to decry the act of violence as terrorist, that is an illegitimate, criminal, and punishable act. The expressions “terrorism” and “war on terrorism” will remain hotly, essentially, contested concepts, and the actions they prompt will likewise remain as inconclusive as they are self-perpetuating and mutually reinvigorating.

Reconnaissance Battles

In a fluid milieu where old routines are quickly washed out and new ones hardly ever allotted enough time to acquire shape (let alone to solidify), groping in the darkness pierced by but a few random shafts of light (a plight ennobled in the currently fashionable sociological rhetoric with the name of “reflexivity”) is the sole available way of acting.

All action cannot but be experimental—though not in the orthodox sense of an “experiment” (that is, of a carefully designed test meant to prove or disprove the existence of a predicted/hypothesized/guessed regularity), but in the sense of a random search for one lucky move among many others that are ill-conceived and mistaken. Action proceeds through trials, errors, new trials and new errors—until one of the attempts brings a result that could, under the circumstances, pass for satisfactory.

In the absence of routine and tested, apodictically commanded or authoritatively endorsed recipes for success, actions need be, and tend to be, excessively abundant. Most of the moves are anticipated and feared to be unsuccessful, and the sole service they may be reasonably expected to render is to eliminate from future calculations a part of the mind-boggling multitude of possibilities. This profusion of trials does not guarantee success—but it sustains hope that among the many failed and wasted attempts one, at least, will be on target. George Bernard Shaw, an exquisite professional of the stage but an enthusiastic amateur of photography, is reputed to have insisted that, like the cod that needs to spawn thousands of eggs for one new fish to reach maturity, the photographer must take thousands of photographs if s/he wishes to produce one satisfactory print. Many, perhaps most, actions undertaken in the under-defined, under-determined, under-regulated global frontier-land seem to follow, by design or by default, the advice Shaw bequeathed to photographers. Prominent instances of such actions are the reconnaissance battles that have become the most common category of warfare (and violence in general) in our global frontier-land.

In military practice, “reconnaissance battles” have one purpose: to sift the grain of the possible hopeful from the chaff of the impossible or hopeless. Reconnaissance battles precede the setting of war objectives and the design of war strategy. They are meant to supply the hard facts military strategists need for the selection of feasible goals and to provide the range of realistic options from which future military actions may be selected.

In the case of reconnaissance battles, units are not sent into action in order to capture enemy territory, but to explore the enemy’s determination and endurance, the resources the enemy can command and the speed with which such resources may be brought to the battlefield. The units are ordered to lay bare the enemy’s strong points and weaknesses. Analysing the course of a reconnaissance battle, staff officers can hopefully make intelligent guesses concerning the enemy’s power of resistance and their capacity for a counter-attack, and so to suggest realistic war plans.



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nor its rules are
predetermined*

Reconnaissance battles bear a striking resemblance to “focus groups,” the modern politicians’ favourite means of anticipatory intelligence-gathering: testing the electorate’s possible reactions to steps considered, but not yet taken, before irreparable damage is caused by an ill-advised or wrongly calculated step. Indeed, a good deal of current military thinking, and the armament policies that thinking inspires, takes the form of “simulated reconnaissance battles,” conducted inside staff conference rooms or during military exercises on experimental ranges instead of on the temporarily unavailable battlefields.

Reconnaissance battles are the principal category of violence in an under-regulated environment. The current case of “under-regulation” is the result of both the progressive collapse of existing structures of authority and the appearance of new sites of action in which the question of legitimate authority has been never asked, let alone answered. The collapse of old authority structures affects all levels of social integration, but is particularly conspicuous and consequential on the global, and the political levels. Both levels have acquired a heretofore unprecedented importance amidst the totality of factors shaping the conditions under which lives are nowadays conducted, and both lack traditions that could be invoked and relied upon whenever new and untested, but hopefully correct and success-promising patterns of action, are sought.

On the planetary plane, the political void that has replaced a world tightly structured (after the pattern of the Gothic cathedrals rather than classical palaces) by the tensions arising from the mutual containment and reciprocal balancing of two superpowers provides a natural ground for reconnaissance battles. A political void is a constant invitation to bargain-by-force. Neither the outcome of the global game, nor its rules are predetermined; there are no global political institutions capable of systematically limiting the players’ choices and forcing or persuading them to respect those limits. The responses to the terrorist assault of September 11 have yet further exposed the essential lawlessness of the global frontier-land and the irresistible seductiveness of the catch-as-you-catch-can tactics.

To quote Madeleine Bunting’s summary of the Afghan war experience: “What the events of the past few days have starkly revealed is that the US had only one interest in this war in Afghanistan, capturing Bin Laden and destroying al-Qaeda; that imperative outstripped all considerations of Afghanistan’s future. So the timing of the attack was decided by US military preparedness rather than any coherent political strategy for the region, and the US war aim determined the crucial switch in tactics around

November 4 when the US decided to throw its weight behind the unsavoury Northern Alliance by bombing the Taliban frontlines" (*The Guardian*, November 17, 2001). William Pfaff of the *International Herald Tribune* saw this sudden U-turn coming—being an inevitable consequence of the US' attitude to the world's problems: first, "Afghanistan has been substituted for terrorism, because Afghanistan is accessible to military power, and terrorism is not"—and then, inevitably, "official Washington [started] rapidly losing interest in political solutions. There is an increasing disposition toward brute force, and the use of whatever allies are at hand, even if that threatens to leave Afghanistan in chaos, and the war on terrorism stranded" (November 3, 2001). George F. Will, though from an opposite standpoint, endorsed that verdict on the logic of American strategy: "In spite of the secretary of state's coalition fetish, the administration understands the role of robust unilateralism. And neither lawyers citing 'international law' nor diplomats invoking 'world opinion' will prevent America from acting ... pre-emptively in self-defence" (*International Herald Tribune*, December 3, 2001). Note that both "international law" and "world opinion" appear in inverted commas.

It has been said that the Taliban, the targets of the most recent war on terrorism, were a British invention, managed by Americans, financed by Saudi Arabia, and put in place by Pakistan. The trouble with such a verdict is that it can only be pronounced with the benefit of retrospective wisdom. At the moment of this writing, the Taliban have been bombed out of existence and the vacant position of Afghanistan's nominal rulers has been filled by West-sponsored and anointed tribal chiefs. In the course of time, though, one would perhaps say of them much the same as one says now of the Taliban, with but minor modifications, once they fill the place vacated by the assorted terrorists presently defeated.

The condition of lawlessness, eagerly exploited in all reconnaissance battles, self-perpetuates with every successive attempt, to turn that lawlessness to one side or another's advantage. Each act of violence leads to retaliatory actions that invite responses in kind. As the balance of power and the range of opportunities shift, yesterday animosities are discarded or suspended for the sake of manning newly emerged front-lines. Enemies turn overnight into allies and allies into enemies, as new *ad hoc* coalitions cut across old *ad hoc* coalitions and plum prizes are hoped to be gained by a timely changing of sides. And so the waging of reconnaissance battles—designed to fathom the opportunities offered by continuous instability—becomes an increasingly tempting strategy, gladly resorted to, with a similar zeal and acumen, by those concerned with preserv-

ing their privileges, and those bent on gaining them, alike. Theorist Gregory Bateson's "schismogenetic chains" need no external boosting to perpetuate themselves: they expand and self-replicate, drawing all procreative energy they need from their own inner logic. As the cycle of offence-to-be-avenged-by-a-vendetta-to-be-avenged unravels, both sides (to use Knud Løgstrup terminology in *Opposing Kierkegaard*) lose their ability for sovereign, self-generated action and become ever more constrained in their next moves. Offences crying for vengeance self-propagate:

"There is no proportionality between what occasioned the affront and the reaction to it," because sides have "too high an opinion [of themselves] to tolerate the thought of ... having acted wrongly, and so offence is called for to deflect attention from [their own] misstep."

This Gordian knot cannot be untangled; it can be only cut—just like the interminable recycling of vendettas in

Euripides' Hellas had been cut by Sophocles' rule of law. The cycle of violent reconnaissance battles may grind to a halt only if there is nothing left to reconnoitre; if the universally binding and enforceable rules of conduct that allow no unilateral opting out and disallow the inverted comas when international laws and world opinion is invoked are put in place. When raising an outcry about the violation of human rights stops being a matter of (short-lived) political and military convenience. When, for instance, the principle of women's equality exploited to add ethical splendour to the assault on Afghanistan, is applied to the discrimination against the women of Kuwait or Saudi Arabia.

War As Vocation

The end of territorial wars coincided with the end of mass conscript armies. These two fateful departures were closely related in their turn to the passage from the solid to the liquid, frontier-land stage of modernity—to the end of the "era of space" and the emergence of the "era of speed," marked by the devaluation of space and (to deploy Paul Virilio's suggestions) bringing the velocity of television and tele-action in the 'speed-space' to their ultimate, speed-of-light limits.

Conscript armies have been replaced with professional and highly specialized army units, whose main function (at least in theory) is to destroy similarly space-confined targets—units of the enemy's professional army and the new 'sinews of war' of the liquid modernity era, that is the intelligence-gathering-and processing centres, broadcasting stations or fuel and armaments depots. Armies become leaner, nimbler, faster moving. They tend to be groomed to act in dispersion, in small groups, or individually, more reminiscent of swarms than the marching columns of yore. The

Enemies turn overnight into allies and allies into enemies.

ratio of technical equipment to human power needed to service them and operate is changing radically in favour of the first, and an ever greater portion of the skills once lodged in soldiers' memory and trained habits has been transferred to the electronic appliances of targeting, and increasingly also of tactical and strategic decision-making. (One recalls the joke about the automated factory of the future: it will employ but two living beings, a man and a dog. The man will be there to feed and stroke the dog, the dog will be there to prevent the man from touching any of the machinery. As professional armies go, such a future seems not that far away.)

The new fashion of conducting military action aims at excluding, possibly altogether, any face-to-face confrontation with the enemy. These hit-and-run tactics are hoped, among other things, to end the traditional banes of invading forces, like the threats of fraternization with the natives and the gradual softening of the conscripts' morale, which once had to be fought back with the help of intense surveillance and continuous ideological indoctrination of the troops. The new tactics of striking and killing at a distance, coupled with the shift of the task of target-selection onto inhuman (unfeeling and morally blind) parts of the war-machine, has also stretched to an unprecedented length the technique of 'adiaphorisation' of military action, stripping the action-on-command from ethical evaluation and moral inhibitions.

The soldier's task, like that of any other professional, is but "a job to be done." The propriety of performance is measured, like in the rest of the professions, in terms free from moral import. The sole ethical rules allowed to intervene in the evaluation of professional performance are first, following strictly the logic of hierarchical command, and second, completing the task set for the action with the least cost and in a manner approximating as closely as possible the commanders' briefing.

The new obsolescence of territorial occupation, the redundancy of mass conscript armies and the professionalization of the armed forces from top to bottom allowed wars to adjust to the liquid-modern conditions in general and to the operating mode that fits the nature of the "speed-space" in particular. Going to war in the times of conscript armies called for a protracted period of laborious ideological preparation. Patriotic emotions and feelings of shared threat had to be lifted to that high pitch at which the survival instincts are either dimmed and dis-empowered or dissolved in the cause of collective salvation. Those about to be called to arms had to be first made ready to die for the country. How far we have moved away from such stark necessities has been vividly shown recently by the promptness with which the readiness to sacrifice life for the cause has been condemned and classified as a symptom of religious fanaticism, cultural backwardness or barbarism—by



the countries that for many centuries represented martyrdom-for-a-cause as the proof of saintliness, that adorned their capitals with Cenotaphs around which they still

gather annually to pay homage to the heroes who fell so that the nation could live, and that all along have used the cult of fallen soldiers to gain and defend their collective identities.

The advent of professional armies de-instrumentalized patriotic fervor. The collective frenzy now redundant for military purposes can be safely poured out and unloaded during football matches, Eurovision song contests, and Olympic games; it has been promptly harnessed to the service (and profit) of the entertainment industry. Whatever remains of it is time and again recycled ("spinned") to beef up support for one or another of the competing political teams, and sometimes is appealed to (with but meagre effect) to boost demand for domestic foods or films—but seldom if ever is resorted to, or needs be, to make going to the war feasible. This allows the war actions to be started quickly, overnight if need be, whenever the supreme commander of the armed forces considers such actions desirable and promising success—and in effect renders the proliferation of wars more rather than less probable. The

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Vietnam war was perhaps the last fought by American conscripts. Sending to war expeditionary forces composed of professionals alone does not involve the political risks comparable to those taken by Johnson or Nixon and is unlikely to trigger the kind of popular resentment that caused the protracted post-Vietnam trauma. Besides, that trauma was in large part due to the military defeat, not the dirtiness and immorality of carpet bombing villages and pouring napalm on villagers. The new smart bombs and stealth bombers coupled with the elimination of combat guarantee that war may be ineffective, but is defeat-proof.

Subjected to the professional conditions of service, soldiers have gained the status of employees, with all the attendant safeguards of their job conditions and the right to compensation in case these contractual standards are not met. Thanks to the high level of skills and know-how that the servicing of high-tech equipment demands, and the intense wear-and-tear of mental and emotional forces caused by the risks involved, soldiers belong to the relatively privileged sector of the labor market that offers better-than-average job security and job satisfaction. But perhaps the most striking effect of the new form of warfare is that during military actions it is the soldiers who enjoy the greatest personal

safety. It is the risks to their lives and bodies that are reduced to the minimum. As reporters with *The Observer* reported in the article "Unfinished Business," of December 9, 2001, "In a war won at the push of button, bravery does not count"—and it is neither needed nor called for, let me add. During the Afghan campaign, as of this writing seven soldiers have lost their lives, and only one as the result of enemy action; the others fell victim to "accidents at work," the usual risk of the most peaceful of professions (this compares with six journalists who were killed by the enemy since, unlike the soldiers, they had to be where the action was and not where it was remotely controlled).

Contemporary military professionals are no more a kind of brave, swashbuckling matador; they are more like the coolly professional, down-to-earth operators in a state-of-the-art abattoir. At the end of the day, it is solely military personnel casualties that truly count and are counted. And it is the soldiers' welfare that is meant when "saving lives" is proclaimed to be the commanders', and their political bosses', prime concern. The other casualties of war are "collateral." Pressed by Leslie Stahl of CBS about the half million children who died because of the United States' continuous military blockade of Iraq, Madeleine Albright, then U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, answered that "this was a difficult choice to take," but "we think that the price was worth paying." Civilian casualties of war are counted but reluctantly, and more often than not they are uncountable: after all, people killed by direct hits, destroyed by "daisy cutters" or in the course of "carpet bombings" are but a small fraction of the victims of war. Towns and villages are erased, panic is sown, crops and workshops are burnt, and thousands or millions of people are overnight transformed into homeless refugees.

In the military calculations presented in publicly digestible form by PR or political (the distinction is often difficult to make) spokesmen, all this is perhaps an unpleasant, but all the same unavoidable side-effect of action aimed, after all, against "enemy forces," not "innocent civilians." In the time of territorial conquest and conscript armies, when the whole of an "enemy nation" were actual or potential enemy soldiers, the entire population of the "enemy country" was seen (with good logical, if not moral, reasons) as a "legitimate target." Once war becomes a matter of professionals, these targets that are no longer "legitimate" become collateral damages, difficult to justify, let alone to defend in morally acceptable terms.

The ethical devastation caused by such a shift in classification is enormous, and not easy to grasp in full. "Collateral casualties" can appear to be like the uncomfortable side-effects of a potent medical drug: difficult to avoid, necessary to bear with for the sake of the therapy. "Collateral casualties" lose life because the damage done to them counts less in the total balance of the action's effects. They are disposable, "a price worth paying," and not because of what they

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have done or are expected to do, but because they happened to stand in the way of the bombers or lived, shopped or strolled, imprudently, in the vicinity of the professional armies' playground. Were it possible to bar the TV cameras' access to that playground, the "collateral damages" could be left off the calculations (and the action reports) altogether.

The ejection of war and the "killing business" in general from the focus of ethical debate, a focus in which they stood for most of human history, and, even more significantly, the removal of actions leading to the murderous effects of war from moral constraints including the ethical convictions of the actors, are perhaps the most seminal of the attributes of the new professional army. It sets the scene for new kinds of horrors, quite distinct from those born at the battlefields. Thus far, there is no sign of a new Geneva Convention meant to confine and limit the human devastation the new horrors portend.

Living Together in a Full World

As the ancients already noticed, books have their fates... The fate of Kant's little book on the idea of universal history and world-wide citizenship is as thought-provoking and illuminating as it has been peculiar. Conceived in Kant's tranquil Königsberg seclusion in 1784, this little book quietly gathered dust for two centuries in academic libraries—read only, mostly as a historic curiosity and without much excitement, by a few dedicated archivists of ideas. And after two centuries of exile to the footnotes and bibliographies of scholarly monographs, it all of a sudden burst into the very center of the "history of contemporaneity." These days, it is a hard task to find a learned study of our most recent history that would not quote Kant's "universal history" as a supreme authority and source of inspiration for all debate on global citizenship—itsself an issue that has suddenly found itself at the center of public attention.

The fate of this particular book may seem strange and baffling, but it holds in fact little mystery. Its secret is simple: it took the world two hundred years to reach the limits of a tendency that guided it since the beginning of modern times—but which Kant, having put it to a philosophical test, found in advance contrary to "what the Nature held to be its highest purpose." Kant observed that the planet we inhabit is a sphere—and thought through the consequences of that admittedly banal fact. And the consequences he explored were that we all stay and move on the surface of that sphere, have nowhere else to go, and hence are bound to live forever in each other's neighborhood and company. And so a "complete citizenship unification of the human species" is the



destiny Nature has chosen for us—the ultimate horizon of our universal history that, prompted and guided by reason and the instinct for self-preservation, we are bound

to pursue and in the fullness of time reach. This is what Kant found out—but it took the world two more centuries to find out how right he was.

Sooner or later, Kant warns, there will be no empty space left for those of us who have found the already populated places too cramped or too uncongenial for comfort. And so

Nature commands us to view (reciprocal) hospitality as the supreme precept which we will need—and eventually will have to embrace—in order to seek the end to the long chain of trials and errors, the catastrophes the errors have caused, and the ruins left in the wake of the catastrophes. As Jacques Derrida would observe two hundred years later in *Cosmopolites de Tous Les Pays, Encore un Effort!*, Kant's propositions would easily expose present-day buzz-words like "culture of hospitality" or "ethics of hospitality" as mere

tautologies: "Hospitality is ethics itself, not one ethic among others. Ethics *is* hospitality." Indeed, if ethics, as Kant wished, is a work of reason, then hospitality is—must be or sooner or later become—ethically-guided humankind's first rule of conduct.

The world, though, took little notice; it seems that the world prefers to honor its philosophers by memorial plaques rather than by listening to them, let alone by following their advice. Philosophers might have been the main heroes of the Enlightenment lyrical drama, but the post-Enlightenment epic tragedy all but neglected its script. Busy with equating nations and states, states with sovereignty, and sovereignty with tightly controlled borders, the world seemed to pursue a horizon quite different from the one Kant had drawn. For two hundred years the world was occupied with making the control of human movements the sole prerogative of state powers, with erecting barriers to all other, uncontrolled human movements, and manning the barriers with vigilant and heavily armed guards. Passports, visas, custom and immigration controls were among the major inventions of the art of modern government.

The advent of the modern state thus coincided with the emergence of the "Stateless person"—that latter day reincarnation, as Giorgio Agamben discovered in his *Homo Sacer*, of the sovereign right to exempt and to exclude any human being who has been cast off from the limits of human and divine laws; to make it into an "unworthy life" that can be destroyed without punishment—but whose destruction is devoid of all ethical or religious significance.

The full burden of the modern classifying, including-excluding zeal was, throughout the initial phase of modern

Thus far, there is no sign of a new Geneva Convention meant to confine and limit the human devastation the new horrors portend.

history, somewhat less exasperating, having been partly relieved by that other modern enterprise: opening up an unprecedentedly vast expanse of “virgin land” that could be used as a dumping ground for those unwanted, stateless persons, and act as a promised land for those who fell by the board from the vehicle of progress. No land of course was really “virgin” at the time Kant’s *Universal History* was sent to the printers; but plenty of lands had been already *made* virgin and many more were to be classified as “virgin” in the coming decades thanks to the enormous and still rapidly rising power differential between the fast industrializing center and the lagging behind periphery. The power of the metropolis was so overwhelming that it could declare extant human habitation of lands that it described as “primitive,” “backward,” and “savage” null and void, and summarily recast the population of such lands as collective bearers of “unworthy life”—thereby offering all the rest a license to kill. Somewhat later, the technique of summary exclusion from the human race developed during the conquest of distant lands was to be ricocheted back on Europe; as Aimé Césaire pointed out in 1955 (quoted by Marc Ferro in his *Histoire des colonisations*)—what the Christian bourgeois (of Europe and its extensions) could not really forgive Hitler was not the crime of genocide, but the crime of having applied to Europe the colonialist actions that were borne up until then by the Arabs, the coolies of India, and the Negroes...

Colonization allowed Kant’s premonitions to gather dust. However, it also made them look, when finally dusted off, like a prophecy of apocalypse instead of the cheerful utopia Kant intended them to be. Kant’s vision looks now that way because—due to a misleading abundance of “no man’s land”—nothing needed to be done and so nothing was done in these intervening two centuries to prepare humanity for the revelation of the ultimate fullness of the world.

To get rid of domestic European “unworthy lives,” the lands decreed as virgin provided the Devil Islands, Botany Bays and other similar dumping grounds for European governments envious of a Russian Empire that ruled over the infinite permafrost expanses of Siberia. For Europeans fearing the outcasts’ lot, the “virginised lands” offered a promising alternative—a hide-out and a chance to “start a new life.” Irish villagers sought salvation from potato-blight famine at home; German, Swedish, and Polish peasants ran there from overcrowded villages and decaying townships with no jobs and no prospects; Jews sought safety from Russian pogroms. The untitled offspring of titled families traveled to the “frontiers of civilization” hoping to restore their power and wealth in military service, colonial administration, or business ventures, having first built a new world—a world needing to replace the “indolent” and “somnolent” native nobility with brand new elites, and so fit to provide the incomers with brand new career tracks. For many years, modernity, that intrinsically expansive and transgressive civilization, had no reason to worry: this civi-

lization made of the urge toward expansion and transgression had seemingly infinite space to expand and could look forward to endless new barriers waiting to be transgressed. On the map of the modern world, there was a profusion of blank spots marked (provisionally, of course!) “here are lions,” and waiting to be spattered with new towns and criss-crossed with new road networks. Those distant blank spots were safety valves letting out the steam and protecting the metropolis from overheating. There were a lot of places for the adventurous to seek adventure, for the gamblers to try their luck, and for the defeated to attempt a reversal of bad fortune. The world was anything but full.

Well—it is now. No more Statues of Liberty promising to huddle the downtrodden and abandoned masses. No more escape tracks and hideouts for anyone but a few misfits and criminals. But (this being, arguably, the most striking effect of the world’s newly revealed fullness)—no more the safe and cozy *chez soi* either, as the events of the September 11 have proven dramatically and beyond reasonable doubt.

That manifestation of the changed existential condition took us unawares—as the change itself took us unprepared. The sacrosanct division between inside and outside, that charted the realm of existential security and set the itinerary for future transcendence, has been all but obliterated. There is no ‘outside’ any more... We are all ‘in,’ with nothing left outside. Or, rather, what used to be ‘outside’ entered the ‘inside’—without knocking; and settled there—without asking permission. The bluff of local solutions to planetary problems has been called, the sham of territorial isolation has been exposed.

Frontier-lands of all times have been known as, simultaneously, factories of displacement and recycling plants for the displaced. Nothing else can be expected from their new, global variety—except of course the new, planetary scale of the production and recycling problems. Let me repeat: there are no local solutions to global problems—although it is precisely the local solutions that are avidly, though in vain, sought by the extant political institutions, the sole political institutions that we have collectively invented thus far and the only ones we have. And no wonder—since all such institutions are local, and their sovereign power of feasible (or for that matter legitimate) action is locally circumscribed.

The unity of the human species that Kant postulated may be, as he suggested, resonant with Nature’s intention—but it certainly does not seem “historically determined.” The continuing uncontrollability of the already global network of mutual dependence and “mutually assured vulnerability” most certainly does not increase the chance of such unity. This only means, however, that at no other time has the keen search for common humanity, and the practice that follows such an assumption, been as urgent and imperative as it is now. In the era of globalization, the cause and the politics of shared humanity face the most fateful steps they have made in their long history. □

The Yo-Yo Theory of Just War

Joel Kovel

What better time to revisit the question of a Just War than when the war is virtually won? While there is no particular end in sight to the Afghanistan war as this is being written, no one doubts that victory is in America's hands. Our forces roam freely, the Taliban have been shoveled into the dustbin of history, Al Qaeda is reeling, and chief war-meister Donald Rumsfeld resembles Teddy Roosevelt more every day. God must have listened to all that singing, and decided to bless America. A great majority of the citizenry concludes that the war has been eminently worthwhile; and this opinion has been taken to the next level by the eminent scholar of international jurisprudence, Richard Falk, who has argued in liberal journals that it is a just war as well.

Falk's great authority is evinced by his having published no fewer than three articles in *The Nation* on the subject of just war since the outbreak of hostilities. In the latest, December 24, 2001, he corrects an earlier correction. At first, Falk held the war to be just. He then reversed judgement when it seemed that U.S. policy makers were using disproportionate force to achieve their goals. Now, however, with the "unexpectedly rapid collapse of the Taliban regime and the obvious impact on the operational nexus of Al Qaeda, there seems, at least temporarily, to be a restored sense of proportionality between means and ends." And so the war is once more just.

But there's something wrong here. Call me out of step, but I thought that justice had to do with whether something was right or wrong, not with whether it works. That's pragmatism, not justice. What's just has to have an enduring quality. It should not be dependent on whether force achieves its goal, but upon what the force is all about.

Falk's view, instead, has as much constancy as a weather report: the war is just one week, unjust the next. His concept of a just war behaves like a yo-yo because it reduces war to those terms defined by the state—in this case, that it's all about stamping out terrorism. This view of war not only sets aside any deeper or larger purpose, it mystifies what the state is really all about.

What is the U.S. role in Falk's view? The United States, he claims, has a special responsibility to "achieve a maximally

effective response and generate the widest possible popular support [because of] its leadership in world society, as well as its linchpin role with respect to global security, however flawed its execution has been in several past instances (including Vietnam, the Israel/Palestine conflict, the post-cold-war abandonment of Afghanistan and the follow-up to the Gulf War)."

To call Vietnam, etc., instances of "flawed execution" is most kind of Falk. One may wonder, what would have been a flawless conduct of the Vietnam war? And what about some of the other behaviors of the world leader? Consider the toppling of Iranian democracy in the 1950s when Mossadegh tried to nationalize the nation's oil, which prepared the way for Islamic fundamentalism; or the cold-war dismemberment of Afghanistan, *before* it was abandoned, also creating Islamic fundamentalism; or the nurturing of Saddam Hussein *before* the Gulf War, as a weapon against socialism; and all the other topplings and sponsorings of terror in other parts of the world: Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Indonesia, Chile, Panama, East Timor ... to draw the list out would take us over the whole terrain of the last fifty years, because our country has indeed exerted "leadership in world society," though not, it needs to be said, according to the precepts of justice.

The pattern has been only too consistent. Administrations and leaders come and go, but U.S. foreign policy remains as fixed as the North Star. It has one supreme goal, and that is to make the world a reliable source of profit for our propertied classes and their allies in other nations. That is what global security is about; and to believe that the underlying motives are any different now that terrorism is in the sights of the superpower is tantamount to believing in the tooth fairy.

We have to be blunt here, else the question of a just war disappears in a fog of propaganda. The word Falk is searching for in his convoluted defense of U.S. "leadership in world society" is "imperialism"—the forceful, violent if necessary, projection of power over other nations to control them for our own interest. An imperialist power need not always be violent, and its violence can at times serve a useful purpose, as when it represses the monsters of terror it has raised. But it can never raise itself to the level of justice, because its essential being is to sow injustice in the world. Thus present triumphs will become the occasion for future terrors. □

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Dirty Politics

Republicans and Globalization in 2001

Antonia Jusz

"You won't believe how much money we spent in the last two hours."

—A White House official, speaking anonymously to *Congress Daily*, shortly before the House vote on renewing Fast Track.

The year 2001 was, to say the least, a tumultuous year for the opponents of corporate-led globalization. There were many high points, such as the gathering of over 10,000 people from across the world in Porto Alegre, Brazil to discuss positive alternatives to corporate-led globalization. Then, there were the 60,000 people moved to take to the streets in Quebec City, Canada to protest the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). At the same time, even before the horrendous tragedies of September 11, there were extreme lows, the worst being the deaths of four anti-globalization protestors at the hands of police on the streets of Genoa, Italy and Papua New Guinea.

However, it was clear throughout the year that the anti-globalization movement had fundamentally shifted the debate on globalization from one of "how fast?" to "for whom and at what cost?" Just as this shift in thinking had begun to affect the shape of public policy, the tragedy of September 11 occurred. Nothing could have prepared the anti-globalization movement—or anyone—for the events of September 11 and their aftermath. But neither could we have foreseen the sort of dirty politics carried out in the name of fighting terrorism that would be used by the Bush administration and the Republican leadership to achieve its 2001 corporate globalization "victories": the launch of a new round of negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and passage of Fast Track in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Immediately following the events of September 11, the Bush administration began to argue that terrorism could be fought with trade. The first step would be Fast Track—the darling of the corporate world, denied to it for seven years by a coalition of legislators and human rights, women's, environmental, consumer, and labor organizations. "Fast Track" is a mechanism by which Congress eliminates many of the

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key democratic processes it uses to create legislation—including the full committee process, full debate, and the ability to amend legislation. Opposition to Fast Track has grown steadily in and outside of Congress primarily in response to the legislation that it has been used to pass—most recently, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the establishment of the WTO. After experiencing the impact of these agreements, few in the United States were eager to so readily turn over their democratic rights to aid in the creation of such legislation in the future. So, when President Bush and his trade representative, Robert Zoellick, started emphasizing Fast Track as a response to terrorism, few thought the argument would go far. In fact, the legislation remained stalled until the success of the fourth WTO ministerial meeting held in the small dictatorship of Doha, Qatar in the Persian Gulf.

Erasing the "Stain of Seattle"

In December 1999, the WTO tried to hold its third ministerial meeting in Seattle, Washington. The WTO was unable to launch a new round of trade liberalization negotiations at this meeting because of the 50,000 people on the streets of Seattle who brought sunshine to a traditionally secret backroom process. The sunshine made it impossible for the WTO delegates do the arm-twisting and undemocratic deals for which the organization is renowned. Even more importantly, developing country delegates stood up to the "Quad"—the United States, European Union, Japan, and Canada—to reject the launch of a new round of negotiations.

By 2001, the WTO, and the United States and European Union in particular, had learned their lesson. First, the location chosen for the ministerial meeting was Doha, Qatar, a remote dictatorship where entry was controlled and protest illegal. Not only was it difficult for WTO-critics to get in to the country (only about sixty did), but it was also difficult for both the mainstream and alternative media to cover the event. The distance effectively blocked out the sunshine

ILLUSTRATION BY RUSS ANDO

and gave negotiators the ability to wheel, deal, and arm-twist like never before.

Developing country delegates entered this ministerial virtually united in a set of demands consisting largely of reforms to existing WTO rules. They were united in their opposition to the launch of a new round and to the addition of new issues to the WTO's already biased agenda. Also united were hundreds of citizens' groups from around the world who had signed a WTO "shrink or sink" statement demanding the WTO not only reject new issues and the launch of a new round, but that it also "shrink" its current set of rules or "sink" as an organization all together. Once in Doha, however, all of these demands were quickly rejected and the unity of the developing country delegates was systematically destroyed.

Two weeks before the Doha ministerial began, U.S. Trade Representative Zoellick set the tone by saying, "as much as developing countries may need debt relief and development aid, a prerequisite for their long-term economic growth is full participation with the global economy and trading system. Doha is the best opportunity we will have in the next ten to fifteen years to expedite this integration. It is an opportunity neither we nor the developing world can afford to miss" (*International Trade Daily*, October 31, 2001). The not so hidden threat?—play ball in Doha or your debt relief and development aid will be cut off. This threat was spoken bluntly time and time again to developing country delegates in backrooms throughout Doha.

For example, according to Walden Bello, Executive Director of Focus on the Global South, Haiti and the Dominican Republic were told by the United States to cease opposition to one of the proposed new issues—government procurement—or risk cancellation of their preferential trade arrangements. Bello also describes how Pakistan, typically a stalwart among developing countries against the WTO, was mostly quiet in Doha after receiving a massive aid package of grants, loans, and debt reduction from the United States due to its special status in the U.S. war on terrorism. Also, Nigeria, which had issued an official communiqué denouncing the draft WTO declaration before Doha, came out loudly supporting it on November 14—a flip-flop that, according to Bello, is difficult to separate from the fact that the United States came up with the promise of a big economic and military aid package in the interim.

A Joint Motion for Resolution offered after the ministerial by members of the European Parliament states their opposition to the "heavy-handed and divisive tactics used by the WTO Secretariat, the EU, and the USA" in Doha.

Even more troubling to U.S. citizens may be how Zoellick abandoned promises he had made to senior United States senators such as John D. Rockefeller, Democrat from West Virginia. According to the senator, Mr. Zoellick "promised me, facing me, looking directly in my eye, in my office, that he would not in any way compromise various

fair trade and anti-dumping laws, [and] he immediately did so within the first five minutes" of arriving in Doha (*The Washington Post*, December 17, 2001). Zoellick also chose to simply ignore Congress' unambiguous statutory requirement that he seek a labor working group at the WTO.

The dirty politics worked: developing countries, isolated from information and support and in fragile positions due to the war on terrorism and the global recession, were brought to their knees; citizens groups were denied their numbers, access, and therefore much of their influence, and the launch of a new round was won. Upon departing Doha, Zoellick announced, "we have overcome the stain of Seattle" (*International Trade Daily*, November 15, 2001).

These dirty politics, however, look pristine in comparison to what came next—the vote on Fast Track. Fresh from his victory in Doha, Zoellick was prepared to do anything to complete his success by winning Fast Track.

The Fast Track Vote

On December 6, 2001, less than a month after the Doha ministerial, Fast Track was defeated in the U.S. House of Representatives. It had lost by four votes when the official time expired. Unfortunately, this is not the end of the story. Not to be undone by the rules, Robert Zoellick and the Republican leadership used their control of the House floor to keep the Fast Track vote open an unprecedented twenty-three minutes after the official clock expired. When they achieved a one vote majority, they slammed down the gavel: stopping the clock on the vote, eliminating the ability of the other side to respond, and eking out a 215 to 214 victory. Fast Track passed in the House.

In that twenty-three minutes, Republicans were searching for votes and found James DeMint, Republican of South Carolina waiting for them with a letter in his hand. The letter committed its signers (soon to include House speaker Dennis Hastert; Dick Armey, the majority leader; and Tom DeLay, the majority whip) to use "whatever means necessary" to cancel some textile export preferences already granted by Congress to Caribbean, Central American, and Andean nations in the Caribbean Basin Trade Preferences Act—effectively gutting a central provision of the Act—as well as directly contradicting pledges made by the United States in Doha to consider speeding the elimination of barriers to textile trade. With Democrats shouting to end the voting and declare defeat, DeMint and the House leaders engaged in animated discussions on the floor before DeMint got his letter signed. DeMint, who had voted no, then switched in his vote to yes. Then, according to DeMint, he "went and got a few other textile folks who were going the other way, and got them to vote for it. We passed it" (*Los Angeles Times*, December 2).

The tactics in Doha and Washington revealed the Bush Administration and House Republicans willingness to do

(continued on page 47)

Prayer as a Rebellion, Part II:

How Sacred Words Have Come Alive Since September 11

Leonard Felder

Like most people, I sometimes feel deeply moved by words of prayer and at other times I tend to be somewhat disconnected or distracted while reciting a prayer. But since September 11, I have found with my counseling clients, friends, and family that certain Jewish blessings and prayers have taken on a new meaning and a new intensity.

Whether you are a person who frequently utilizes prayer for guidance or a person who rarely has felt comfortable with prayer, there are profound teachings and techniques contained in some of Judaism's sacred words. Jews have prayed for renewed strength and clarity of mind during tranquil and horrific chapters in our long history as a people. Here are a few examples of how ancient prayers and blessings can guide us to respond with compassion and wisdom during these current volatile times:

Prayer as A Rebellion Against Fear and Edginess

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, along with the bio-terrorism that followed a few weeks later, caused a marked increase in anxiety for many of us. Even if you tried not to be fearful or upset, you may have noticed yourself just a little bit more impatient, short-tempered, or easily agitated by people and events in your daily life. You may have found yourself getting worked up by what you saw on the television news and then later inadvertently taking out your frustrations on co-workers, loved ones, or even on a slower-than-molasses clerk who was making you wait for a painfully long amount of time.

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One of the purposes of Jewish prayer is to help us creatively rise above fear, edginess and impatience. For example, there is a spiritual practice in Judaism that if your child, parent, spouse, friend or a nearby stranger is starting to get on your nerves, you need to stop yourself from lashing out with hurtful remarks and instead take a moment to say a blessing for this individual. You will need to catch yourself, right before you lash out with a shaming comment or a dirty look, so you can take a moment to say silently the familiar ancient blessing that comes from the Book of Numbers, "May God bless you and keep you. May God illuminate your way and be gracious unto you. May God raise up in your direc-

tion and guide you and give you peace and wholeness."

For instance, I was counseling a man named Brian who had lost a beloved family member in the World Trade Center and who was telling me how fearful he'd become and how impatient and short-tempered he had reacted recently with his wife. Brian admitted, "The last thing I want to do now is to take out my pain on my wife, but I'll tell you my fuse is very short these days." When I asked Brian if he would be willing say a silent blessing for his wife right at the moment when he was about to lash out at her with a barbed comeback, he wasn't sure at first. Brian commented, "Are you saying I need to let her walk all over me because I'm a little too edgy right now?"

I replied, "No, you don't need to let her 'walk all over you,' but you might want to say a silent blessing and see if that helps you stand up for yourself in a less abrasive way. Over the next few weeks, Brian tried using these ancient words to calm himself during stressful moments. He reported back, "I was surprised at how quickly I could snap out of my impatience and remember that I really do love my wife. Asking God to bless her made it very hard to trash her with my words. And it gave me a few extra seconds to calm down and talk to her like a human being."

ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH SOLIE

Prayer as a Rebellion Against Helplessness and Depression

With terror attacks in American cities and bombs dropping on Afghanistan, many people I spoke with in the past few months have told me they felt helpless and depressed. Fortunately, Jewish prayer is designed to help us break out of feelings of emptiness and isolation. A few weeks after September 11, I participated in a prayer service in which we not only asked God, or the still small voice within, for guidance but we also brainstormed about ways of acting responsibly and being effective in a world gone mad.

First we recited together and talked about the deeper meanings of the traditional prayer, "Sim shalom, grant us peace, your most precious gift, O Eternal Source of peace, and enable the people Israel to be messengers of peace..." Then we exchanged ideas and resources on how to take action for bringing about a world where terrorism would no longer be so compelling a choice for so many individuals. Here are a few of the ideas we came up with for rebelling against helplessness and depression. You might want to add your own ideas and ways of taking action:

1. Supporting with time and money the groups that are working for peace and dignity for all peoples in Israel and Palestine, including the New Israel Fund, the Abraham Fund, the Tikkun Foundation, Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam, and others.

2. Supporting with time and money the groups that are working for an end to poverty in Third World countries,

including FINCA, American Jewish World Service, and others.

3. Supporting with time and money the organizations that set up dialogues between Jews and Muslims, hawks and doves, fundamentalists and progressives, etc.

4. Educating ourselves and those we know in America and elsewhere on the complex personal, political and religious issues that underlie these conflicts.

5. Finding ways to express creatively the stories of dignity, compassion and bridge-building that are emerging from the current crisis.

6. Supporting the many important local and national charities in America whose funding has dropped to dangerously low levels since September 11 because of the huge amount that has been given instead to a few high-profile charities.

7. Reading books and articles that inspire you to act locally and globally in ways that have wisdom and compassion.

8. Making sure you don't forget to listen to and assist your own family members, friends, co-workers and neighbors who are struggling during these stressful times.

My hope is that Jewish prayers will help each of us wake up the compassionate and creative parts of our selves, so that we will one day look back at this anxious period in history and be able to say, "That was a time when we turned great fears and divisions into healing and repair. That was a time when we found the sparks of strength and goodness that were hidden." □

DIRTY POLITICS (from page 45)

anything to get their globalization agenda passed. To get a deal signed in Doha, they reneged on promises made to members of their own government and commitments required of them under U.S. law. To get a deal signed in Washington, they made the entire U.S. Congress renege on trade commitments made to some of the poorest countries in the world in an earlier trade agreement. Also in Washington, they reneged on commitments made in Doha to developing countries just weeks before. According to the conservative *Financial Times*, "the House vote [on Fast Track] casts doubt on Washington's reliability as a partner."

What it All Means

If it becomes law, Fast Track will allow the Bush administration to move any agreements reached in the WTO's new negotiating round (as well as the FTAA and any other new trade deals) through Congress more easily. Included in the WTO negotiations (scheduled to conclude in 2005) are agreements—known as the "new issues"—desperately sought by multinational corporations in the areas of investment, government procurement, competition policy, and trade facilitation. Also included in the negotiations are "built-in" items such as services and agriculture. Similar agreements are included in the proposed FTAA. Both the

new and built-in negotiations seek, through various channels, to allow multinational corporations greater access to markets—including many traditionally associated with governments—such as the provision of water, electricity, elementary and secondary education, libraries, waste disposal, etc.—while simultaneously restricting the ability of governments to regulate corporate behavior in these areas. In other words, the agreements force the United States, and all signatories, to move towards the privatization of these vital services without a single public discussion. The impact on the United States is the same as around the world—less government control, more corporate control, less accountability to citizens and their needs that run afoul of the profit motive.

At the writing of this article, Fast Track has not yet been passed. It must first go through the Senate and then most likely back to the House for a final vote. In addition, neither the FTAA nor any of the agreements being negotiated at the WTO are done deals (the next WTO ministerial meeting is scheduled for Mexico in 2003). We have the power to decide whether or not they come to be. Several pundits have already begun to argue that the dirty politics of the Doha ministerial and the vote on Fast Track could cost the Republicans their majority in Congress and their hold on the White House. Maybe it should. □

Social Venture Philanthropy

Lawrence Bush and Jeffrey Dekro

While *tzedakah* is a Jewish obligation, it is not meant to be fulfilled in a rote or soulless way. Our texts emphasize *using insight* to make *tzedakah* effective—"to discover which way is best to be privileged to do this *tzedakah* mitzvah in this particular situation," says *Leviticus Rabbah* (34:1).

The "social venture philanthropy" movement (SVP) reflects this teaching by using fundamental practices of venture capitalism to make philanthropy more effective. Paul Brainerd, a founder of Social Ventures Partners, explains the "venture" metaphor as follows: "There is no IPO, equity or cash-out, but the rest—a closely-engaged relationship with investees, a focus on capacity building for the long-term, measurement of progress against goals, an integration of human as well as financial capital, and a focus on the success of a portfolio of investments—has proven to have concrete applicability" to the not-for-profit sector. (All unattributed quotes are from the Morino Institute's 2001 report, "Venture Philanthropy: The Changing Landscape.")

Although SVP has been little-tested and much hyped (including cover stories in *Time* and *Forbes*), it clearly represents an effort by the baby-boom generation and their younger siblings and peers to shape a more dynamic philanthropy that reflects their life experience. All have witnessed the dismantling of government as the insurer of well-being, a huge surge in the power of corporations to shape daily life, and a great increase in the importance of foundations and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) in creating political and social progress. "Forty years ago," explains Peter Drucker, "nonprofit institutions... were generally seen as marginal to an American society dominated by government and big business respectively... [and] the nonprofits themselves by and large shared this view." Today, by contrast, Drucker adds, "we know that the nonprofit institutions are central to American society and are indeed its most distinguishing feature"—hence the need to revamp operations.

The demand for foundations to be effective and accountable also resonates with Judaism's fundamental teaching that wealth is the collective product of humanity (see our March/April 1999 column). Writing in the *Harvard Business*

Review (Nov.-Dec., 1999), Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer (an activist in the Jewish Funders Network and a founder of the Center for Effective Philanthropy) argue that we should "look to foundations to achieve a social impact disproportionate to their spending... to create real value for society" based on their preferential tax treatment: "[S]ome of the money that [they] give away belongs, in a sense, to all of us."

However, while SVP's demands for measurability, accountability, and funder-grantee partnership seem commonsensical, they also raise the danger of funder arrogance and interference. Vanessa Kirsch, the founder of New Profit, Inc., a venture capital fund, warns that "While [funders] demand accountability, we have learned that we must also remember the limits of our role... [as] 'a guest at the table.'" An SVP approach may also shortchange the work of advocates and organizers, whose success is hard to measure and depends less upon a visionary "social entrepreneur" than upon networks and coalitions of people.

To avoid these pitfalls, SVP requires a commitment to power-sharing that is consonant with Judaism's emphasis on *partnership and social investment* as the highest, or most complete, form of *tzedakah*. One good example of this approach has been the Joshua Venture (www.joshuaventure.org), conceived of by the Righteous Persons Foundation, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, and the Walter and Elise Haas Foundation, as a response to the "Jewish continuity crisis." Rather than prescribing programs that fulfill the organized community's notion of continuity, Joshua empowers American Jews aged 21–35 to "transform their visions into action" and determine the direction and content of their own Jewish institutions.

In general, SVP ideology represents an important challenge to the Jewish community. The "Super Sunday" model of united giving is yielding to a system dotted with family foundations, alternative philanthropies that closely engage funders, and new demands for accountability. The secretiveness about budgets, endowments and salaries that was once typical of Jewish organizations is becoming less tolerable. Activist funders, including a generation of financially and politically empowered women, want to see their values reflected in the programs and governance structures of the organizations they support. In a nutshell, the sophistication of the American Jewish community has moved beyond its own philanthropic structures—and "catching up" means opening up, not just ratcheting up, our collective institutions. □

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Unmasking the Scroll of Esther

Bonna Devora Haberman

Often we think of Purim as a children's carnival. Yet the Megillah, the Scroll of Esther that we read on Purim, is a complex script for outrageous masquerade, tinged with macabre violence. The Talmud records the following story:

Rava and Rabbi Zera made a Purim feast together and became drunk.

Rava got up from the table and slaughtered Rabbi Zera.

The next day when he understood what he had done, he prayed for mercy and brought him back to life.

The next year, Rava said to Rabbi Zera:

"Come let us make a Purim feast together!"

Rabbi Zera replied:

"No! A miracle doesn't happen at every single hour."

(bTractate Megillah 7b)

This dark and dangerous Purim revelry derives from lethal themes present in the Megillah: the sexism of the beauty pageant to choose a queen, the genocidal plot against the Jews, and the Jewish destruction of 75,000 Persian lives in the ninth chapter of the Megillah. How do these elements fit with our Purim fun? The Megillah reveals how deadly orders issue from the sumptuous banquets of the heartless and powerful, with the swish and tilt of goblets, while we occasionally look up from our page, from our drink.

A feminist interpretation of the Megillah exposes the gendered root of racism, violence, and war. We find evidence of enslavement, abuse, and the trafficking of women in our own tradition. Through a "textual activist" approach, we can unmask the Megillah as we unmask evil action in the world, participating in a grassroots feminist social change process.

The dramatic excitement in the Megillah of Esther begins in the first chapter when Persian Queen Vashti refuses to be



taken to the King's drinking party wearing (only) her crown. King Achashverosh opts to banish the queen. Yet ridding himself of Vashti is insufficient; her insubordination generates fear of women's universal insurgence. Paradoxically, when Achashverosh cannot expose Vashti at his will, his vulnerability to her is exposed. Concerned that gender disorder in his court will ignite a women's liberation movement, the king decrees that every woman, young and old, must submit to her husband, the inviolable ruler of his house, and speak his language (Esther 1:2). The king's edict defends the patriarchy against Vashti.

Hungry for beauty and sex to console himself, the king mobilizes the entire Persian Empire to satisfy his appetite. The beauty contest for the crown involves collecting virgin girls from throughout 127 states of Persia. Consider these parallel notices, one from the ancient Persian Empire, the other from the contemporary global empire of sex traffickers in Kiev last year:

Let the King appoint officials in all the states of his empire. They will round up all beautiful young virgin girls and bring them to the capital city, Shushan, to the women's section. (Esther 2:2-3)

One typical ad used by traffickers read: "Girls: Must be single and very pretty. Young and tall. We invite you for work as models, secretaries, dancers, choreographers, gymnasts. Housing is supplied. Foreign posts available. Must apply in person."

(Jan. 18, 1998, *Metro Final*, Sacramento CA)

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According to the Megillah, the girls are delivered into the custody of the eunuch Hegai who oversees twelve months of primping and preening in myrrh and oil. This confinement under guard culminates in each taking her turn for a night with the king. On the morning after, she is passed along to Shaashgaz who controls the harem of concubines. None is seen again by the king unless he summons her. This rule obtains for Esther even *after* she has been crowned queen (Esther 4:11). The enforced confinement of women to sexual service is practiced today throughout the global empire, as Donna Hughs details in the *Journal of International Affairs*:

The United Nations estimates that as many as four million people are trafficked around the world each year, resulting in profits to criminal syndicates of up to seven to twelve billion dollars annually. ... The trafficked women often find themselves trapped in debt bondage contracts, or virtual slavery, working as prostitutes... where their invisibility makes them vulnerable to outrageous abuses. (Spring 2000)

What about Mordecai, Esther's uncle and guardian, a hero of the Scroll—does he willingly tender Esther to the harem? There is no evidence that he hides her or resists. Unlike Yocheved, Moses' mother who hides him from Pharaoh's edict against male babies, Mordecai does not critique the collection of the girls. Male sovereign entitlement to women is presumed. Rashi comments that even though she has been taken to lie with a heathen, there is no reason for Mordecai to fear for this righteous woman, for she will bring redemption to her people. By singling Esther out as an exception, this midrash implicitly accepts the sexual enslavement of the other women. Even if Mordecai values Esther's position as the potential savior of her people, he never expresses outrage about the sex role to which she and the other women in the harem must conform.

Just as the Passover Haggadah inquires about the origins of enslavement, on Purim we should ask about the Jewish foundations of gender abuse. Where did all of this gender trouble begin? There is a biblical story about Avraham and Sara that addresses this question. When the famine was heavy in the Land of Israel, Avraham sought refuge in Egypt. Fearful that Sara's beauty would bring harm to him, he asked her to pretend to be his sister. He also saw that he could *benefit* through her. Avraham obtained his wealth from Pharaoh when Sara was taken to the royal court.

When Avraham arrived in Egypt, the Egyptians saw the exquisite beauty of the woman. Pharaoh's ministers saw her and praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman *was taken* to the king's palace. On her account, Avraham profited; he gained sheep and oxen, donkeys, servants and maids, asses and camels. (my emphasis, Genesis 12:16)

The text uses the same verb that describes Esther being *taken*, on account of her beauty. Struck by God with great sickness, Pharaoh uncovers the deceit. He blames Avraham for not telling him the truth about Sara, that she is married to him (Genesis 12:17). Why was Pharaoh so clear about the impropriety of this ruse, while Avraham was not? And why was Avraham so willing to accept the "gifts" from Pharaoh, when earlier he refused to accept gifts from Malki Zedek, a priest who acknowledged the "Almighty God?"

Did Avraham sell Sara to an imperial Pharaoh in exchange for sheep, cattle, donkeys, servants, maids, asses and camels?!

This story is a microcosm of the Exodus from Egypt; it is a liberation story on a family scale. Abraham and Sara went down to Egypt on account of famine in Canaan. Sara was taken into captivity in Pharaoh's court. On behalf of Sara whose cries are not vocalized in the text, God sent a plague to deliver her from bondage. But did Avraham *sell* Sara to an imperial Pharaoh in exchange for sheep,

cattle, donkeys, servants, maids, asses, and camels?!

While anguishing in my heart about the character of our forefather, I cannot close my eyes to the terrible scheme that Avraham, ancestor of the Jewish people, seems to have finessed. He willfully denied Sara's full humanity as his spouse and degraded her to the status of a beauty object in an economic exchange among men. Avraham appears to have "pimped" Sara to obtain his fortune. A few verses *after* this incident, God reveals for the first time the future destiny of the Israelites to be enslaved (Genesis 13:13–16). Avraham's gender abuse is arguably the cause of the eventual enslavement of the entire Jewish people in Egypt for 400 years.

While the rabbis did often stress that one of the greatnesses of our Torah is that the protagonists are fully *human*, surely they did not intend that we emulate their shortcomings. We refine our own humanity by revealing their assumptions, and analyzing and engaging with their struggles. The goal of this interpretation is neither outrage nor alienation, but to embrace empathy and to resolve to improve our own behavior and that of our societies. There is evidence of this process in the text. Before Avraham merits conceiving a child with Sara, God commands Avraham to sanctify his sex organ through circumcision. I recommend adding the intention to prevent the violation of women as a vital part of the covenant of circumcision, *brit milah*. This powerful symbolic act will begin to redress the presumption of male entitlement to women's bodies that we find expressed in the Megillah, in the Torah, and in our global economy.

The sale of women and children into prostitution is one of the most egregious contemporary violations of human rights. The United Nations acknowledges the alarming increase in

the scale of sexual “trafficking” from the South and East toward voracious and perverse appetites for abusive sex in the West and North. This burgeoning business embeds patriarchal and class structures based upon extreme exploitation of some of the most vulnerable members of humanity; it sustains a degraded conjunction of money with power.

In the Scroll of Esther, recruiting virgins for sexual service to the king intensifies the former royal edict that commands women’s subordination. Each family that surrenders or “pimps” its daughter, each community that does not protect its daughters, spouses, and sisters, is complicit, Jews included. Jewish communities have long been involved in trafficking women, throughout the period of what was known as the “white slave trade.” Historians Susan Glenn and Robert Weisbrot have documented Jewish trafficking networks originating in eastern Europe.

Even before they had left their homes in Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe, Jewish girls had been frightened by stories of prostitution rings that preyed upon unaccompanied females on the ships and at the sea ports. Their fears are not unfounded. The Jewish underworld made a steady profit by supplying the brothels of Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Near East with “white slaves.”

(Susan A. Glenn, *Daughter of the Shtetl*)

By 1909, of 199 licensed brothels in Buenos Aires, 102 (51%) were run by Jewish madams, often wives of the slavers. The agents would even pay their passage across the Atlantic to Buenos Aires. These unsuspecting women would make the trip only to be met by thugs who abducted them to houses of prostitution.

(Robert Weisbrot, *The Jews of Argentina*)

Today in Israel and throughout the world, as in the Persian Empire,

many of these women and girls become “commodities,” literally bought and sold for thousands of dollars, literally held in debt bondage. They are locked up in apartments, and have their passports and travel documents confiscated. Many women are subjected to violence, including rape. Yet most of the people who commit such human rights abuses are never brought to justice by the Israeli government. (Amnesty International, May 18, 2000)

Women today are still rendered a sexual commodity subject to exchange among men. We embed the degradation of the human dignity of women in society by means of our unexamined texts and traditions, our sexual, religious, social and political practices, and through the media. Gender abuse, at the core of human identity and relationship, fuels other forms of abuse. In the Megillah, we see how Haman’s

racism follows immediately upon the heels of the king’s sexism. While Vashti’s rebellion against her spouse appears domestic, and Mordecai’s rebellion seems political and religious, the Scroll bends the gender specificity of these domains and demonstrates their interconnectedness. A prominent aid to the king, Haman becomes obsessed with the Jewish piety of Mordecai, who refuses to prostrate himself in front of Haman. Haman’s wrath against Mordecai and the Jews closely parallels the king’s fury against Vashti and the women (as Athalya Brenner points out in her collection,

A Feminist Companion to Esther, Judith and Susanna). The cause is also similar: both Vashti and Mordecai refuse to submit to a self-absorbed man. Disdain for and subordination of women are the underlying conditions for the progression toward more violent evils that threaten to prevail under the jester-king.

As the text successively strips away masks of authority, macabre, vain, and fickle circumstance threatens moral order. Insurgent against

this backdrop, Esther schemes to dissuade the king from allowing the slaughter of the Jews. The text indicates her gradual ascent to power and the possibility of feminist activism. At the moment that Zeresh, Haman’s spouse, is predicting that Haman will fall, the eunuchs arrive according to Esther’s bidding and *take* Haman to her party. This scene is a complete inversion of the opening incident. Whereas Vashti defiantly resists a *king’s* summons, Haman is subordinate to the *queen’s* summons. This gender contrast foreshadows Esther’s eclipse of Haman and highlights the feminist trend instigated by Vashti at the outset of the Scroll.

At her own peril, in the presence of the evil protagonist Haman, Esther carefully formulates her appeal. In this climactic scene (in chapter 7), Esther performs a subversive transformation of identity and power. She compasses simultaneously contradictory positions. She both submits and presides. While she is part of the system and empowered by it as queen, she postures as a humble servant who seeks favor in the king’s eyes. Esther deftly maneuvers past the dangers of alienating the irascible king. She begins with words that appear to plead, but conceal accusation. If it were *only* that she and her entire people had been sold into bondage, then she would not deem her cause worthy (Esther 7:4). It is only total death and annihilation that merit troubling the king (!). Do we detect sarcastic understatement here; or is it Esther’s awakening? Indeed she and her people, women, have been sold into sexual slavery. Yet she did/could not resist. Esther is becoming aware that her two subordinated roles converge: woman and Jew. She makes an eloquent plea against enslavement and violence:

*Esther performs a
subversive transformation
of identity and power. She
compasses simultaneously
contradictory positions. She
both submits and presides.*

Let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request; for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be massacred and to be exterminated.

(Esther 7:3–4)

In this statement, Esther reveals her hidden *otherness*. She is a Jew marked for annihilation by the king's edict; and a woman, held captive in sexual slavery. She opposes oppression doubly, as both woman and Jew. Her call for liberation refers to her people, Jews, and to her people, *women*.

"Coming out" as a Jew is paradoxical in this context, for she "passed" so easily as a non-Jew. Does being Jewish affect her behavior, or is being Jewish easily hidden? Esther reveals that she is not what she seems. External identity is a mask for her internal being; she *is* what she did not seem, a Jew. At the same instant, Esther "comes out" as a woman. Just as she unmask the truth of herself as Jew, she unmask the truth of herself as woman. Having masqueraded as a submissive being, she manifests herself as a potent, commanding leader who imminently takes the king's authority in her hands, legislates, and makes a royal appointment. This unfathomable inversion of her status recreates her identity as Jew and woman. Indeed the transformation of the Jews in Persia from oppressed people to empowered self-defenders hinges on the transformation of the identity of "woman." Esther transforms herself from oppressed object to strident commanding subject. Her rise to power, however, is not self-absorbed like the king and Haman. Esther's

Esther reveals that she is not what she seems. External identity is a mask for her internal being; she is what she did not seem, a Jew.

indomitable humane compassion drives her to risk her own life to oppose narrow and violent evil. "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16).

In the next scene of the Megillah, the king goes off to his garden, stymied and infuriated by the unmasking of Esther's identity and her vulnerability to Haman's plan to kill the Jews. Meanwhile, in another gender inversion, Haman pleads with Esther desperately for his own life. Achashverosh returns to find Haman falling atop her couch and exclaims: "Have you come also to conquer the queen

with me in the house?!" (Esther 7:8). The text is not clear about Haman's intention; was it physical or sexual aggression? The language of *conquering* underlines the commodification of woman as an object to be possessed or occupied by men. The sexual nuance of this bombastic scene is heightened by the previous phallic imagery of the golden sovereign scepter the king extends to Esther when she comes to see him (Esther 5:2). Haman's position *on the queen* signals his intention to

usurp power. Esther's body becomes the contested territory for male conquest, the site where the king experiences an intolerable threat to his power. Defending his territory, Achashverosh immediately deposes Haman.

In contrast to the male violence, Esther's strategy expresses her commitment to life. She seeks to repeal the scrolls that mandate annihilation (Esther 8:5). Yet, having won the power and compliance of the king, Esther has a rude awakening. Even the *king* has no power to revoke his own seal. The only recourse is to issue new orders giving

The Fast of Esther

The Mistabra Institute for Jewish Textual Activism has created "Unmasking the Fast of Esther," a four-part event to claim the day before Purim, traditionally a fast-day, as a time to educate and mobilize the Jewish people against gender-based oppression and the "trafficking" of women into prostitution. Unmasking the Fast of Esther transmits a feminist liberatory interpretation of the Purim story through text study, a dramatic script entitled "Fast Food," prayer and activism. "Unmasking the Fast of Esther" is intended to be performed by amateur or professional readers at your dining-room table, in a synagogue social hall, community center, or theater.

We have made "Unmasking the Fast of Esther" available to communities throughout the world to create "Unmasking" events and spread this initiative widely.

All of the materials required to produce "Unmasking the Fast of Esther" in your community may be downloaded from our website: www.brandeis.edu/~mistabra. We welcome you to participate in Mistabra's textual activism process. For further information, please contact: mistabra@brandeis.edu,

This project is an antidote to the edicts of destruction, once distributed throughout the Persian empire of Achashverosh, today distributed through global terrorist networks that undermine the sanctity of human life.

Abraham Joshua Heschel has said: Some are guilty, but all are responsible.

The Fast of Esther will occur this year on February 25. Purim begins February 26.

Fast, for Esther.

permission to the Jews to defend themselves against their assailants (Esther 8:11). The bloody denouement of chapter nine, the destruction of 75,000 lives, seems to be an irrevocable outcome of the immutability of the king's ph/fallible decree. Whereas Esther's solution respects the integrity of the body by *deconstructing* the text, the monarch's solution destroys the body while maintaining the text intact. The outcome in the story enacts the horrific consequences of the displacement of integrity from human life to text. Yet the celebration of Purim promulgated by Esther's Scroll affirms her humane kindness. The obligations of Purim are giving gifts to the poor, exchanging food with friends, feasting and rejoicing, and listening to the Scroll. These commandments reflect Esther's desire to nurture caring and mutual sustenance. By contrast, the violent outcome is a perverse inversion, a mockery of divine immutability, and a displacement of the sacred from our texts and table.

In the Megillah, racism is brought down, but sexism is not explicitly uprooted and violence continues. This "activist" reading demonstrates one of the claims of feminist theory: human dignity is embedded in the relations between women and men, in families, in daily respect for the full humanity of girls and women. Violation of the female gender is one of the most prevalent sources of oppression. Until sexual oppression ends, racism and other forms of violence will not end either.

During the three days preceding her meeting with King Achashvaerosh, Esther, a prostituted woman, declares a communal fast in solidarity with herself as she incubates her strategy and steels her resolve to foil Haman's evil plan to destroy her people. Esther's fast creates a unique opportunity to inspect and strategize against the gendered roots of evil. Esther was an activist whose potent insurgence foiled a plot of global proportions. Ultimately, Esther's liberation struggle is affirmed by her control over the text; Esther authorized the final version of the Scroll (Esther 9:29). According to some commentaries, the acceptance of the oral law by the Jewish people is undertaken at this time (Esther 9:27). Following Esther's lead, let us make a ritual innovation: sanctifying *Ta'anit Esther*, the Fast of Esther that precedes Purim. By the order of Esther, we fast in solidarity with all girls and women who are dehumanized on account of gender. The Fast of Esther is a day to begin to incubate *our* strategy and steel *our* resolve to foil the gendered roots of evil.

According to the legendary kabbalist Rabbi Isaac Luria, the concealment of the divine presence during the Babylonian exile is a reenactment of the drowse God imposed upon Adam during the creation of Eve. This feminist reading interprets the Megillah as a wake-up call to the Jewish people. It is time to unmask and dismantle the tacit sexist global consensus. It is time to deconstruct the perverse desire that makes trafficking profitable. □

A Prayer

Here is a prayer that accompanies the Mistabra script. Please include it in your Fast of Esther ritual, or at any appropriate community event.

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Prayer on the Occasion of the Fast of Esther

תפלה לעת תענית אסתר

May God who blessed Esther with the strength and courage to overturn plots of evil and desecration,

Steel our own resolve to foil the abuse of power where gender is a tool of oppression.

Sustain our effort to return the captives who have been sold into sexual bondage.

May we dismantle the structures of desperation that render us vulnerable to capture and exploitation.

May we instead create the conditions for families and communities to embrace each other lovingly, and enable healthy sustenance for all, that we may live lives that affirm our fullest human dignity, women and men, girls and boys.

תבוא לפניך אִנְקַת אֲסִיר כְּגֹדֶל זְרוּעֶךָ הוֹתֵר בְּנֵי תְמוּתָה

Tavo l'fanekha enkat asir,
k'godel zro'akha; hoter bnei t'mutah.

May the cry of the captive come before You, according to the greatness of Your power; release those who are appointed to die. [Psalms 79:11]

Joy and gladness shall we attain, sorrow and misery shall flee.

חֲרוֹךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם מְתִיר אֲסוּרִים

Barukh Ata Ado-nai, Elo-heinu
Melekh Ha'Olam Matir Asurim.

Blessed are You God, Sovereign of the Universe, who frees captives.

May the Shechinah, Divine Presence, dwell among all people at every table, in every heart.

Let us say, Amen

• • •

From the hollow emptiness of our bellies, a deep void that echoes with the suffering of the most vulnerable, we hunger for change. From the intense embodied experience of fasting, we hunger to alleviate unconscionable violations that flourish in our contemporary world.

You Never Know

Mordechai Gafni

The goal of mystical consciousness is to fully receive the unique essence of another through deep understanding and empathy. Yet how often in life are we simply unable to understand one another? Receiving each other becomes next to impossible because of distance, strangeness, hurry, deafness, carelessness, or inevitable difference in the languages of our soul prints. Try as we might, the full depth of so many people are ultimately unknowable to us, much the same as God is ultimately unknowable to us. Are we to give up, or is there a path of receiving which is true even when we cannot fully grasp the soul print of another? Is there a way to receive what seems so unreceivable, whether human or divine?

This quandary inspired St. Thomas Aquinas, the medieval writer who did so much to define Christianity, and Moses Maimonides, perhaps the most important Jewish philosopher-mystic of the last thousand years.

Our task, both wisdom-masters assume, is—to receive God. As Platonic philosopher Plotinus said, God is the lonely one.

You don't have to read much of the Bible, or any other religious document for that matter, to realize that God has a serious soul print communication problem. Indeed, the word "levado," used to express the loneliness of Adam, Jacob, and Joseph, is also used to refer to God. God's essence—his divine soul print—remains unshared with most of humanity.

How can we redeem God from divine loneliness? For theologians like Aquinas and Maimonides and many others past and present, the very essence of God is his incommunicability. According to these medieval scholars, God is unknowable. In the language of one scholar, "If I knew him I would be him." Aquinas and Maimonides proposed an ingenious solution they called "the affirmation of not knowing"—that is, we recognize God by acknowledging that we do not know him. In the words of one of French writer Edmond Jabès' characters, "I know you, Lord, in the measure that I do not know you."

"Don't you know," he said, "it's raining today because a holy man has gone to his world."

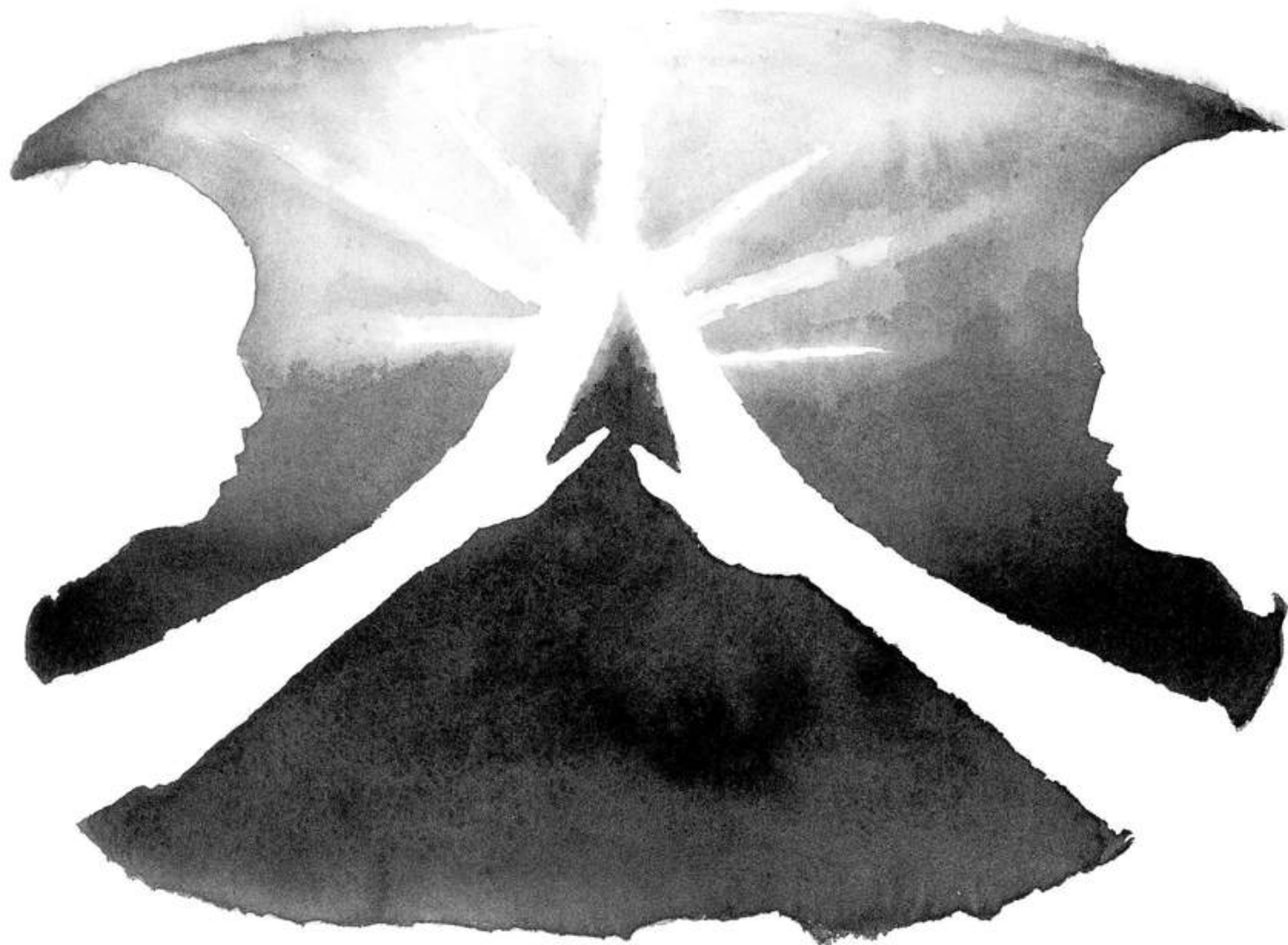
For years I thought the "affirmation of not knowing" to be a classic example of irrelevant if clever medieval sophistry. Two incidents occurred that changed my mind. The first took place at the small neighborhood grocer around the corner from my house. On a rare stormy day in Jerusalem, I made my way through the rain to the grocer to pick up some essentials for my bad-weather hibernation. My mood was about as foul as the gust of smoke that greeted me at the door. The source of the noxious fumes, I soon found out, was a swarthy-faced middle-aged man, loitering in my corner store! Shirt open to chest, large gold necklace and all, he stood there smoking his 9 AM cigar. Fanning my way through his smoke, and coughing, I mumbled to the grocer my consternation at the torrential rains that had soaked me through and through.

The man with the gold necklace turned and looked at me—I promise—with the gentlest look you could possibly imagine. All of his features suddenly appeared handsome and majestic. The gold necklace seemed regal, the smoke sweet as an incense offering. "Don't you know," he said, "it's raining today because a holy man has gone to his world."

I felt like some gate had swung open inside of me. Something in my heart went soft—I just wanted to reach out and hug him for being so beautiful. It was an epiphany moment pure and simple. Only later when I got home and read the paper did I see that one of Jerusalem's great mystics had in fact died that morning: the Rebbe of Gur, a Hassidic master and leader of a thriving community with origins in the Eastern European town of Gur, a community that had been virtually wiped out during the Holocaust. This master had slowly, painstakingly, and with endless love, passion, and daring rebuilt his community in Israel over the past forty years. The world felt so much darker without him.

If I said that I thought the man with the cigar and the gold necklace was an angel, I would be taking the easy way out. Indeed, he was not an angel but flesh and blood. And I had totally misjudged him. I thought him to be a boor—coarse and crass, involved only in his immediate needs. However, the shining beauty and Zen-like understanding on his face as he told me that a holy man had died let me

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know how superficial my vision had been. I had assumed I knew him, and I had not truly known him at all. I had not received him. The words of a modern spiritual singer, Shlomo Carlebach, flashed through my mind: “You Never Know You Never Know—You Never Know.” The intent of the refrain is the need to acknowledge that we never really can be certain of the nature of the person standing before us. That is precisely what Aquinas was saying about the lonely God. It is true we cannot understand God. But whether we are relating to God, to an intimate, or to a near-stranger, we can get to the end of all knowing—that is, the acknowledgement that we do not know.

We know that one major soul print danger is the temptation to judge, label, categorize, dismiss, or otherwise try to put another person in a box. People in boxes are less threatening to us. Instead, we must seek to receive an other’s soul print, even as we are aware that the other remains mysterious to us, ultimately unknowable, just like God. We are called to honor the soul print by gently saying to ourselves, “You Never Know You Never Know—You never know.”

To Know You Don’t Know

Here is the second incident that made me come to accept the truth of my not-knowing. One Friday night in Jerusalem, I was the keynote speaker at a conference hosted by the Israeli government for all the editors of Jewish newspapers in the world. I had just arrived back in Israel from a lecture in San Francisco and was exhausted. Anyone who has ever been that tired knows that it is something like being drunk. When you’re drunk, you go high or you go low. That night I went high. Speaking to the editors, I first taught them a song, then lectured for awhile, drank a toast, sang another song, and then lectured and drank another toast and sang once more.

It was a truly beautiful evening and seemed like a strong and effective presentation, or so I thought. Truth is, it looked like everybody else thought so too. That is, except for one guy who sat in the third row—writing. Now I am a liberal Orthodox rabbi and I would never impose my Sabbath observance laws (which preclude writing) on anyone. Nevertheless, to write so openly despite the unspoken

understanding that the Sabbath mood should be maintained, at least in the public spaces of the conference, seemed a bit strange. What really made me crazy is that I was spilling my heart out giving this lecture and he was just sitting there in the third row, writing. The chutzpah!

By the time I ended my lecture, the man had succeeded in thoroughly annoying me. It was clear he was a superficial, self-involved journalistic bureaucrat. Surely, I thought, here was a symbol of the tepid, insipid sort of religiosity I was dedicated to overthrowing through spiritual revolution. Before I left the hall I sought him out, thinking to give him at least an oblique reprimand of sorts.

To my surprise, he greeted me with tears in his eyes. Before I had a chance to make a fool of myself, he said, "Please look at what I have written." He showed me sheet after sheet of musical notes. I cannot read a note of music and had no idea what this was about. Then, speaking English with a thick Bulgarian accent, he declared, "I have been the editor of a paper in Bulgaria for only a few months now. I got the job by chance. Since I was six years old, I have not heard a Jewish song ... until you sang tonight. Something happened as you sang. I promised myself never to forget the songs of my people. But how to remember? So, I wrote down every note that you sang. I will sing them for the rest of my life." He smiled at me with fierce gratitude. "Thank you. I have come home."

I just stared at him, my heart too full, and my face too red, even to speak. I had spent the previous week in the United States lecturing on Kabbalah. I realized, sadly, that on this night I had not been a Kabbalist. I had not received him. My judgment of him had barreled past the truth of his soul print. The musical refrain of the spiritual folk singer kept playing in my mind: "You Never Know You Never Know—You Never Know."

To acknowledge that you do not truly know another's soul print is to resist the siren's call to reduce another to box and label. To know how much you don't know the other is sometimes the holiest act of receiving the other.

There are all sorts of ways to say "you never know." Sometimes you can redeem others from loneliness just by acknowledging them—by remembering their name or recognizing their face.

Soul Print Practice

Next time you pass someone in the street that you recognize but don't know well, don't turn the other way or look straight ahead or use your cell phone to avoid greeting him. Do just the opposite—clearly recognize your acquaintance, share the pleasure of seeing a familiar face, and if you don't know his name, ask gently.

Always fill an open hand. When a person puts out an open palm to you, see it and remember the lines of her soul print.

One of the models for receiving without fully understanding biblical myth's response to an "open hand." "An open hand" is how biblical myth refers to the poor person on the street whose hand is open to receive your gift. Although most of us are not begging on the street with an open hand, are we not all pleading with an exposed and vulnerable heart to be received?

Always fill an open hand. When a person puts out an open palm to you, see it and remember the lines of her soul print.

Whenever you encounter a person with his hand extended for money, don't try and calculate, "Does she really need it, or doesn't she? Does she deserve it or not deserve it?" Admit the fact that you can not fully know. There is a tradition of the Kabbalah that says if you give without checking too carefully whether the recipient "truly deserves it," then God may give to you without checking whether you "truly deserve it." Never walk by without giving something. Take notice of what happens to you when you

close your heart and prevent yourself from giving. Pay attention...feel the constriction of your heart. Your heart has been attacked.

Don't label people or put them in boxes.

One way to see through a person's present circumstance to her soul print is to imagine her as a laughing baby. This image is a wonderful means for connecting to her soul print.

The next time you find yourself judging, boxing, or reducing someone else to a label, say to yourself "You never know." Pick a "you never know" melody. Use it like a mantra that permeates your consciousness. Whenever you are about to judge someone, let the melody mantra play in your mind.

Say "Shalom."

Biblical myth law tells us that even when we are in the midst of the highest meditation on divinity—the Shema meditation—we must interrupt the rapture in order to greet a passerby. We greet them with the word "Shalom" which, like the Thai greeting "Namaste," is an affirmation of the God within the other. "Shalom" literally means peace, wholeness, or harmony. It is one of the names of God as well as being a biblical greeting. In the kabbalistic understanding of language, all meanings converge to convey a wider intent. Shalom thus means, "The divine point within me greets the divine point within you."

True, two people saying "shalom" to each other may not have fully received each other's soul prints. Certainly, they do not fully understand each other. Indeed, they may barely know each other. Yet through this point of human contact, the loneliness between the two of them is abated.

For in the greeting “shalom” lies a kind of receiving. “Shalom” gives voice to this recognition—that you, the one I greet, have a wonderful and glorious soul print even if I have not yet been privileged to receive it in understanding. There is a level of receiving in the recognition itself. Thus the “shema”—the meditation on divinity—is interrupted to acknowledge a higher divinity, the soul print of the passerby.

Imagine you are standing by yourself in Times Square on New Year’s Eve. The ball is about to drop. Surrounded by boisterous strangers, you feel terribly alone. Then someone taps you on your shoulder. You recognize each other, and you exchange greetings. The loneliness you felt has instantly been transformed into connection. Because of the initial experience of isolation, the connection is even more precious.

To Receive the Face of a Stranger

The basis of the law requiring one to interrupt rapture to give greeting is nowhere explicitly stated in the Bible. I believe its source is a stunning biblical myth vignette about Abraham and his guests. Abraham, the first hero of biblical myth, is the image of Plato’s philosopher king—a powerful force in affairs of state whose major passion is for truth. In later Christian, Islamic, and Jewish traditions, Abraham becomes the first great spiritual master. In the text, God appears to Abraham as Abraham is sitting—perhaps in lotus position—at the entrance to his tent. Abraham sees three strangers approach and says, “Wait a second, God, I have guests,” and runs to greet the strangers.

The way the myth-masters read this story, Abraham is in the midst of a meditation on the Godhead. No common activity. In the middle of rapture, he sees some strangers nearing. He breaks his meditation, says to God, “Don’t go away I’ll be back soon,” and goes to greet the visitors, inviting them to sit and have a drink with him. It is a pretty wild description. Can you imagine how you would respond if, in the middle of merging with the divine, you hear the doorbell? Could you see yourself saying, “Hey, God, hold on for a second, I have to get the door. There may be strangers there and I want to greet them and maybe even invite them in for a drink?”

Strange, indeed. One fourth-century Babylonian wisdom-master explains Abraham’s strange behavior with a startling and wonderful epigram: “To receive the face of a guest is greater than receiving the face of the divine.”

Sometimes we greet a stranger without words and with no prior recognition of his face. Some of my best friends are people I will never talk to. They are people with whom I have exchanged a knowing look or a meaningful glance, in a crowded bus, in the market, or on a street corner. Although we do not know each other in any conventional way, in every one of those moments, I feel my soul print fully affirmed—fully recognized—even as it remains fully hidden.

Soul Print Practice

After shaking hands, Sephardic Jews have a tradition of kissing their own hand (as if kissing the trace of the person that lingers on their skin). Buddhists put their palms together and bow, saying “Namaste”: “the god within me welcomes the god within you.”

Develop a receiving gesture for when you greet another person, whether it be a tip of the hat, a slight bow, or the placement of your hands upon your heart.

If such a gesture doesn’t work for you, then try “the two-handed shake.” When you shake someone’s hand, shake with both hands, so that the shake turns into more of a split-second hold.

Remember, a good image for the soul print is the hand print. The next time you grasp someone’s hand, remember that it can be either a mere formality or an opportunity for soul print connection. Imagine that as you receive the other’s hand, she is allowing you, for a brief second, to touch her soul print. When people say, “I liked him from the first handshake,” they are not referring to firmness of grasp but to an authentically felt moment of soul print connection.

Practice Hospitality: Open Doors in All Directions.

The biblical hero of hospitality, Abraham, had a tent that was open to all four directions, welcoming wayfarers from all sides, of all sorts, at all times. In like manner, make a point of welcoming people from all different directions, from all sides of the social spectrum, from all faiths, all races, and all personality types. When my wife Chaya was a kid, one of her favorite stops in the neighborhood was the home of the Usdan family. People entering their house were greeted by a glass container filled to the brim with M&Ms. To her child eyes (and probably to her adult eyes as well) it was like an invitation to joy—a wonderful way to be welcomed in. So at our wedding, when we received from the Usdans an identical glass container full of M&Ms, Chaya’s eyes filled with tears. Those M&Ms were much more than candies; they represented the art of receiving guests. Chaya understood that the Usdans had passed over to us the gift of giving itself.

Food is a crucial element of hospitality. Always have some delectable on hand for an unexpected visitor. (If chocolates are a bit too much of a temptation for you, have a healthy alternative like baby carrots, fruit, or nuts.)

Honor comings and goings: when people walk through your door, be a door chime: let your voice of welcome be the first sound that greets them.

There is a biblical tradition of escort. Walk your guests all the way out. In an apartment building, ride all the way down the elevator with them; in a house, escort them out to the street.

Consider going as far as taking up Abraham’s tradition of ritual washing by pouring warm water over the hands (and for the daring, even the feet) of your guests. □

Slim Fantasia on a Few Words from Hosea

(Take words with you and return to God)

I.

Poor Hosea, who
can stomach him?
marrying that
harlot, leaving
her to languish
in the desert,
giving his own kids
those vile names....
Not to mention
speeches full of
graphic retribution ...
Probably the people —
if they ever gathered
in the first place —
after a phrase or two
just walked away.
Me? I can't even
read him on an ideal
afternoon at the perfect
distance of a holy
language ... But it
turns out I'm the one
he's talking to: hey,
big-mouth poet,
lifting the gem-
stones from the Bible:
*Take words with you
and return to God.*

II.

I love the way
He doesn't say
which ones.
I'm tempted to
bring along the
entire dictionary;
that way, God can
choose whatever words
He likes. But what
if He starts ripping
out whole pages,
declaring everything
on them and their
synonyms off limits,
says: okay, I'll take
praise, torah, God.
You can find your
own words; leave Me
out of this — But
here's a tip: you're
focused on the wrong
half of the quotation,
the important section
is *return to God.*

III.

By which He'd
have a point,
but what if He
doesn't tell me
how to get there?
Where did I think
I was heading
with my OED?
The Holy Temple's
been destroyed.
And in its place
— according to
the radio this
very morning —
they've got live
bullets and a
vindictive crowd
shouting something
in Arabic I can't
make out, but it isn't
*take words with you
and return to God*

IV.

It's not as if — by
the way — I have
any kind of handle
on what is meant
here by the word
return. When,
exactly, was I
ever with Him?

Jacqueline Osberow's most recent book is Dead Men's Praise (Grove, 1999).

The closest I've
come, if I've
been in the vicinity
at all, has only
ever been a matter
of words: the kind
Hosea's after,
interchangeable
with beaten gold,
that show up in
the lining of the
holy of holies
I didn't know
was lodged
inside my brain....

V.

Maybe it's like
an algebraical
equation, in which
the word *and*
stands in for *equals*
until *take words*
with you means
return to God.

VI.

Or maybe I was
wrong about
that crowd;
Hosea's words
were uttered, but
with a different
intonation; it's an
imperative to die:
return to God.
And *take words*
with you is the
stone thrower's
signal that he's
throwing stones
because he's tired

of words and more
words, especially
the ones delivered
by an inaudible
Landlord, whose
ancient promises
have now expired.

VII.

But shouldn't I
describe this day,
another perfect one?
The sky, as usual,
uninterrupted....
only at its edge,
a strip of cloud,
the torn-off fragment
of a holy page
reading: *take*
words with you
and return to God.

VIII.

I'd love to take
dictation on a
cloud; I'd pluck
a feather from a
passing cormorant
and moisten it with
remnants from a
seven-sided snow-
flake, sequestered
in an overly warm
fog. At least I think
it might make an
imprint on a cloud.
Then, if I found a
way to fold it up,
I'd take it with me
and return to God.

IX.

Or maybe I'd be
returning to Hosea,
or not Hosea, but
the scalding place
I suspect Hosea's
words have been —
or not — let's be
realistic — the very
place; I'd settle for
their general direction....

X.

Of course, needless
to say, I'd lose
sight of them.
Even my one cloud
has disappeared.
Heaven's rejoicing,
it can finally get
back on schedule
delivering its daily
empty aerogram.
And I, like a fool,
will stand here,
squinting at the sun,
reading the entire
text aloud. Don't
tell me it's empty.
I'll take any inter-
ruption, anything
the sky will dare
to hold, anything
but Hosea and his
crackpot exhortation:
Take words with you
And return to God

—Jacqueline Osherow

Towards a Sephardic Jewish Renaissance

Kyla Wazana

I've never fasted on Yom Kippur. Part of the reason is, I'm not good at going without. But the other reason is that every time I try to get through the hunger pains, I remember my great-grandmother encouraging me to cheat when I was a teenager. "Have some chicken," she'd tell me. "When I was your age, my mother used to sneak me chicken."

The point of this story never really sunk in until I started to face the rise of Orthodox religious practices in my grandmother's community of expatriate Moroccan Jews in Toronto. The kind of loving flexibility that my great-grandmother let me see when she slipped me a chicken leg and shrugged off any need to atone by fasting ("for what?") is long gone in much of the Sephardic community in Toronto, and reflects a radical change in religious and cultural life. When my family confronted our need for a religious community after my great-grandmother's death, many of us were shocked and alienated by the rigidity of the Orthodox establishment the way laws, ritual, and a fearful, even paranoid relation to *kashrut* in Orthodox circles seem to precede family and community. During the eight days we sat *shiva* for my great-grandmother, my family—made up mostly of women—were hurt by our exclusion from the mourning rituals and by our rabbi's cavalier dismissal of our presence in favor of his idea of Orthodox ritual, getting off of his cell phone intermittently to let us know that if we didn't make a *minyán*, two women could count as one man. An already sad occasion, my great-grandmother's death seemed marked by the knowledge that we had lost more than a central member of our family—we had lost a connection with an older way of life.

I asked my grandmother's best friend about Orthodoxy at the *shiva*. "C'est de la merde," she told me, "*Ça n'a jamais été comme ça au Maroc*." [More or less: "It's a crock. It was never like this in Morocco."] Satisfying as this answer was

to me it doesn't point to history. How did these changes come about? What has happened to Sephardic life and community in the forty years since my family left Morocco?

Sephardic Culture

In contrast to Ashkenazic cultures and religious life, Sephardic Jewish religious and cultural life developed in concert with the Arab cultures that surrounded it. The word "Sephardic" comes from the Hebrew word "Sepharad" which means "Spanish." However, the term also describes Jews living around the Mediterranean basin, ranging from communities in Greece and Turkey to North Africa and Israel. The term sometimes includes the hidden "Marranos" of New Mexico and the Jews of Iraq and Persia, though the latter often prefer to call themselves "Mizrahi" from the Hebrew

word, "Eastern." Wherever Sephardim lived, the culture in which they flourished was Arabic and Islamic, rather than European and Christian. According to Ammiel Alcalay, a professor at City University of New York and a founding member of *Isri Nasawi*, a Los Angeles-based group of Sephardi and Mizrahi artists, this difference between Christianity and Islam is key to understanding the difference in Jewish practices that arose.

The crucial dissimilarity, says Alcalay, is that "the central idea of Christian identity is that Judaism should not exist. In Islam, however, there is a recognition of Jews as part of a chain of prophecy." As a result, in Arab communities Jews often found a place of recognition in the public sphere: a greater freedom to travel and a greater diversity of careers were open to Jews; they were not confined to one rung or another of the larger society. This is not to say Jews in the Arab world experienced no persecution. Though at times forced to pay head taxes, wear marked clothing, or live in Jewish quarters, in good times, the communities were more integrated with the larger culture and the tenor of Sephardic life was fundamentally different from that of Ashkenazism.

Arab Jews also did not need to fight against the secularism that arose out of the Enlightenment and that gave rise to nationalism and Zionism in Europe. Alcalay argues

*What has happened to
Sephardic life and
community in the forty
years since my family
left Morocco?*

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that as a result of this “violent secularism” in the West, what emerged was “this distortion of these forms of traditional religious and spiritual life in which the only proper way to live is to follow authoritative and religious orthodoxy. But Sephardic tradition is very accommodating. There was no hierarchy of Orthodox and non-Orthodox. That division has nothing to do with our historical way of life.”

From a day-to-day perspective, the absence of a competing secularism meant that religious practice was more a matter of personal choice and less of a hierarchy of practices for those within the same community. What characterized Sephardic religious life was a fierce traditionalism combined with a sense of living at ease with others. A good example of this might be the Moroccan *Maimouna*—the feast celebrating the end of Passover, celebrated in honor of Moses Maimonides. For the week of Passover, Moroccan Jews withdrew from their larger communities while they observed dietetic laws. The end of Passover, however, was marked by the opening of all homes to friends and neighbors—Jewish and non-Jewish alike: a reintegration into the large culture and community.

Why hasn't the tenor of Sephardic-Mizrahi life survived the changes of the last fifty years? For the most part, these practices ended with the dispersion of these thousand-year-old communities. Political changes, including Arab nationalism and the end of colonial rule, led to a massive scattering of Sephardim to the United States, Canada, France, and Israel—to the Western world. Here, Sephardim have been forced to confront the split between secularism and religion even as they are torn from their food, languages, and communities. But the fundamental shock, without doubt, was caused by the founding of Israel and the consequent creation of a Jewish nationalist identity fundamentally opposed to any hint of the Arab world.

In the Americas

Like other Jews, Sephardim have been on the move for the past several millennia. But most North American Jews, and indeed most North Americans, may be surprised to discover that the history of Sephardic Jews in the United States goes back to the colonial era, when the first synagogue in America, Shearith Israel, was founded in 1654 by



Jewish family in the village of Ilich of Morocco's Anti-Atlas in 1953. Photo © Elias Harrus, from the forthcoming book, *Jews among Berbers*, by Sarah Levin and Daniel Schroeter.

a group of Spanish and Portuguese Jews. According to Ruth Mizrahi (in a dissertation titled “703 American Sephardim”) the descendants of this first community formed the dominant Jewish cultural group for the next two centuries, helping to bankroll the American Revolution and serving as founders of the Stock Exchange. One served as a U.S. Supreme Court Justice. We might reconsider then, the image of Ellis Island as the birthplace of the history of American Jews: it wasn't until the mid-nineteenth century that German and Russian Jews began arriving in greater numbers and achieved numeric and thus cultural dominance, although several successive waves of Sephardic migration followed.

Following the colonial period, the second wave of Sephardic immigration happened at the turn of the nineteenth century, when Eastern Mediterranean and North African Jews began to trickle in. Another small population of Sephardim arrived from threatened World War II environments, followed by a massive exodus of Jews from Muslim nations after the Suez crisis of 1956. This last diaspora came from Morocco, Libya, Egypt, and other North African nations newly liberated from colonialism.

Sephardim who arrived in North America in this second wave found that, in addition to adjusting to North American culture, they had to accommodate themselves to Ashkenazic Jewry. “These communities left places where they were dominant and went to places where they were minorities,” says Jordan Elgrably, a journalist and founding member of *Ivri-Nasawi*. “Different groups tried to set up communities but because they were basically traditional, they organically connected with the most Torah-observant groups.” It was at this critical moment that the fundamental tenor of Sephardic life began to change into its modern form.



Cantor Haim Meshulam reciting the kiddush for Erev Shabbat in the largest Sephardic synagogue in the world, in Sofia, Bulgaria. 1985. Photo by Yale Strom from his book *The Expulsion of the Jews: 500 Years of Exodus*.

Many communities have failed to find a critical mass of people able to support a Sephardic synagogue; when there are enough Sephardim, congregations are often formed of people from many different places resulting in a new, and not always unpleasant, co-mingling of regional practices. As well, what might generously be termed “enthusiastic outreach” on the part of mostly Ashkenazic Orthodox groups has definitely played a big part in the evolution of Sephardic identity. Vivienne Roumani-Denn, Executive Director of the American Sephardi Federation, says that upon arrival many families in the United States chose to embrace Ashkenazic Orthodoxy in an effort to keep their families from becoming too assimilated: “If it’s a choice between Sephardism and Judaism, they’re going to choose Judaism.” The problem, she says, was that “Sephardim got absorbed into Ashkenazi schools and synagogues. This was good because it made certain things easier, but what we’re finding now is that we are losing our whole history—we need to bring it alive and preserve it now, or we will lose it.”

The problem with the overwhelming presence of Orthodoxy in Sephardi American communities is not just assimilation, however. Loolwa Khazzoom is a multicultural Jewish educator based in Berkeley who has developed a series of workshops for Jewish institutions aiming to integrate Mizrahi and Sephardi cultural practices. Not one to mince words, she has had a series of experiences at synagogues, from Orthodox to Reform, that she sees as racist and exclusionary. For Khazzoom the problems of new Orthodoxy have a real gender dimension: “There’s this myth that Sephardic men are these primitive sexist horrible men and that Ashkenazim are enlightened and every Sephardic

woman would want to be with them. But the Sephardic Orthodoxy I grew up with was much more open.” For example, “in Babylonian practice women would come down from the galleries to read the Torah and then go upstairs. And when it was passed around, the Torah would come upstairs to be kissed. In fact, the first female Rabbi wasn’t an American Reform—she was a woman in Kurdistan in the sixteenth century named Asenath Barzani.”

But why hasn’t Renewal, Reform, or Conservative-Egalitarian Judaism caught on in the Sephardi community? It might be

said that the terms and divisions of Ashkenazic religious practice are not really relevant to traditional Sephardic cultural and religious life. Sephardic cultural activists also point to basic differences between practices:

“Why?” asks Alcalay, “Because Reform and Conservatism are essentially quite alien to us. Sephardic liturgy has an essential beauty and to me Reform is church-like—it’s not genuine. And besides it’s not like anyone was made to feel welcome. In Boston, when we set a synagogue up it was always in the basement of someone else’s building.”

Elgrably agrees: “Sephardim haven’t caught on to Torah Renewal. There are younger Sephardim who are not as Torah observant and they feel more drawn to the renewal tradition, but a lot of the renewal songs are too Christian and the music is not the same.” Khazzoom notes that even when the music is Sephardi or Mizrahi in origin, it is often played by Ashkenazim who know little about the music’s origins or meaning. Attending a Jewish meditation conference that featured Mizrahi symbols but no Mizrahi content, Khazzoom felt enraged: “they take our *chamsa* [symbol of the hand of Mohammed’s daughter Fatima that is believed to ward off the evil eye] and they take our drums and God forbid they should have one workshop about Sephardi or Mizrahi meditation.”

The fundamental difference is more than simply aesthetic or cultural, it is one of practice—to have a nontraditional religious ritual, and to practice Judaism in nontraditional ways is foreign to many Sephardic communities; faced with that choice, Sephardim would rather embrace the European and North American Orthodox forms. Elgraby sums up the feelings of many progressive

Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews in North America: "A lot of us would do well to found a Sephardic Renewal-oriented synagogue," he admits, "but it's basically an oxymoron at this point."

After Israel/Towards Israel

It may come as a surprise to Ashkenazim that many Arab-Jews would probably not have left their countries if not for the actions of the Israeli government. And yet it wasn't until the years after the Suez crisis that the political environment in Arab countries became increasingly difficult for Sephardim. According to Joel Beinin, professor of history at Stanford and author of a book on Egyptian Jewry, it wasn't until a decade after the founding of Israel that the majority of Egyptian Jews began to consider leaving Egypt. Says Beinin, "The Arab-Israeli conflict intensified and took on a more comprehensive pan-Arab dimension after Israel allied with the former colonial powers in attacking Egypt in 1956. After 1956 a lot of Jewish property was confiscated and a lot of pressure put on people to emigrate. Before 1948, the Egyptian government was very clear that Egyptian Jews were Egyptian citizens ... after 1948 [that was no longer true, but] the majority of the community stayed in Egypt [anyway]." Indeed, says Beinin, Israeli nationalist sentiment ranked low enough among Egyptian Jews that when they were finally forced to leave their homes after 1956, "those that could afford to go elsewhere didn't go to Israel, but went everywhere else."

Across the board, the cultures of Arab-Jewry have been almost completely disrupted by the actions of the State of Israel since the Fifties. And this fact, somewhat mangled and hidden by better-known and better-publicized histories of other peoples making joyful *aliyah*, offers insight into the oblique relationship some North American Sephardim have toward Israel.

Israel was founded in the wake of a Holocaust and under a nationalist impulse, both of which specifically originated in Europe. As Zionists fled from Europe to Israel, they believed Israel had to become a nationalist state in the European model, united by one language and one culture. As a result, they brought great pressure to bear on the already-present Sephardim—the Yerushalmi Sephardim—to assimilate to Zionist culture. Central to the creation of Israel was the attempt to blur distinctions between different Jewish communities to create, instead, Israelis.

It is, in many ways, as though someone had put a giant dam in the flow of Jewish history, attempting to force the cultural differences between Jews into one political tributary. Says Ammiel Alcalay, "There is a dissonance in Zionist

ideology and modern Jewish thought, which centers on the universality of all Jewish life: what happens to one Jew is supposed to happen to another. This is ahistorical and wrong and just dumb. There are differences everywhere: Israel was just a meat grinder in terms of what people went through."

Many activists feel that it is primarily Israeli racism that has gone a long way towards erasing the vestiges not only of diasporic Sephardi culture but of the indigenous Palestinian Yerushalmi Sephardi culture. Well-known at

least amongst Sephardi scholars are the efforts that have been made to stamp out Sephardi culture in favor of Ashkenazi Orthodoxy or secular nationalism—from removing the children of Yemenite Jews from their families of origin so that they can be raised by Ashkenazi families to establishing a more-powerful Ashkenazi Head Rabbi alongside the historically Sephardic Yerushalmi rabbinate, to offering little or no Sephardi curriculum in the schools.

The result has been an erosion of Sephardi and Mizrahi identity. Says Elgrably, "America and the West have

the same Orientalist attitude towards Arabs that Israel has towards Middle-Eastern Jews. As a result of their experiences in Israel many Mizrahim lacked self-esteem. They thought that the Ashkenazim were smarter and more educated." One consequence, says Elgrably, is that Sephardic institutions have been increasingly abandoned by the younger generation.

The other consequence, at least in Israel, has been the frightening emergence of the Shas party, the Sephardic Torah-observant party. Emerging in 1984, Shas was one of the first political parties to organize around a platform of Sephardi and Mizrahi ethnic identity, tapping into a deep reservoir of Israeli-Sephardi resentment and uncertainty. Although its leaders are trained in Ashkenazi Orthodoxy and were, at least at its inception, followers of the Ashkenazi-Haredi movement, the emergence of Shas has given rise to a new stereotyping and scapegoating of Sephardim as both far more likely to vote for right-wing parties in Israel and to take nationalist pro-Israel stances in the United States.

Although Shas is the third largest party in Israel, holding approximately one-sixth of the Knesset, it attracts less than one-half of the Sephardic vote. But, while many liberals have chosen to conclude that Sephardim are somehow intrinsically given over to the political right, the emergence of Shas might well point to other, more productive lines of questioning: how has the secular Ashkenazi left failed to open the door to Sephardim? How did the *a priori* secularism of Zionism fail to account for the very different

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polarities of Sephardic cultural life, in which a vibrant traditional religious life still managed to leave open the door for accord with the modern Arab world?

Liberalism within the Sephardi community and the family I grew up with has always been less a matter of party lines and agendas and more in line with a gracious ease towards differences that exist outside and inside the community—a commitment and basic goodwill towards the well-being of our neighbors and families. And while this admittedly nostalgic sense of Sephardi relationships might not be the basis for a long term politic, I know that I am not the only child of émigré Sephardim who wishes that there was a political, cultural, and even spiritual space where that past might bear modern fruit.

Toward a Future

From my childhood, I can still remember the very real sadness in my grandmother's voice when she told me that she had never wanted to emigrate from Morocco: a note that many children of immigrants are haunted by in the process of finding ways to orient themselves in settler cultures like those of Israel, the United States, and Canada. What we are seeing today is a generation of uprooted and transplanted Jews grappling with the meaning of being Arab and Jewish in relationship to cultures—Ashkenazic, North American, and Israeli—that have offered very differ-

ent, indeed, sometimes completely negating, ways of framing and understanding Jewish identity.

In response, we must sketch out an axis of Jewish experience that, until very recently, ran along very different lines than the Ashkenazic one. Though no one would deny that Jews experienced repression in Arab countries as well, it must be understood and acknowledged that rather than being exiled or ghettoized within their own countries, Sephardic cultures existed in a certain kind of deep-rooted accord with Arab cultures. This is a lesson we can bring forward.

But to where should we look when we choose a past and try to shape a future? In the minds and memories, imagined and real, of transplanted Sephardim, the life our parents and grandparents had to leave behind translated into a religious and cultural experience that was at least sometimes practiced in the spirit of a communion with a larger cultural sphere. And while it is no doubt true that more than a little of the immigrant's nostalgia shapes this vision, it is also true that instead of looking to Ashkenazic forms of renewal to revive Sephardic culture, we should look back to religious Sephardic practice and its osmotic relationship to Arab culture. Despite the ravages of the past fifty years, we can look to find once more that porous, interdependent relationship between a profound commitment to tradition, history, and communal religiosity on the one hand, and on the other, to the larger, culturally rich world around us. □

A STRATEGY FOR PALESTINE (*from page 13*)

the Congress. Unfortunately, American Jews have allowed these organizations to be captured by reactionaries who pride themselves on giving unequivocal support to whatever policies the Israelis adopt. This is where the focus of nonviolent struggle should be.

Satyagraha would not have worked against Hitler or Mussolini, and it won't work against Ariel Sharon, at least not so long as his policies are endorsed by organized Jewry in the United States and consequently by the Bush administration. However, without American Jewish backing, Sharon cannot survive. Conversely, Israeli policy cannot be changed without first changing American policy, and American policy won't change so long as it appears to have the support of American Jews. The true arena for the settlement of this conflict, therefore, is not in Palestine; it is in the United States.

Among American Jews there is a growing recognition of this. There is also discontent with the national Jewish leadership, particularly on the West Coast where the heavy hand of East Coast leaders has offended local Jewish organizations. The summary firing of the popular, liberal director of the Pacific Southwest region of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) by the national director, Abraham Foxman, produced angry reactions among Jewish leaders in Los Angeles. Support for the Sharon-Kahane policy toward Palestine is not supported by all American Jews. But they

can do nothing as long as suicide bombings and other forms of terrorism threaten America as well as Israel.

A nonviolent strategy based on "Annex or Exit" would clarify and emphasize the injustice and illegality of the Occupation, make the Palestinians the most reasonable party to the conflict, and increase the difficulty of defending Sharon's policies. This strategy, supported by Palestinian leaders and carried out through nonviolent demonstrations by American Muslims and Jews against AIPAC, ADL, and other Jewish organizations—coupled with sophisticated public relations management—could make a big impact, particularly if the demonstrations are big enough and the demonstrators persistent enough. Muslim students especially can do a better job of mobilizing university campuses. Somehow, the cruelty of the Occupation must be brought home to American Jews and the American public at large. When it is not disabled by revulsion at the mass murder of innocent Israeli citizens, the conscience of American Jews can be activated in behalf of justice for the Palestinians.

Supporters of Hamas and Islamic Jihad will find all kinds of reasons why such a new strategy won't work. Less radical Arabs in the diaspora may be so paralyzed by hatred and so intellectually disabled by the depressing trend of events that they cannot envision alternative approaches. If such blindness persists, then a viable Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel, with both existing in peace and prosperity, will not be possible in this century. □

Musar and the Path of the Mensch

Alan Morinis

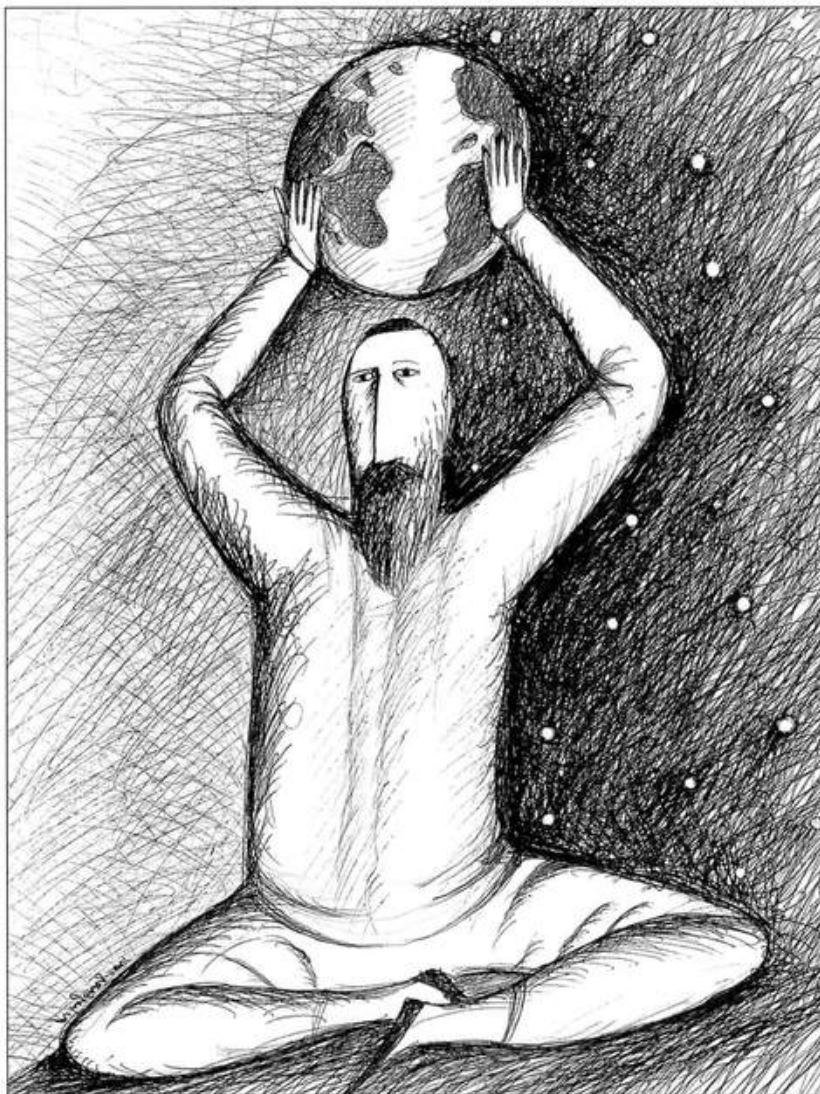
I was incredulous when I discovered that Orthodox Jews in nineteenth-century Lithuania practiced a transformative spiritual discipline called Musar that combined *tikkun olam* (healing the world) with *tikkun ha-middot* (healing our inner selves). Why had I not known!

Like many Jews, I have searched for ways to improve the world and nurture growth in my own heart at the same time. I hadn't found much guidance in either direction in the Judaism of my youth, and so, like many others, I was drawn to Eastern traditions. That indirectly led me to co-found the Seva Foundation, an organization that partners in development projects around the world and that bases its work on the principles of karma yoga. In Seva I learned how important it is to strike the delicate balance between action and reflection, doing and being, inner and outer.

And so, many years later, when I stumbled upon the traditional Jewish discipline of Musar, it was an "aha!" experience. In ways that were so similar to what I had learned with Seva, the Musar path shows the seeker how to wring inner transformation from everyday life. It is a discipline of personal practice that is meant to lead the soul step by step on a path of purification until it reaches the height of perfection in this life, which is to be a holy presence on earth, and it invites us to walk that path not by isolating ourselves, but by engaging with the world around us.

Musar's main focus is the traits of character that live within us. It stresses that each of us comes outfitted with every one of these core traits, only in varying amounts. One person may have too much anger, but none of us has no anger. Another may be too lazy, but no one is completely devoid of a lazy streak. Musar zeroes in on traits that can cause us to fail in our actions, or that give rise to suffering, and guides us toward the ideal of holiness by showing us

Alan Morinis's book on his journey into Musar, *Climbing Jacob's Ladder*, will be published in 2002 by Broadway Books, a division of Random House. He can be reached at: www.morinis.ca.



Musar invites us to walk the path not by isolating ourselves, but by engaging with the world around us.

how to adjust the levels of our inner traits. The excesses and deficiencies—not the traits themselves—are the problem it helps us address.

The Hebrew word that names our inner character traits is *middab*, literally "measure." In Musar, we learn to take the measure of these traits by becoming ever more conscious of our thoughts, words, and deeds. In Musar practice, we learn to consider our actions, plumb our motives, and stare intently at the reflection we cast on the world.

Once we identify which of our own *middot* need some attention, Musar provides practices that ease us into changing them for the better. Our actions arise from our appetites, Musar teaches, and the most difficult of these to modify are the ones that have become habits. There is no point in trying

to eradicate our urges—since every trait occurs naturally in every one of us, that would be pointless—but we can gradually loosen their grip on us. “Gradually” is the key word here. Typically, Musar practice targets work on a *middah* for only a fixed period of time. To combat miserliness, for example, you would train yourself to practice generosity for only a day or a week at a time. There’d be no cold turkey at quitting smoking if you followed the Musar way.

Sometimes we may find a trait within us that needs to be transformed totally. Major change like that requires more radical techniques, ones that reach directly to the root of the *middot*, anchored in the dark soil of the subconscious where the intellect holds no sway. Repeating emotionally-charged phrases is one such Musar practice. Learning with intense emotion (“with lips aflame,” one teacher said), and singing emotion-laden melodies can implant change directly to the soul, more firmly and effectively than anything learned solely through the mind. Musar teachers also developed guided contemplations that use vivid imagery to etch different sorts of impressions on the heart.

Its use of chanting and meditation were aspects of Musar that struck me as being close to Eastern practices I had learned. Indeed, some of the Musar teachers practically sound like Zen masters. “Take time, be exact, unclutter the mind,” was the motto of Rabbi Simcha Zissel Ziv, who founded the Kelm branch of Musar in the nineteenth century. “The worst thing that can happen to a person is to remain asleep and untamed,” said the founder of the Novarodock branch, Rabbi Yosef Yozel Hurvitz.

But Musar is not an Eastern practice in Jewish guise. It is a discipline that only makes sense within a Jewish context. That context includes, to be sure, the teachings of the Torah and Talmud, including distinctly Jewish understandings of such concepts as the soul (*nefesh* and *nesbama*), the *middot*, the One God, and holiness (*kadosh*). But most distinctively, Musar is thoroughly Jewish in affirming the reality of this life—this is no illusory realm—and the importance of our actions here and now. This is where Musar’s inner spiritual practices, its *tikkun ha-middot*, connect with its emphasis on social justice, *tikkun olam*. Musar tells us that our most important spiritual work is in the realm of human-to-human relations. No abstraction, no psychic fireworks: how we act toward our children, our parents, our colleagues, our community, our world—that is where we polish the holiness of the soul.

Secular ethics tells us that a bounty of justice, peace, and equity will flow from our improved behavior toward others. Musar is more concerned with how our actions mark and color the fabric of our souls. A soul can be dented and bruised, or, alternatively, nurtured and burnished, by our

actions. In serving the oppressed, caring for the weak, and helping those in need, the Musar accent falls on the verb: serving, caring, and helping are qualities we need to develop to move closer to our own holy perfection. The Musar discipline aims to elevate these traits until we are transformed into holy vessels of spirit on earth.

Doing *tikkun olam* with our own spiritual growth in mind might seem selfish. Yet, if we do not attempt to lift our own souls higher, it’s inevitable that our personal weaknesses and distortions will hamper our efforts to lift the world higher. In this dialectic, we aren’t able to improve the

world until we improve our own souls, and yet the opposite is true as well. We must not wait until we are perfected to try our hand at serving others because working in service is a key way to practice perfecting ourselves. In fact, doing good in the world is a prime way to work at improving our own soul traits. The Yiddish writer Chaim Grade puts words to this effect into the mouth of one of his characters, a Musar student who says, “One can’t reform the world if one isn’t perfect. But one can’t become perfect if

one doesn’t stand up for the wronged.” The human perfection that Musar tells us is our potential in this life only comes in the context of a more perfect world.

Given Musar’s emphasis both on inner work and social justice, it seems incredible that it is not better known. One simple reason for this is that so many Musar teachers and students were killed in the Holocaust. Another is that, while there has always been a puritanical, judgmental side to Musar, this voice has grown louder and more shrill in recent times. In the past one-hundred years, Musar has found a primary home in Orthodox yeshivas where the main emphasis has been on keeping yeshiva boys away from uncleanness of body and mind as well as toeing the ethical line. Yet it was not always so. A brief look at the history of Musar reveals that there have been other voices in the tradition as well, voices that have something valuable to say to Jewish spiritual and activist life today.

Musar arose out of Torah and Talmud. Then, over the centuries, the Musar tradition developed as thinkers offered up their own reflections on the ideal human life. The first book that might be called a work of Musar is widely agreed to be Sa’adia Gaon’s *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*, written in the tenth century in Babylonia. This was followed by at least two dozen central texts, including works by Solomon ibn Gabirol, Bahya ibn Pakuda, Moses Cordavero, Moshe Chaim Luzatto, and others.

Much of contemporary Musar, however, is the child of a remarkable nineteenth-century rabbi named Israel Salanter, who initiated the Musar movement in Eastern Europe.

Musar is not an Eastern practice in Jewish guise. It is a discipline that only makes sense within a Jewish context.

Salanter did not speak against the foundations of Orthodox life—scholarship, prayer, and mitzvot—but he tried to shift the balance of Jewish practice to give conduct in this life a higher spiritual priority than the focus on pure Torah study that preoccupied the Orthodox masters. He also modernized Musar by incorporating psychological insights (especially the concept of the subconscious) that were beginning to emerge in nineteenth-century Europe.

Salanter saw clearly that being active to heal the world can't be separated from one's interior life. "Spiritual life," he wrote, "is superior to physical life. But the physical life of another is an obligation of my spiritual life." He affirms that the soul lives on a higher plane than anything in the material world, but he binds the two together in an Escher-like formula: a spiritual life that is not concerned with the welfare of others is no spiritual life. When the roof on the poorhouse in Vilna was collapsing, Salanter began to sleep there too, until the town fathers took action. "A pious Jew," said Salanter, "is not one who worries about his fellow man's soul and his own stomach; a pious Jew worries about his own soul and his fellow man's stomach."

In popularizing Musar, though, Salanter also revamped its purpose. His Orthodox world was under attack on several fronts in the nineteenth century, and one of his major goals in bringing Musar to the masses was to strengthen the traditionalists in their struggles with the Czarist regime, the Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment), the Reform movement, Zionism, and the revolutionary politics of communism and socialism. Hasidism also had a role in Salanter's thought. Despite 150 years of suppression, Hasidism had not gone away. Salanter calculated it was time to shift strategy, and promoted Musar as a rival to Hasidic spiritual practices.

Enlisting Musar into this social battle refocused the discipline. Prior to this, Musar had been a path marked off for personal spiritual growth. This is the Musar of Luzzatto in his *The Path of the Just*, and ibn Pakuda in *The Duties of the Heart*. But in the hands of the Musar movement—especially once it had taken over almost all of the yeshivas that educated young boys—ethical standards in the public arena suddenly came to the fore. Rebuke and reproof had always been part of Musar, but now the moral guidance of the Musar teachers became even more severe and fiery, as they warned their young charges to bind themselves to the mitzvot and to avoid being lured to damnation by the multi-headed beast of the Haskalah, Zionist, Hasidic, and Reform movements.

Musar was still gaining strength when its entire world was consumed in the flames of the Holocaust. After the war, Orthodoxy's focus reverted to Torah study, and the remaining vestiges of Musar slipped far to the sidelines, where they remain today. Musar is now mostly a minor

subject on the curriculum of yeshivas and seminaries. It is virtually unknown beyond Orthodox circles.

That the Holocaust decimated the Musar world doesn't fully explain why, even in the Orthodox community today, Musar no longer occupies anything like the elevated position it once held. It seems to me that Musar lost much of its spiritual purpose, and ultimately its strength, when it got handed the social task of defending Orthodoxy. The discipline then got rerouted from private spiritual practice into ferociously judgmental public moralizing, with the result that many Orthodox men describe their boyhood

Musar class as a dreaded time when a dry old man would harangue the youngsters about their sins and the horrible damage they were doing to their souls. They have a hard time making out what I find so interesting about Musar.

*In every
generation, Musar
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current generation.*

In every century, Musar has been revamped to make its wisdom speak to the needs of the current generation, and this is a task awaiting us today as well. We have in Musar

a thousand years of consideration of the path of life that we can learn from, and even the most recent and challenging expressions of the tradition can have something to teach, if we don't get too caught in reactivity and just dismiss what may be difficult to understand or hard to digest. Nor would we want to neglect the few beautiful and heartfelt teachers of Musar who are still with us today, like my own teacher.

Recovering this wisdom and asking it to speak in the language of this generation doesn't mean returning to the Musar discipline of eleventh-century Spain or nineteenth-century Vilna. We only need to do what every generation before us has done, which is to go back to the sources and interpret them in ways that reflect current needs and themes. Then, just as Rabbi Salanter did, we will create a Musar for our own times, a contemporary spiritual path rooted deeply in Judaism that is dedicated to feeding and nourishing the individual soul and uplifting society at the same time. How deep and how far this might take us we can only guess.

As a first thrust towards such a reinvention, a few areas leap out.

Some Musar practices for inner change are well documented, like the emotional repetition of lines from sacred texts (*hitpa'alut*) and contemplation of one's inner qualities (*heshbon ha-nefesh*). Others are not. In our time, given that we have come up with so many modalities for personal growth, it's worth considering whether some of these might be useful for accomplishing the goals Musar sets. Might experiential methods for inner awareness, like Feldenkreis or Reiki, have any role to play in a modern Musar?

Already, a "Musar-as-self-help" theme has emerged in the writings and work of Miriam Adahan, Abraham Twerski,

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"Respect"

Whither the Black Public Intellectual and the Recent Saga of Cornel West

Waldo Martin

On a brisk yet comfortable Thursday evening last November, Cornel West came to Berkeley's campus to give the annual Mario Savio Memorial Lecture. By the time his presentation began at the 800 seat venue, well over 200 people had overflowed into doorways and aisles. Conservative estimates suggested another several hundred were turned away at the door. The size and response of the Berkeley crowd—unusual for these kinds of campus events—are typical of the audience response West has engendered recently. At least since his best-selling book *Race Matters* (over 400,000 copies sold since 1993) made him a commanding public spokesman, his audiences have been large and avid. Within the last decade, Cornel West has become an important national, even international, activist voice, speaking on a wide range of central issues, but most famously on justice and equality, as well as race.

Little over a month after West's Berkeley speech praising the legacy of the Free Speech Movement and assessing the global meaning of September 11, word broke of an ill-fated October 2001 meeting between West and the recently installed president of Harvard, Lawrence Summers, renowned economist and a former head of the Treasury Department under President Clinton. What apparently began as a conversation between them in Summers' office had deteriorated a couple of months later into a public feud, a national news story with front-page coverage in the *New York Times*. By mid-January 2002 the controversy was subsiding, but its reverberations persist. In an important sense, this episode is a cautionary tale about the prospects and perils of free speech.

According to West, in that initial encounter Summers upbraided him on several counts. Among these was the fact that West's extremely popular Introduction to Afro-American studies course—often with upwards of 500

students—has yielded too high a percentage of A's and A-s, contributing to Harvard's grade inflation dilemma, an issue Summers has made a priority. Not only did Summers want West to toughen his course standards, but he also questioned him about activities such as his spoken word CD, *Sketches of My Culture*, and his participation in Reverend Al Sharpton's presidential exploratory committee. The mes-

sage was evident: someone of West's stature should be devoting himself more fully to more conventional scholarly activities and paying more attention to his undergraduate teaching. West ably defended himself against these and other similarly unfair and misguided charges, but left the meeting offended and angered. In

early January 2002, in a National Public Radio interview with Tavis Smiley, West observed that "In my twenty-six years of teaching this is unprecedented for me.... I have never been attacked or insulted in that particular way."

Even before the controversy hit, unofficial word had spread of concern and discontent among the faculty in Harvard's Afro-American studies department as well as among African American faculty throughout the university. Other faculty members sensed that Summers' treatment of West was symptomatic of a generally dismissive and insulting attitude toward several of them as well as some of their collective concerns. In particular, Summers' failure to speak out forcefully in support of the university's affirmative action policy further enflamed the fires of concern in an already volatile area. When news of the ill-fated meeting between West and Summers burst onto the public scene, these numerous background issues helped to shape the broader framework of the controversy.

By the time the dispute became hot news in mid-December, two of West's colleagues were also estranged from Summers: Henry Louis Gates, Jr., an African American literature specialist and department chair, and Anthony Appiah, professor of philosophy and Afro-American studies. All three had reached the point where they were said to be considering offers to jump ship and go to Princeton. At one point, Reverend Jesse Jackson came to town seeking a meeting with President Summers in an

In an important sense, this episode is a cautionary tale about the prospects and perils of free speech.

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effort to mediate the dispute. Shortly thereafter, Reverend Al Sharpton publicly questioned why Summers would concern himself about West serving as one of Sharpton's advisors. At some point Sharpton, too, apparently sought a meeting with the increasingly beleaguered Summers.

After several meetings, including one between Summers and the Afro-American studies faculty, and much discussion, Summers appeared to capitulate. He pledged to continue strong institutional support for the department and made it clear that the university would do all it could to preserve its outstanding roster of Afro-American Studies scholars. He also provided a more ringing endorsement of Harvard's affirmative action policy. While the fires of controversy appear to have died down, as of January 2002 West continued to ponder publicly if he would remain at Harvard.

What are we to make of all this? Summers clearly overstepped and misstepped, and then backpedaled. Why question West's teaching standards, his scholarship, and outside activities to begin with? First, West's appointment as a "University Professor" acknowledges an already superior record as a teacher and a scholar. Nothing significantly different has transpired in these areas since his Harvard appointment. He continues to do what he has always done, that is, combine in a mutually beneficial, even synergistic, fashion, his scholarly and academic career, on the one hand, with his activism and public intellectual work, on the other. His legendary reputation as a teacher has only grown since coming to Harvard. As the recently published *Cornel West Reader* (1999) demonstrates, his writings range widely and impressively in subject matter, emphasis, scope, and type. Similarly, it shows that he has remained a fertile and productive thinker and writer. West himself reports that currently he is simultaneously working on several major books, including "a meditation" comparatively assessing both the great Russian writer Chekhov and the jazz giant John Coltrane. This is the kind of fresh and engaged work one anticipates from someone of West's gifts.

West is no stranger to criticism and controversy, however. Notably, his principled commitment to engage in dialogue with a number of black leaders with whom he disagrees on a variety of positions has caused a lot of flack in some quarters. For example, he has worked with leaders like Louis Farrakhan, whose anti-Semitic statements have outraged the Jewish community. This is extremely difficult, admittedly controversial, but nevertheless critical work. As both West's discussion of the Black-Jewish question with Rabbi Michael Lerner, *Jews and Blacks: Let The Healing Begin* (1995) and the collection of essays he co-edited with Jack Salzman, *Struggles in the Promised Land* (1997) show, his commitment to bridging the divisions between the two groups is real and sincere.

As the critical fallout from *Race Matters* illustrated, West has also met his share of criticism as a scholar and as a public



In the increasingly conservative context after September 11, this episode takes on deeper meaning.

intellectual. His courageous critique of nihilism among blacks and the poor was described as "moralism" by some critics. Jealous of his fame, daunted by his articulate and powerful presentation of his ideas, some academics and journalists have poured through his writings, found moments of unevenness or, quoting out of context, statements that seem hard to defend, and then assaulted his scholarly status. In light of his enormous creativity and productivity and brilliance, these criticisms often seem trivial. Cornel West has generated significant discussion both inside and outside academia—he is the quintessential public intellectual of our times, not only because he produces first-rate work but also because his work shakes and disturbs the conventional wisdom.

Returning to this most recent controversy, it would appear that the actual issue is neither his teaching nor his scholarship. At bottom, an essential element of the controversy has been West's outside activities, his cultural and

conflicts with, even diminishes, his academic and scholarly work. Most prominent among that cultural work is West's recent CD, *Sketches of My Culture*. Seeking to speak primarily but not exclusively to a broader African American audience, the project reveals and explores the centrality of music to the African American experience, in particular African American culture. The cultural politics of the project reflect a fundamental emphasis on the enduring Black Freedom Struggle, from African enslavement to contemporary African American realities. West and his crew layer a series of thoughtful and catchy lyrics over a variety of often hypnotic riffs. Drawing upon a cross-section of black musics, principally jazz, soul, blues, and rap, the grooves are engaged; the messages are inspirational and engaging even while didactic.

Like any other work, this project will have its supporters and its detractors. Ultimately, that's beside the point. For West, the CD is part of a wide-ranging and deep commitment to engage the public in a spirited debate about the best of human possibilities and the need to struggle to achieve those possibilities. It demonstrates that West envisions himself as a thinker, writer, and activist with roots not only in the academy but firm roots in the community as well. Rather than reserving his contributions for the academy, West is committed to treading wherever his intellectual and ethical compass leads him.

It may have been this willingness to use his university professorship as a passport to the public, his desire to function as an ambassador of the university to the public, that triggered Summers' review. In the past and today, however, many Harvard professors, from Henry Kissinger to Daniel Moynihan, have functioned as public intellectuals. These (white) men, however, have typically acted on behalf of

state power and "the system." Himself a public intellectual and a former beltway insider, Summers may be more familiar, more comfortable, with the incarnation of a politically engaged academician who only acts when fully encompassed by the system. We need to ask why West's publicly political—and let's not forget, intellectual—activity appears to be so much more questionable than that of a Kissinger, a Moynihan, or a Summers. Even without knowing the answer to this question, when a prominent African American progressive like West is being questioned on suspect academic grounds, it must raise political, free speech, and racial alarms. Whether intentional or not, the racial offensiveness and insensitivity of Summers' remarks and actions must be acknowledged, criticized, and vigorously resisted. They cannot be dismissed as merely stylistic or trivial.

More broadly speaking, the increasingly conservative domestic context in the aftermath of September 11 demands that we consider this episode as far more than an academic and personal feud. In light of its timing and political context, the political subtext of this episode must also be carefully framed and analyzed. From this vantage point, this episode reeks of not just a highly questionable effort to rein in West academically, but also to infringe upon his right to political speech, expressly of the radical variety. This episode smells of a thinly-veiled yet inept attempt to circumscribe West's right to forge a dissident, leftist, and progressive political vision in these all too often reactionary political times. In a very real sense, this is at bottom a story about the right to be, and indeed the necessity of being, at once a radical black political dissident and a radical black scholar in a place like Harvard in today's world. □

MUSAR AND THE PATH OF THE MENSCH (from page 67)

and Zelig Pliskin. These writers have emphasized the psychological threads woven into Musar, along with its thrust toward personal change and psychological well being. More can be done to frame psychological health and change in the context of the holiness and dynamics of the soul.

The contemplative techniques of the Musarists are documented, but I have come up completely empty-handed for descriptions of their meditation practice. Did they even make a clear distinction between meditation and contemplation? Because Musar relies on sharpened inner awareness, might we borrow from and adapt the meditation methods of other traditions, Jewish and not, to fill out this dimension of Musar practice?

Musar sets for us the goal of bringing out the holiness that is innate in us. In the Musar teachings, holiness is not some sort of divine, miracle-working radiance that is foreign to this life as we know it. In fact, later Musarists would agree that there isn't a whole lot of difference between being holy and being a *mensh*. In its single syllable, the word *mensh* conveys everything European Jewish culture

has had to say about ethical perfection and virtue. Rabbi Salanter himself uses it when speaking about the transformative potential of Musar practice. He draws our attention first to the *golem*, the legendary creature of Jewish folklore that is said to have been created by Rabbi Judah Loeb in the seventeenth century: "The Maharal of Prague created a *golem*, and this was a great wonder. But how much more wonderful is it to transform a corporeal human being into a *mensh*!" He called that the work of Musar.

Becoming a *mensh* is no easy task. Honing awareness, becoming sensitive to our inner natures, and working on the soul-traits that tend to lead us into transgression, suffering, and loss takes effort. Though the work is hard and the path needs to be updated, Musar offers us a thousand years of experience in living the path of the *mensh*. It urges us to become *menshlich* in our inner life and in the world—*tikkun ha-middot* and *tikkun olam*—and it shows us how to do both, and how the two are intertwined. Musar offers us a key—dusty, rusty, maybe even a bit bent, but still a key—to opening our hearts, and tells us that this is where we start to make the world a better place. □

Jewish Feminism's Third Wave

Charlotte Honigman-Smith

■ *Yentl's Revenge: The Next Wave of Jewish Feminism*, edited by Danya Ruttenberg. Seal Press, 2001.

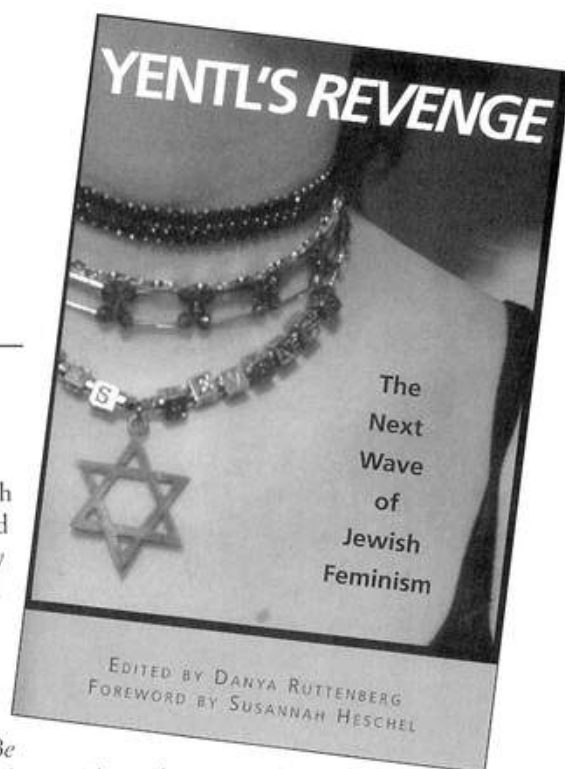
Young Jewish feminists occupy a strange and sometimes uneasy place in both feminist and Jewish dialogues. Thirty years after the arrival of feminism on the American Jewish scene, women are far from equal in the Jewish world; young Jewish women usually are either classified as "Jewish singles" or utterly disregarded. At the same time, anti-Semitism in the political and academic environments where young women often develop feminist consciousness continues to discourage the development of a Jewishly-informed feminism. Letty Cottin Pogrebin's famous description of herself as a "double agent for ... Judaism and feminism, neither of which necessarily believe that the other deserves a place in heaven" sadly still holds true.

Out of this double bind comes *Yentl's Revenge: The Next Wave of Jewish Feminism*, edited by Danya Ruttenberg (Seal Press 2001), a vivid, provocative, and wonderfully readable anthology of essays by young Jewish feminists. And from its in-your-face title onward ("Now it's Yentl's turn to run the damn yeshiva" Ruttenberg declares in the book's introduction), the reader is given fair warning that token acknowledgment and pat definitions are about to give way to complexity of

experience and opinion. Young Jewish women are standing up to speak, and our understanding of Jewish identity will be given enough room to expand from a sound bite to a full *drash*.

Yentl's Revenge follows the pattern of the young feminist anthology established by such earlier third wave books as Rebecca Walker's *To Be Real*, Barbara Findlen's *Listen Up* and Ophira Edut's *Adios Barbie*. Twenty young Jewish women have contributed essays on diverse topics which combine their own stories with theory and debate about the future of Jewish feminism in their generation. I was familiar from these previous anthologies with the way many different voices gathered together in an anthology can begin to speak to one another and balance one another's arguments, but, seeing this happen in a Jewish context was an unexpected revelation. Not only was I not used to seeing young Jewish women's voices recognized, I realized, but I wasn't used to seeing such diverse interpretations of Jewishness and Judaism brought together without hostility or an intent to prove one point over another.

Perhaps this book's greatest strength is the smoothness with which it brings together wildly different, sometimes oppositional perspectives on Jewish observance and spirituality in a single volume. Contributors include two rabbinic students—one Orthodox and one Reform—at least one atheist, one woman who combines Jewish practice



with modern paganism, and women raised in homes that ranged from deeply pious to moderately observant to secular to entirely assimilated. Some speak of embracing their religious community, others of escaping from it. Despite this, the overwhelming sense is of a common cause. The hostility and condescension between points on the observance/assimilation scale that often take over writing about the future of the Jewish community is almost entirely absent as young Jewish women tell their stories from the Jewish present.

And the stories being told are wonderful, sometimes joyous, sometimes painful, and always gripping. Speaking as Jewish women, the contributors have the space, emotionally and on the page, to address complex Jewish and feminist issues on their own terms. Ellen Friedrichs describes with humor and insight the complex blend of desire and ambiguity towards Israel that many young American Jews will immediately recognize in "I Was A Teenage Zionist." Ursula Katan's "To Open My Mouth And Speak What I Know" examines her experience as a survivor of sexual abuse in a family of survivors of the Shoah, confronting issues so raw and terrifying that the

(continued on page 75)

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The Cameri Theatre, Tel Aviv

Taking the Pulse of a Nation

Glenda Frank

“**W**hat does Israeli identity mean,” asks Noam Semel, the general director of the Cameri Theatre in Tel Aviv.

“Theatre,” he answers, “should be a mirror in front of our society.” In many ways, the Cameri Theatre tells the story of Israel and the peace process. For three decades, the Cameri has been daring to confront the uncomfortable underbelly of Israeli life even while it produces some extraordinary and highly polished theatrical events.

The Cameri was founded by immigrants in 1944 as an actors’ collective. Its mission, however, was only really forged in 1970, when it staged *The Queen of the Bathtub*, Hanoach Levin’s satire of the administration of Golda Meir. Although *The Queen* closed after eighteen performances, the government threatened to withdraw its subsidy from the theatre. From then on, the Cameri has focused on awakening the Israeli public to the complexity of policy by packaging it as an evening’s entertainment.

For a U.S. audience, the Cameri’s willingness to sponsor experimental and provocative work might be surprising, given that since 1971 it has essentially been a government agency. The mayor of Tel Aviv appoints the thirty-one members of the Cameri’s board of trustees and chairs the executive committee.

Indeed, with five separate theatre locations in Tel Aviv, an audience of

600,000, and an annual budget of \$16 million, the Cameri is the largest theatre in Israel. It employs 220 people each season, and any given night (including Friday!) at least three theatres are performing. In addition, the Cameri sponsors touring companies, which have performed in places like Berlin, London, Buenos Aires, Australia, the Kennedy Center, and most recently, Greece.

Such size and political ties might imply institutional calcification, but the Cameri continues to thrive on the cutting edge. Sometimes the material is provocative as in Hillel Mittlepunkt’s *Gorodish*, which traces the rise and fall of a general from being a hero in the Six Day War of 1967 to becoming a villain in the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

More complex are the issues raised in *Murder* by Hanoach Levin. The subject is the cycle of Israeli/Palestinian violence: a Palestinian is tortured then and dies in the first scene, a Jewish bridal couple is shot by the boy’s father in the next, and the last portrays a mob assault on a construction worker accused of terrorism. Adapting Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin’s pronouncement at the signing of the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles—“We wish to open a new chapter in the sad book of our lives together ... a new reckoning in relations between peoples”—the Cameri looked beyond the conflicts to an uneasy peace. It brought Palestinian and Israeli audiences, primarily

students, together to view and to discuss “a play that’s like a blow on the head,” according to an Israeli TV newscaster. The discussions were led by Israeli and Arab members of the cast. Some of the participants had never been outside Gaza. One Arab woman who arrived with many reservations responded: “Now I am confused. Can I choose peace? How can I choose it?” The production won five awards, and became the impetus for the ongoing P.E.A.C.E. Experience: Peace Through Enrichment Activities and Cultural Encounters.

Two years ago the Cameri featured Edna Mazia’s *Herod*, a love story (in contemporary idiom and costumes) that is complicated by politics. Mazia calls King Herod, the son of a convert who built his coalition government by marrying into the ruling political family and courting Rome, a “modern tragic figure who ... did not have the greatness to put aside the personal humiliation of rejection to rule.” Even as he built Israel into a great power, his paranoid need for control destroyed him and his family. Mazia, a novelist who began her playwriting career at forty, says that Herod, the most controversial figure in Jewish history, teaches about Israel today.

Semel has more dreams for the Cameri. He’d like to see plays about the trauma of soldiers in Lebanon and about the four mothers whose demonstrations against Netanyahu’s policies created a national controversy. Meanwhile the Cameri continues to challenge hard-line views. It remains “a theatre [reading] the pulse of Israeli society.” □

Glenda Frank teaches theatre at FIT, SUNY, reviews theatre for Back Stage, and has received two NEH awards. Her articles have been published in the Dictionary of Literary Biography, Jewish Women in America, The Eugene O’Neill Review, and Theatre Journal.

A Quiet Sort of Heroism

Enid Dame

■ *The Children of Chabannes*, a documentary film by Lisa Gossels and Dean Wetherell. www.childrenofchabannes.org.

How does one “teach” the Holocaust? What mages do we select to convey its enormity? What stories do we employ to try to contain it, to try to make sense of it? If we have only one or two classes in a crowded semester to devote to it, if we only have time for one novel, one poem, one film, which should we choose?

This is a decision I face constantly in my Twentieth Century World class. I am an English teacher by training, but in my university, history is part of “humanities,” and instructors from many disciplines are encouraged not only to teach history courses, but to bring in alternative texts from our own fields to supplement the (required) textbook. The question is, which ones? Films are especially problematic. Those which simply emphasize acts of cruelty, terror, and large-scale destruction are useless. Aside from their possible quasi-pornographic titillation, (not unlike that provided by horror films), they frequently lead to numbness. I can feel my usually lively-minded, opinionated students shutting down under the weight of so many images of stacked corpses and the paraphernalia of death camps. The mind has its own survival mechanisms; one is to refuse to take in

too much vileness. Such images foreclose fruitful discussion. What can one say except “How terrible!”

I have used the film version of *Mother Night*, Kurt Vonnegut’s brilliant, quirky novel about an American actor turned spy who broadcasts coded messages, along with anti-Semitic fulminations, on his radio program in Nazi Germany. Students love both novel and film, which raise difficult questions about identity, self-delusion, and the inability to escape from history. However, both works may tend to reconfigure the Holocaust as a mere backdrop for an intellectual discussion—like the whirlwind in the book of Job. The protagonist’s ethical and psychological dilemmas are center stage; the actual event pales in comparison.

Then there are the obvious choices: *Schindler’s List*, *Europa Europa*—true stories of personal bravery against enormous odds. These also have their pitfalls. *Europa Europa*, which came highly recommended, seemed an excellent selection. It’s the true story of a Jewish boy who, through his language skills, “Aryan” looks, courage, and personal charm (both women and men find him winning), gets himself first adopted as a mascot by a Nazi troop, then sent by them to a special school for Nazi-

soldiers-in-training. There is plenty of suspense here, (What will Sol do when he’s ordered to take a physical examination? when a friendly Nazi makes a pass at him?) many hair-raising escapes, and a final happy ending “in real life” as Sol is united with his brother at the end of the war. The students enjoyed this film but had little to say about it, except “How terrible!” or “Good for him!”

Films like these are curiously distancing. In their reconstruction of the Holocaust as an adventure story, they invite us to identify with a bold, risk-taking hero—a player who successfully beats the villains at their own game. Inadvertently, they may reinforce a sense of inertia, of powerlessness in their viewers. Would *we* have the *chutzpah* to pass ourselves off as “Aryan,” or to thumb our noses at the Nazi authorities (as Schindler does)? How do we insert ourselves into this narrative? What if we see ourselves as non-heroic, non-risk-takers, non-game-players? (Do women, in particular, have trouble identifying with this sort of heroism?) One unfortunate subtext of such films may be: unless we are willing to carry out elaborate, individual scenarios, to rise to the level of action-story hero, there is little *we can* do when faced with a highly organized and effective killing machine but submit to it.

This is why Lisa Gossels’ new documentary, *The Children of Chabannes*, is such a joy. It is a tribute to a quiet



Enid Dame is a poet and writer whose book of poetry *Jerusalem Syndrome* is forthcoming (*Three Mile Harbor*, 2002). She teaches history and English at New Jersey Institute of Technology.

FILM REVIEW

sort of heroism. Gossels, who produced and directed the film with Dean Wetherell, wisely concentrates on one story, and one area of the world: the isolated, independent Creuse region of central France. Here, three fairly ordinary, fiercely determined local people, working with the Jewish organization Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants (OSE), involved an entire village in rescuing Jewish children. From 1939 to 1942, some 400 Jewish children, many of them refugees from Nazi Germany, found a safe haven at the Chateau de Chabannes.

Lisa Gossels' father Peter and uncle Werner were two of these children. Thus, this story is hers as well, which accounts for much of its power. A reunion at the village in May 1996, with many of the rescued children and their aged rescuers in attendance, provided the impetus for this film. Gossels intersperses interviews with former students, teachers, villagers, and local historians with scenes of the Chateau and the surrounding countryside (which apparently haven't changed much over the years), and with photographs, drawings, and spoken excerpts from a 170-page journal compiled by the children and their teachers in 1942. Now housed at *Le Centre du Documentation Juive Contemporaine*, the journal is a poignant, revealing document. Describing themselves as "thinking ... working ... having fun," the children accompany their text with both cheerful drawings of mushrooming expeditions and nightmare images of barbed wire. Two former teachers, the Paillassou sisters, now in their 80s, read the words they wrote in 1942, then contribute additional memories and reflections.

The OSE operated four havens for Jewish refugee children in the Creuse region, in unoccupied (Vichy) France. The Chateau de Chabannes was the only one headed by a non-Jew, Felix Chevrier. This remarkable man was a



journalist, Freemason, and Republican who steadfastly refused to believe that France—"a country of visionary people"—would accept racist ideology, or cooperate with the murder of children. (His friend, journalist Frédéric Pottecher, who reads his stirring letters, describes Chevrier as "a little to the left but not much.")

Working with the two dedicated local schoolteachers, Reine and Renée Paillassou (whose feisty and perceptive recollections are a vital part of this film), as well as Jewish educators from the OSE, Chevrier insisted that the Jewish children be integrated with the rest of the village. The village cooperated. The Chateau de Chabannes provided a safe and loving refuge for children who came from Germany, Austria, Poland, and even from *French* internment camps in the occupied zone. Many children, including the Gossels brothers, were sent to France by their parents after Kristallnacht (Nov. 9–10, 1938). Most never saw their parents again. In a very real sense, Chevrier, the teachers, and the village became their family, giving them a precious space to learn, play, and simply be children in their interrupted lives. This feeling is reinforced in the photographs, many of which depict a

fatherly Chevrier and his young staff with a group of children. They could almost be ordinary boarding-school photos—except that the usual stiffness is absent. Instead, a genuine warmth is conveyed, confirming OSE teacher Georges Loinger's statement that the Chateau's aim was to create an atmosphere of kindness "without which there can be no normal life." Peter Gossels agrees, "We were nurtured."

We meet many amazing people, both surviving children—such as Ruth Keller, who speaks movingly of her separation from her mother—and the teachers, who include both the indomitable Paillassou sisters and the Zionist Georges Loinger. Renée Paillassou was involved in the Resistance and eventually lost her teaching job for her refusal to bring the children to the train station to greet Petain. Loinger switched his profession from engineer to gym teacher—to the horror of his parents—to help Jewish children acquire resistance skills.

What made the Creuse region—a beautiful but poor rural area with which many French citizens are unfamiliar—willing to protect and nurture these foreign children? The villagers interviewed speak of the region's long history of Republicanism and free-thinking: "This part of the country is not religious," says Yvonne Labrousse emphatically. While other rescuers might have been motivated by religious convictions, in the Creuse the *lack* of such convictions seems to have resulted in an absence of hostility to those with different beliefs (there was neither a Jewish nor Protestant community in the area). Certainly the tradition of independent thinking ensured that the residents would not blindly accept anti-Semitism—or government decrees. (The Vichy government enacted over 400 anti-Jewish laws and sent 76,000 Jews, including 11,000 children, to death camps.) Also, the schools were public. Therefore, it was not difficult to integrate the Jewish

children into the educational system where, villagers suggest, both local children and Jewish newcomers benefited from contact with each other. Eventually, the network of protectors was to be joined by the village police.

Disaster struck when the Vichy government intensified its pro-Nazi policies. On the day that Renée Paillassou lost her teaching job, Jewish children were ordered to be separated from non-Jews—a repetition of the situation he experienced in Nazi Germany, Peter Gossels recalls sadly. Then in 1942, the Free Zone was ordered to produce “quotas” of foreign Jews to be sent to German death camps. Twelve older boys and two teachers were taken from Chabannes. Chevrier was able to effect the return of six students and both educators. But six children had already been sent out of France. Two, Wolfie Blumenreich (who was sent to twelve work camps before arriving at Auschwitz weighing 83 pounds) and Jerry Gerard, survived, and appear in the film. The other four were killed. Particularly troubling is the death of nine-year-old Rolf Rothschild, whose parents had asked him to be sent from Chabannes to join them in a French internment camp.

After this grim episode, as Norbert Bikales says, “life became more difficult.” The Préfet of the Creuse ordered the arrests of thirty-three Jewish children in OSE homes, some as young as two years old. Thirteen of these children lived in the Chateau de Chabannes. Through a combination of swift action, shrewdness, and the cooperation of the village, Chevrier was able to save all thirteen. The local police, obviously sympathetic to Chevrier, “didn’t pursue the matter.” Subsequent roundups were forestalled by a warning system, which the Paillassou sisters were instrumental in setting up (their father was a retired policeman). Warned by the local police, Chevrier would always make sure that no children were available for deportation.



However, as roundups increased, the school was slowly dismantled. The children were dispersed one by one—into local families, into OSE jobs, into Switzerland. (Georges Loinger personally saved 1,000 Jewish children by this route.) Some of the older youths joined the Resistance. No further children were lost.

Felix Chevrier, Reine Paillassou, and Renée Paillassou have all been,

deservedly, honored as Righteous Gentiles at Yad Vashem. *The Children of Chabannes*, however, is a tribute not only to these outstanding individuals but to an entire community, which refused to lower its standards of justice and human decency in a time of extremity. One subtext of this documentary is that heroism can be achieved in everyday life, in the schoolroom and the community; it can be a matter of maintaining a life-giving routine as well as dramatic confrontations with authorities. Also, it shows that it is possible to resist a well-organized and well-defended system bent on annihilation. In the face of impending evil, it is possible to maintain human connections, to make plans, to

retain a modicum of control, and even to succeed in preserving both life and the values that sustain life. For these reasons, I believe that every teacher of Twentieth Century History should incorporate *The Children of Chabannes* into her curriculum, to complement all the other stories and to remind us that even in the worst of times people are capable of acting out of their best convictions. □

JEWISH FEMINISM'S THIRD WAVE (continued from page 71)

Jewish community continues to have trouble acknowledging their existence. In “Not Lost: A Jewish Feminist Atheist Meditates on Intermarriage,” Sarah Coleman questions whether her marriage to a non-Jewish man tears apart Jewish continuity or contributes to it. And Ophira Edut gets down to fundamentals in “Bubbe Got Back: Tales of Jewess With Caboose” in which Edut considers her own backside and Jewish body issues, and the ways in which they illustrate the complex nature of Jewish racial identity.

The core question that seems to arise out of many of these essays is simple: how am I going to do this? In a fragmented Jewish world, living in a dominant culture that reduces me to bagels, *Schindler's List*, and Barbra Streisand, how am I going to define for

myself what it means to be a Jewish woman? And astonishingly, the question gets answered. Writer after writer claims a Jewish identity that may not answer all questions, may not be an answer for anyone but herself, but which will be enough of an answer for now, for this generation, for this woman. And that is what makes this book such an intense pleasure to read: not only has someone done this book, but it's excellent. *Yentl's Revenge* is not only a well-blended, enticing anthology, it's a declaration of third wave Jewish feminism. And as Susannah Heschel observes in her foreword to the book, “(t)hird wave Jewish feminists are their own authorities.” From this cornerstone, the voices of the next wave of Jewish feminism are speaking out, and we can begin to build together. □

How 2 Take an Exam

A Serious Comic Classic

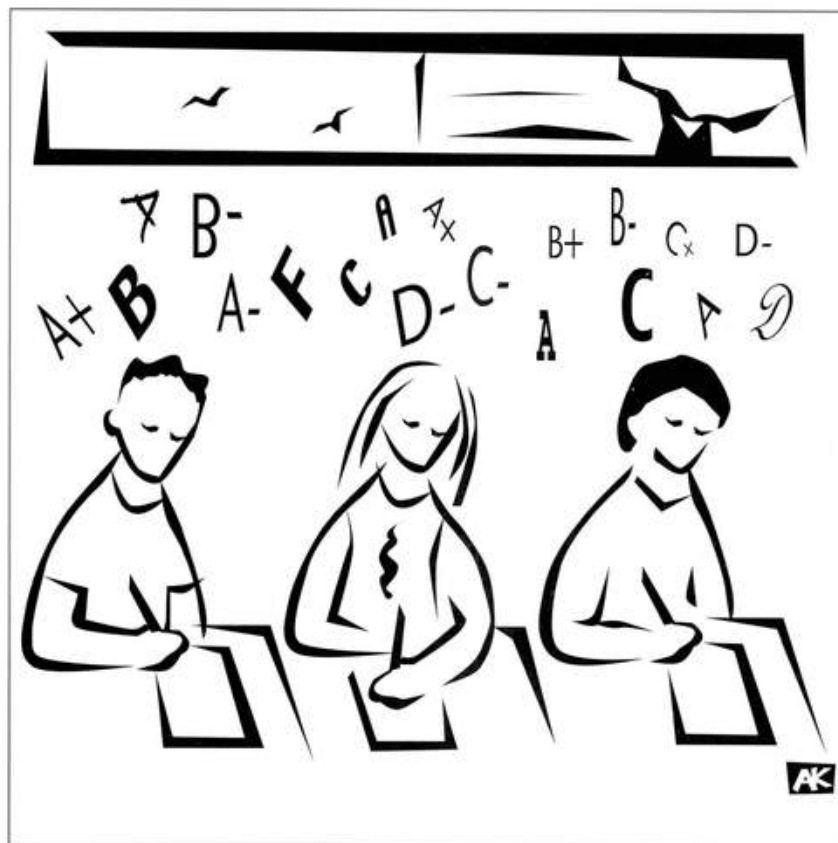
Paul Buble

■ *How to Take an Exam...and Remake the World* by Bertell Ollman. Black Rose Books, 2001.

Bertell Ollman, a serious political-philosophical scholar and one of the moving spirits of the "First Radical Humor Festival" (I confess to being another of the spirits: it was genuinely funny, but still didn't survive for a second appearance) has been a classroom wit (not twit) as well as an admired prof all his career. This is a book for students, not professors. It reads like a series of lectures and promises to raise grades for the careful listener/reader. And I think it will, or at least it can.

The contents should also ring a certain bell for TIKKUN readers of all ages. His basic message to the student is: "RESIGNATION SUCKS." In other words, get the bullshit monitor working so as to separate the official claims of society from its real operation—but don't be overwhelmed by the cynicism that this constantly generates among the knowledgeable.

"Complaining about exams," Ollman writes, "may be most students' first truly informed criticism of the society in which they live," because they have, at a tender age, already taken enough exams to grasp that tests



Get the bullshit monitor working—but don't be overwhelmed by the cynicism that this constantly generates among the knowledgeable.

do such a very poor job of testing real learning, and because grading (on anything beyond multiple choice or true-and-false) is itself inherently subjective. The huge majority of complainers can't get much beyond griping, however, because they don't understand the society that uses the exams to slot the exam-takers for life.

Ollman's own pedagogical method starts with the reality of the exam. He gives us succinctly and at a very low price (his book sells for \$19.95) what the Kaplan Educational Center and "learning" corporations like it charge hundreds or thousands of dollars to

explain to prospective test-takers: start with a good outline; use lots of transitional phrases like "for example"; and don't hold back on the synonyms (i.e., impress the grader with your vocabulary). Anyone who has graded exams, from high school to graduate school, will recognize the accuracy of these observations. Any student can use them as predictors for grade improvement. Most of us teachers will also be sorry that we so often confuse good vocabulary (mainly meaning better formal education) with intelligence.

Most of the rest of the book's suggestions are along similar lines. (Not all: citing experts, he urges a good night's sleep as better than staying up cramming; and, likewise, using all the time allotted rather than finishing fast

Paul Buble's latest book is *Radical Hollywood: The Untold Story Behind America's Favorite Movies* (New Press, 2002). He teaches in the American civilization department at Brown University.

and walking out early in a burst of hubris.) The best suggestions often come down to becoming more self-confident—advice that Advanced Placement students in the elite high schools hardly need, but those out of the loop often need badly. He also urges students to take a strong, even unpopular, stand on issues after thinking them through critically.

All this is surely useful. But a certain crucial problem remains. If, as Ollman says, grades “represent the commodification of the learning process,” reducing the variety of talent and achievement to a single dimension, then how is it possible for students *not* to replicate the greed for money in the world outside with the institutional greed for top grades as long as grades still rule? Why shouldn’t they offer the teacher whatever agreeable ideas (or personal charm) seem most necessary to get those grades? After a near-lifetime in school, at best being simultaneously pampered and warned against getting out of line, do they even know that they are doing it? And how different are students really, in a related sense, from teachers whose mixture of selfless work and career-making accomplishments could be separated out only by psychoanalysis?

The Education of Max Bickford, arguably the most Jewish television show since *Seinfeld* and (along with *100 Center Street*, created by film director Sidney Lumet and starring Alan Arkin as a liberal Jewish judge with Popular Front memories) one of the most serious in years, wonderfully poses questions like this week after week, with protagonist-professor Richard Dreyfuss and his colleagues regularly taking it on the chin. They aren’t much less confused than their students—just older, unlikely to solve them decisively or become famous intellectuals. (To quote a favorite Yiddish literary savant of mine, in middle age everyone is hoping for a great obit in the *Times*, but somehow not looking forward to it.) At its best moments, *The Education* comes

back to the TIKKUN-like question that we radicals have too often avoided rather than responding to directly: how *do* we advise students to avoid becoming competitive and selfish? What are the alternatives in the classroom and the academy setting at large?

Ollman struggles honestly for answers. He envisions a cooperative exam, with the work and grade shared and then recalls that a dean made him give up the experiment after a single try. Committed, progressive professors leading smaller, more intimate classes—not required courses—are about as much as he can propose under the circumstances.

Not many of us have better suggestions, and it’s not entirely fair to Ollman to step back from the classroom context of his book to the campus surroundings. But the best students that I know, the ones who regularly inspire me, are ones who are able to find a political activity like today’s anti-WTO impulse, or a crypto-political activity

like cooperative campus living (or dining, or even studying) that diminishes the otherwise rampant individualism. In the absence of a social movement, even of a mini-social movement, there is still room for cooperativism to take shape, like a shared interest in “alternative” music. Sometimes, although not often enough, an alternative comes together in a campus religious or ethnic institution (including the all-too-rare Hillels with an egalitarian commitment and no compulsive need to support official Israeli policies and practices). However, these alternatives, sadly, often seem to end up intensifying a kind of collective individualism based upon suspicion of and resentment toward others.

In short, as Dreyfuss’s middle-aged, overweight, single father Max Bickford knows all too well, there’s no easy way out. But by the same token, all is not lost. Try *How to Take An Exam* on someone young around you, and see for yourself. □

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Rabbi Michael Lerner, Editor, TIKKUN
Author of *Spirit Matters: Global Healing and the Wisdom of the Soul*

Poetry Sikkum:

You Are Here

Paul Breslin

Northwestern University Press, 2000

In an incisive plain style dedicated to clarity, directness, and psychologically acute observation balanced by a meditative poise, Paul Breslin weaves personal and historical threads with a richly particular intelligence to reveal the paradoxes of experience, justice, and the decorum of giving voice. A long-awaited and arresting first book of poems by a noted scholar and literary essayist.



Glottal Stop

101 Poems by Paul Celan

Trans. Nikolai Popov & Heather McHugh
Wesleyan University Press, 2000

Allusive, fragmentary, hermetic, intricately connected, full of puns, anagrams, and multi-lingual associations, Celan's poems speak to contemporary poetry's involvement in deep language play as well as its social and historical awareness (Celan's parents—both German Jews—were murdered in concentration camps). Popov and McHugh's translations bring to the surface many of the musical and semantic elements of Celan's poems that have remained embedded in translations by others. This volume is sure to take its place among the necessary work in English of this "serious sensualist, in whose hands spirit's question must be retooled for ever more exquisite senses of sense."



They Can't Take That Away from Me

Gail Mazur

University of Chicago Press, 2001

In this searching and imaginatively restless new volume, Gail Mazur asks the fundamental questions of a life animated by a social and existential conscience. Ranging from poems that express culpability cut with anger in the face of a parent's mortality, to dream narratives, to uneasy meditations on place and the striving of the artist, Mazur's language hums with a tension between an unflinching account of motive and a fluent lyrical grace.



The Tether

Carl Phillips

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001

While the classical austerity and compression of his poems seem, in one sense, hardly American, Phillips has invented a style of thinking and feeling in his poems that brings together Whitman's eroticism and Emily Dickinson's sense of metaphysical allegory and rhythmic hesitation. Thus the tether is the line of connection—between lovers, between poets from different ages—that also serves as a figure for the poetic line, unfolding here with an emotionally charged yearning that continually tugs against a sense of rational restraint.

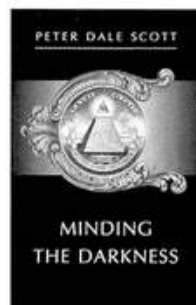


Minding the Darkness Book Three of Seculum

Peter Dale Scott

New Directions, 2000

No other contemporary poet enacts the values of *TIKKUN* to a greater degree or with a keener intelligence than Peter Dale Scott, in his *Seculum* trilogy. At once transparently available in the range of poetic speech and intricately built-up in the far-reaching web of its associative network, this trilogy achieves more for the ambition of poetry as a form of political and spiritual investigation than perhaps any poem in the last twenty-five years. Ranging among ancient sacred and secular works, journalism, conversation, autobiography, and contemporary literature, Scott uses a collage method that honors the ambitious complexities of the modernists, while avoiding their opaque difficulties.



Cairo Traffic

Lloyd Schwartz

University of Chicago Press, 2000

The sound of a poem by Lloyd Schwartz blends the register of real speech with a dramatically contoured act of speaking, a beguiling combination that brings a compassionate wit to bear on subjects by turns frightening and comic: the loss of memory and history, the pathos and curiosity of a degraded desire, the transmutations of myth. The language of everyday becomes, in these poems, sharp answers to persistent, urgent, elusive mysteries.

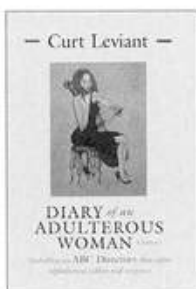


Prose Sikkum:

Diary of an Adulterous Woman: A Novel

Curt Leviant
Syracuse University Press, 2001

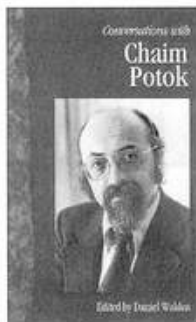
A witty, compulsively readable novel about love, longing, jealousy, and the always complicated human enterprise of keeping secrets. Curt Leviant is an important, but often underrated Jewish American writer, the author of four earlier novels. Here, Leviant produces a colorful cast of quirky characters, a love triangle that begins at a Jewish day school's reunion and evolves into a vivid, humorous, richly-textured novel, told from shifting points of view and perspectives, about the enduring complexities of love—lost and regained.



Conversations with Chaim Potok

Edited by Daniel Walden
University Press of Mississippi, 2001

An important series of interviews, conducted by a number of respected academics, and edited by Daniel Walden, one of the deans of Jewish American literary scholarship, these conversations with Chaim Potok are crucial to understanding the influences that shaped the author's rich literary legacy. No other Jewish American novelist has written so powerfully and eloquently about the conflicts between Orthodox Jewish values and Western secular humanism. These tensions permeate each of his books, and in these conversations Potok reveals the way in which the secular literary and artistic world—as reflected in his readings of Evelyn Waugh, James Joyce, or the paintings of Picasso—collided with his deep appreciation and understanding of Jewish text, mysticism, and religious values. This book is an invaluable resource, illuminating how Potok managed to educate both the non-Jewish and Jewish worlds about Orthodox Jewish life, and create characters that spring from his imagination and the competing cultures that shaped him.



At Memory's Edge After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture

James Young
Yale University Press, 2000

A groundbreaking book written by one of the world's foremost authorities on Holocaust art, literature, and the moral and aesthetic considerations that must be asked when contemplating how to properly remember and memorialize the Holocaust. In this book, James Young, a noted academic, critic, author—and the only foreigner and Jew appointed to a German commission charged with finding an appropriate design for a national Holocaust memorial in Berlin—examines the moral and aesthetic burdens placed on contemporary visual artists, both American and European, who were not witnesses to the Holocaust but yet are compelled to produce art in its name and memory. Along the way, Young provides insights into the controversies surrounding Berlin's newly-opened Jewish Museum, as well as Germany's imminent national Holocaust memorial. Filled with illustrations and Young's unique expert, inside perspective, this is a central book for anyone interested in the relationship between art and atrocity, the burdens of memory—both personal and national—and the politics and pieties that enter into all moral and aesthetic questions about the Holocaust.



The Charney Report Confronting the Israeli-Arab Conflict

Leon H. Charney
Barricade Books, 2001

A compilation of various interviews—conducted over a thirteen-year period—by Leon Charney on his nationally-syndicated television program, with diplomats, politicians, and journalists who have in various ways been involved in the Israeli-Arab conflict. Among those who weigh in on the volatile, sensitive dynamics of the Middle East are: Yitzhak Rabin, Ehud Barak, Nasser Al Kidwa, Shimon Peres, and various others. Leon Charney was a special adviser on the Middle East to President Jimmy Carter during the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David Peace Treaty. He also conducted secret meetings with Yasser Arafat. The insights provided by Charney and his guests are provocative, illuminating, and original.



YES, I WANT TO BE INVOLVED WITH The TIKKUN Community

TIKKUN Community projects for which I will make time to be involved
(if the TIKKUN Community gives me guidance on how to implement these):

- ☐ Organize a monthly "salon" or study group focused on articles in TIKKUN Magazine.
- ☐ Be part of a national "Rapid Response" network to contact media and public officials and share a TIKKUN perspective on social, political, and cultural issues.
- ☐ Organize local demonstrations in support of TIKKUN Community themes
- ☐ Give one evening a month to the Progressive Polling Project (making phone calls to ask people a set of questions prepared by TIKKUN about political and cultural issues)
- ☐ Help create (with help from TIKKUN Office) a set of meetings with local "opinion shapers" or a day-long seminar to present the TIKKUN perspective on the Middle East
- ☐ Help create a national TIKKUN network of students and college campuses
- ☐ Design and implement fundraising for the TIKKUN Community
- ☐ Develop spiritual practices and education in our community around how to integrate them into our personal and public lives
- ☐ Intern or volunteer in the S.F. office
- ☐ Organize spiritually-oriented people in my profession or workplace around the New Bottom Line and other ideas of The TIKKUN Community. My work area or profession is: _____
- ☐ Do public education and outreach (using materials sent to me by TIKKUN) about:
 - ☐ Peace for Israel and Palestinians
 - ☐ Globalization, Ecology, and Planetary Consciousness
 - ☐ The Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and The New Bottom Line for American Society
 - ☐ Gay and lesbian issues
 - ☐ The Core Vision and Spirit Matters
- ☐ I want to be a leader and activist in this community. I'll write you about my ideas, talents and skills. After I've joined (www.tikkun.org).
- ☐ Other talents I have (design or maintain web sites, write a TIKKUN Community song, connect us with rich relatives, organize singles activities, lead wilderness tours, whatever) or projects I'm willing to help create, or ideas I have (send an accompanying letter with your ideas): _____

Yes, I have joined The TIKKUN Community and am ready to get involved! (To join go to www.tikkun.org.)

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Yes, I'm willing to put my money behind my ideals. I know you can't help make this happen unless you have money to hire staff, pay travel and phone bills, etc. So I will:

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PROJECTS OF **The TIKKUN Community** in 2002–2003

1. Peace for Israel and Palestine

We are firmly committed to the survival of the State of Israel and to the best interests of the Jewish people, as well as to the best interests of the Palestinian people. Our staff will produce a brochure or short book helping people understand the legitimacy of both Israeli and Palestinian narratives. Both sides need to be able to tell the other side's story in a compassionate way. And we will support those voices in the Palestinian world calling for nonviolence, just as we will support Israelis calling for an End to the Occupation.

Policy makers in the U.S. won't use their power to push Israel to End the Occupation until their own constituencies are insisting they do so. We will build a national education campaign on college campuses, in synagogues, churches, and mosques, aimed at building support for this new balanced and compassionate narrative, and for Ending the Occupation. We need your help to create small group meetings with locally elected public officials, media people, religious leaders, academics, labor and business leaders, political party activists, leaders of significant nonprofits, and others who shape public discourse in your community. We will provide information, manuals about how to get this together, and possibly send an educator to participate in these gatherings.

2. Progressive Polling of Public Opinion

We'll ask volunteers to spend one night a month making ten to twenty phone calls to names selected at random from their local telephone books, ask a set of questions we will prepare, and then get responses to us. We will compile and analyze the responses and provide progressive social change movements with the kind of information unavailable through the media.

3. Planetary Consciousness

We will circulate and lobby for our proposed Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and attempt to educate the media about the need for a new planetary consciousness as described in the TIKKUN Community Core Vision.

4. Network of Spiritually Oriented Professionals

Help us bring together spiritually-oriented people in your profession or workplace around the New Bottom Line: judging institutions productive, efficient and rational not only to the extent that they maximize money and power, but also to the extent that they maximize our capacities to be loving and caring, ethically and ecologically sensitive, and capable of responding to the world with awe and wonder at the grandeur of creation.

5. Local TIKKUN Study Group

Organize a monthly "TIKKUN Salon" or study group focused on articles in TIKKUN Magazine, our Core Vision, or Michael Lerner's *Spirit Matters*.

6. Network of Campus Activists

Would you like to organize students on your campus to begin creating a nationwide network of students who support TIKKUN Community values?

7. National Rapid Response Network

Help us contact media and public officials to share TIKKUN perspectives on breaking news and on social, political, and cultural issues.

8. Support the TIKKUN Community Staff

Volunteer in the TIKKUN Community National Office in San Francisco. Take off time from your life and spend nine months in S.F. living your values. Or volunteer your web expertise towards maintaining our website.

*Tikkun (te-kiin) ... to heal, repair and
transform the world.
All the rest is commentary*

תיקון

GET INVOLVED WITH **The TIKKUN Community**

In Solidarity with the Israeli Army Reserve officers

who are refusing to serve in the West Bank and Gaza:

- World-wide Fast—daylight till dark, March 27.
- Turn your Seder into a discussion about ending Israel's Occupation and ending the violence on both sides (and bring the TIKKUN Seder supplement in this issue).

Projects we're working on this year:

- 1 Israel-Palestine Peace
- 2 Progressive Polling
- 3 Planetary Consciousness
- 4 Network of Spiritually Oriented Professionals
- 5 College Campus Network

Intern or volunteer

at our San Francisco office.

Create a "TIKKUN Salon"

or study group in your own community.
Invite five to fifteen people to read and
discuss TIKKUN articles and editorials.

HANG OUT WITH MICHAEL LERNER

Passover Liberation Seder

March 28 (second night of Passover),
San Francisco, CA

A lively and joyous community celebration with Beyt Tikkun Synagogue. Reservations \$55—includes a delicious kosher-for-pesach vegetarian meal and a seder led by Rabbi Michael Lerner. Space limited: reserve immediately: 415-575-1432.

Leadership Training

July 3-7, Walker Creek Ranch,
Petaluma, CA

For people ready to become activists around the TIKKUN Community Core Vision, come to our leadership training retreat, July 3-7 at Walker Creek Ranch, in a beautiful country setting one hour north of San Francisco. Because of limited space, you must apply: send a detailed, self-revealing letter about yourself, your talents and skills, what parts of the Core Vision speak most to you, and what projects of the TIKKUN Community you'd like to take part in. Send to: Community@tikkun.org Cost: \$400.

Activist Training

August 12-16, Omega Institute,
Rhinebeck, NY

You like the ideas but you want to explore them more deeply so that you can be more effective as a local activist. Over the course of this five-day retreat with Michael Lerner, we will do role-playing, learn spiritual practices and develop community organizing techniques. To register call the Omega Institute: 845-266-4444.

TO JOIN THE TIKKUN COMMUNITY:

Send \$120 (\$80 or \$40 for low-income) to

The TIKKUN Community, 2107 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 302, San Francisco, CA 94109

email: community@tikkun.org phone: **415-575-1200**