

A Critique of Politics, Culture & Society

TIKKUN

**A LETTER FROM ALAN DERSHOWITZ
JOEL SCHALIT ON THE DISENGAGEMENT
REMEMBERING ARCHBISHOP ROMERO**

(te•kūn) To mend, repair, and transform the world.

JULY/AUGUST 2005

**When the Right
breaks the
barrier, how
should a
Spiritual Left
respond?**

CHURCH & STATE

\$5.95 U.S. \$7.95 Canada



**The Orthodox Anarchist | Deconstructing Pope Benedict
Commercializing Childhood | Watching Campus Watch
Muslimgauze | Reviews: Jacqueline Rose, Joseph Cedar**

The Story Line:

All Aboard the Media Escalator

It's always time in times like these
to watch the news. It turns you on
and keeps you glued. The story line
involves you in the latest crisis,

then puts you on an escalator
headed for the upper floors of fear.
You could get off at the commercial
break, but if the threat is real,

as advertised, would that be wise?
You're getting used to being nervous.
It would be a letdown to be calm,
the unreal calm before the storm

big enough to make a movie of.
So up you go, feeling ready
for a higher level of anxiety,
as if fear itself had made you brave.

Of course, you're not the only one
who's headed up. Look around, you'll see
the whole impatient news-hooked nation
staring as the made-for-TV story

builds to its climax. The ratings soar.
There's money to be made from war.

—Jon Swan

2. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

6. **PUBLISHER'S PAGE:** *Why Are We Here?*

7. **EDITORIAL:** *What is A Network of Spiritual Progressives?*

13. **MASH DOWN BABYLON:** *Remembering Kosovo*

14. FREE ASSOCIATIONS

FEATURES

16. Israel/Palestine

In *Interview with the Orthodox Anarchist* (16), Daniel Siwek profiles a prominent online critic of the Occupation. Looking ahead to August's Gaza withdrawal (21), Joel Schalit dissects settler threats of civil war. Alon Tal analyzes *The Greening of the Jewish National Fund* (23), while Alan Sussman (30) calls Jewish philanthropists to task for promoting fears of renewed anti-Semitism. Moving to campus, Gil Anidjar (27) looks at the silencing of Israel criticism at Columbia.

33. Cover: Church and State

What is the Spiritual Left to do when the Religious Right breaks down the barrier between church and state? Bring spirit in to keep religion out, says Michael Lerner. Then we interview two of America's leading scholars of religion, historian Martin Marty (35) and sociologist Robert Bellah (39) on the explosive growth of theocratic politics and what a spiritually savvy Left can still do about it.

42. Preferential Options for Catholicism

The appointment of Pope Benedict has ignited ferocious controversy over the future political direction of the Catholic Church. Or N. Rose reflects on the liberationist legacy of the late Archbishop Romero (42), while theologian Matthew Fox (45) and Anthony Mansueto (48) deconstruct Benedict's politics and theology.

ARTICLES

52. *Fundamentalism*, Andrew Samuels

56. *Hamas Pacifists and Settler Islamophiles*, Aaron J. Tapper

59. *Shattering the Idol of Spiritual Patriarchy*, Omid Safi

62. *Sages for Sale*, Susan Linn

64. *My Idol, My Dell*, Eileen Pollack

BOOKS

67. Avner Falk's *Fratricide in the Holy Land* and Jacqueline Rose's *The Question of Zion*, reviewed by Cynthia Hoffman

69. Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman's *My People's Prayerbook Volumes 1-8*, reviewed by Jo Ellen Green Kaiser

71. Capsule Reviews

TELEVISION/FILM

73. *Burning the Self in the Community Bonfire: Joseph Cedar's Campfire*, reviewed by Shai Ginsburg

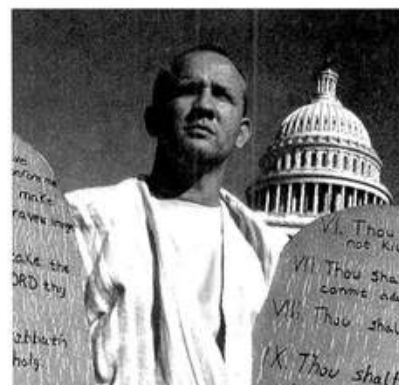
76. *Interview with Joseph Cedar*, by Shai Ginsburg

MUSIC

78. *Islamophilia: The Musical Politics of Muslimgauze*, by Ron Nachmann

79. Album Reviews: Hip Hop Hoodios and Random_Inc

Inside Back Cover: *Sikkum*: Books TIKKUN recommends



Opposite: "The Story Line: All Aboard the Media Escalator," by Jon Swan.
Front Cover: Michel Tcherevkoff/Getty

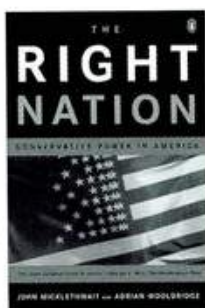
Sikkum

TIKKUN RECOMMENDS...

THE RIGHT NATION: Conservative Power in America

John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, Penguin Books, 2005

Since 9/11, Americans have increasingly shunned domestic news periodicals in favor of U.K. publications such as *The Guardian* and the *Economist*. Why? Because British news publications tend to do a far better job covering international politics than American periodicals do—including reporting on America. Such is the case with *Economist* correspondents Micklethwait and Wooldridge's incisive, informed, and delightfully contrarian account of American conservatism. If you want to know what constitutes the foundation of right-wing political hegemony in the United States today, this eminently readable "people's history" is an absolutely indispensable and eye-opening guide to who rules our country and why.



HEALTHY, WEALTHY AND FAIR: Health Care and the Good Society

Edited by James A. Morone and Lawrence R. Jacobs, Oxford University Press, 2005

America is the most affluent country in the world. Yet the health of its citizenry is even worse than that of most developing nations. While health-care reform has been on the political horizon in the United States for well over a quarter of a century, systematic efforts to offer socially subsidized medical treatment have been consistently defeated. In *Healthy, Wealthy and Fair*, editors James A. Morone and Lawrence R. Jacobs provide us with a searing indictment of this unacceptable status quo, bringing to bear what is arguably one of the best political economies of America's health care system ever written.



THE WAR COMPLEX: World War II in Our Time

Marianna Torgovnick. University of Chicago Press, 2005

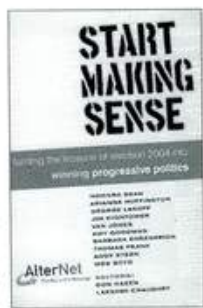
Sixty years after the end of the Second World War, it seems like the conflict is with us more than ever. From Hollywood continuing to churn out a never-ending stream of films about the war to the continued publication of books about the Holocaust, there is clearly something more going on than simple historical commemoration. Marianne Torgovnick convincingly argues that this obsession reflects a commonly held anxiety about the persistence of total war. A masterful and timely work of ideology criticism that guarantees you'll never hear the term "greatest generation" the same way again.



START MAKING SENSE: Turning the Lessons of 2004 into Winning Progressive Politics

Edited by Don Hazen and Lakshmi Chaudhry, Chelsea Green, 2005

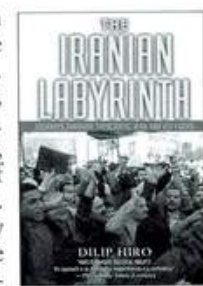
AlterNet is one of the most important sites for progressive political publishing on the Internet. Both a syndication service and a publisher of new works by some of the most recognizable left-intellectuals—Naomi Klein, Thomas Frank—alongside technology and culture critics like Annalee Newitz and Scott Thill, AlterNet has fulfilled the promise of what a left-wing online publication could ideally do. In *Start Making Sense*, AlterNet Editors Hazen and Chaudhry successfully replicate this formula in a print context featuring a stellar cast of contributors ranging from Arianna Huffington to Van Jones.



THE IRANIAN LABYRINTH: Journeys Through Theocratic Iran and Its Furies

Dilip Hiro, Nation Books, 2005

Ever since the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979, Iran has occupied a special place in America's political imagination. During the last decade of the Cold War, it was a proto-Soviet Other in training. Over the course of the past fifteen years, Iran assumed its formal place as one of the United States' primary adversaries. Yet, despite how much Americans may fear Iran, they actually know very little about it. In *The Iranian Labyrinth* historian Dilip Hiro does a first-class job of demystifying the propagandistic portraits of Iran to which we've grown accustomed. A truly eye-opening account of a country that continues to defy even its own expectations.



THE SPECTACULAR DIFFERENCE: Selected Poems of Zelda

Zelda, translated by Marcia Falk, Hebrew Union College Press, 2004

For readers with an interest in contemporary Israeli literature, this nimble translation of Zelda, a popular and critically acclaimed poet who published widely between 1967 and her death in 1984, is especially welcome. An authentic spiritual poet writing in a vein that readers of Dickinson and Blake will recognize, Zelda Schneurson Mishkovsky came from the world of ultra-Orthodoxy and lived in it all her life; yet her poems transcend her religious culture to reach Israeli Jews across conventional divides. This enfaced edition will appeal to those with some reading knowledge of Hebrew. Readers without such knowledge will find the work equally inviting. Highly recommended.



TIKKUN

Editor

Michael Lerner

Associate Editor

Peter Gabel

Senior Editor

Jo Ellen Green Kaiser

Managing Editor

Joel Schalit

Assistant Editor

Liz Winer

Art Director

Jonathan Wieder

Poetry Editors

Carolyn Forché, Joshua Weiner

Assistant Poetry Editor

Paul Otremba

Jewish Book Editor

Jonathan Schorsch

Literary Editor

Julian Levinson

Academic Editor

Akiba Lerner

Music Editor

Ron Nachmann

Contributing Editors

Stew Albert, Gil Anidjar, Michael Bader,
David Biale, Charles Derber, Arnold Eisen,
Mordechai Gafni, Mark LeVine, Ruth Messinger,
Or Rose, Michael Tomasky, Linda Zisquit

Editorial Assistants

Ian Elwood, Jeani Hunt-Gibbon,

JoAnna Minshew, Adam Scow,

David Stalder

Contributing Artists

Jeff Faerber, Laurie Luczak, Camille Wainer

Web Design

Aleksandr Vladimirovsky

Publishers

George & Trish Vradenburg

Controller

Valerie Bach

2342 Shattuck Avenue, #1200

Berkeley, CA 94704

510-644-1200

fax: 510-644-1255

magazine@tikkun.org

Visit the TIKKUN website at

http://www.tikkun.org

Editorial Board

Rachel Adler, Gar Alperovitz, Michael Barkun,
Michael Berenbaum, Jay Cantor, David Cohen,
Dan Cohn-Sherbok, Elliot Dorff, Terry Eagleton,
Marc H. Ellis, Leslie Epstein, Sidra Ezrahi,
John Felstiner, Nan Fink Gefen, Saul Friedlander,
Laura Geller, David Gordis, Arthur Green,
Colin Greer, Burt Jacobson, Ramsey Kanaan,
Reuven Kimelman, Linda Kintz, Daniel Landes,
Tzvi Marx, Daniel Matt, Elliot Neaman,
David Newman, Ilana Pardes, Robert Pinsky,
Judith Plaskow, Letty Cottin Pogrebin,
James Ponet, Megan Shaw Prelinger,
Arnold Rachlis, Aviezer Ravitsky,
Wade Clark Roof, Michael Sandel,
David Saperstein, Zalman Schachter-Shalomi,
Howard Schwartz, Chaim Seidler-Feller,
Gerald Serotta, Rami Shapiro, Stanley Sheinbaum,
Uri Simon, Johnny Temple, Arthur Waskow,
Steve Wasserman, A. B. Yehoshua, Idith Zertal

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

Nina Kohl's article, "Pro-Life Democrats: We're Here, We're Sincere. Get Used to It." (May/June 2005), raises a number of key issues about the politics of choice, most importantly the greater impact of pro-choice policies on lowering the number of abortions than so-called "pro-life" strategies. She also touches on the discriminatory effects outlawing abortion would have on poor and minority women, and the effectiveness of comprehensive sex education at home and abroad. At Planned Parenthood, we couldn't agree more.

However, the positions Kohl advocates in her article are largely contradicted by the actual program put forward by Democrats for Life of America (DFLA), the organization whose key initiative, the "95-10" bill, focuses almost entirely on discouraging pregnant women from having abortions, rather than on promoting programs to prevent unintended pregnancies in the first place.

As numerous studies have shown, the



key to reducing the number of abortions is comprehensive prevention strategies, focused on contraceptive access and medically accurate sex education programs. Indeed, Kohl points this out herself with her example that Belgium has the lowest abortion rate in the world, in

Articles in TIKKUN do not necessarily reflect TIKKUN's stance on any issue. TIKKUN's positions are presented in our editorials.

TIKKUN (Vol. 20, No. 4, ISSN 0887-9982) is published bimonthly by the Institute for Labor and Mental Health, a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. TIKKUN, 2342 Shattuck Ave., #1200, Berkeley, CA 94704. TIKKUN subscribers are members of the Institute for Labor and Mental Health. Publications mail agreement number: #1549111. Canada mail distributor information: Express Messenger International; P.O. Box 25058; London BRC, ON N6C 6A8. Printed in USA. Printed on recycled paper.

SUBSCRIPTION ORDERS, CHANGES, AND PROBLEMS:

Call 1-800-395-7753 between 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM PST, write TIKKUN Subscription Service, P.O. Box 460926, Escondido, CA 92046, or email subscribe@tikkun.org. \$29 for 6 issues, \$56 for 12 issues, \$83.50 for 18 issues. Institutional subscriptions: \$50 for 6 issues. Add \$10 per year per sub for Canada and Mexico, \$14 for all other countries outside the U.S. Please pay for all orders in U.S. funds (including postal money orders) or with checks drawn from a U.S. bank. Visa/MC/AmEx/Disc also accepted. Please allow 6-8 weeks for any subscription transaction, including receiving your first issue, solving subscription problems, or changing your address. (Bills and payments may cross in the mail.)

Manuscript submission: Do not send letters of inquiry. Unsolicited manuscripts not accepted via email. **Fiction & Non-fiction:** Send to 2342 Shattuck Ave., #1200, Berkeley, CA 94704. **Poetry:** Joshua Weiner, Dept. of English, 3101 Susquehanna Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742. Our evaluation process may take up to four months. Submissions without a self-addressed stamped envelope will not be returned. Copyright © 2005 by the Institute for Labor and Mental Health. All rights reserved.

Letters to the Editor: Via mail or email to magazine@tikkun.org. Letters may be shortened for space.

Advertising and Permissions: Contact Liz Winer, 2342 Shattuck Ave., #1200, Berkeley, CA 94704; (510) 644-1200; magazine@tikkun.org.

Distribution: International bookstores and newsstand circulation by BigTop Newsstand Services, a division of the IPA. For more information call 415-643-0161 or fax 415-643-2983 or e-mail: info@BigTopPubs.com.

Postmaster: Send address changes to TIKKUN, P.O. Box 460926, Escondido, CA 92046. Periodical-rate postage paid at Oakland, CA and additional mailing offices by the Institute for Labor and Mental Health, 3137 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94609.

part, she argues, because they embrace comprehensive sex education and emphasize contraception. Democrats for Life of America has not built any such strategies into its legislation.

On the other hand, the "Prevention First" bill, introduced by Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), marks a true effort to prevent the need for abortions by increasing access to family planning services, ending insurance discrimination against women, providing compassionate assistance for rape victims, improving awareness about emergency contraception, reducing teen pregnancy, and providing complete information about preventive contraceptive options. If DFLA members truly wanted to reduce the number of abortions, wouldn't they endorse just such a bill? We hope that Democratic legislators are not led astray by measures like the "95-10" initiative, which do little to actually reduce unintended pregnancies.

Those concerned about reproductive health need to simply and firmly stand up for what we know to be true: that age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education works, that access to contraception works, and that people are better able to practice personal responsibility when they are given the necessary tools to do so.

KAREN PEARL
Interim President, Planned
Parenthood Federation of
America, Inc.

To the Editor:

It is a moment in Jewish history worth reflecting on when a Jewish magazine decides to lend its imprimatur to a person who the *Washington Post* has characterized as "a writer celebrated by neo-Nazi groups for his Holocaust revisionism and comparisons of Israel to Nazi Germany." TIKKUN's decision to publish an excerpt from Norman Finkelstein's self-described "sequel" ["The Occupation Spillover Effect," March/April 2005] to his widely condemned *The Holocaust Industry* is shocking to those who know Finkelstein's background. His own mentor, Peter Novick, described *The Holocaust Industry* as a twenty-first century updating of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion." He also warned readers about Finkelstein's lack of credibility: "No facts alleged by Finkelstein should be assumed to be really facts, no quotation in his book should be assumed to be accurate, without taking the time to carefully com-

pare his claims with the sources he cites." Novick concludes: "Such an examination reveals that many of those assertions are pure invention."

Finkelstein has been characterized [by Leon Wieseler] as a "Jew...who supports anti-Semitism"; who espouses "crackpot ideas, some of them mirrored almost verbatim in the propaganda put out by neo-Nazis around the world"; and as "a disgusting self-hating Jew... something you find under a rock."

These strong words are well-deserved because of what Finkelstein has said about others, including Elie Wiesel, who he has called "the resident clown of the Holocaust circus," "a ridiculous character," and "a wimp"; Abe Foxman, who he has called "the grand wizard" of the Anti Defamation League; Holocaust survivors, who he has said are mostly "bogus"; Leon Uris, who he claims named the major character in *Exodus* Ari because it is "the diminutive for Aryan" and Israel, like the Nazis, "likes the blue eyed, blonde haired Aryan types as a racial group"; and me, who he has compared to Adolf Eichmann and accused of not writing my book, *The Case For Israel*. ("[Dershowitz] didn't write the book. I don't think he even read the book.... [Dershowitz] has come to the point where he's had so many people write so many of his books.... [I]t's sort of like a Hallmark line for Nazis.... [T]hey churn them out so fast that he has now reached a point where he doesn't even read them.") (I wrote every word by hand.)

Finkelstein is not always critical of people. He has said nice things about Holocaust denier David Irving, calling him "a good historian" who has "made an 'indispensable' contribution to our knowledge of World War II." He has praised Hezbollah, Osama Bin Laden, and Libya.

There are good reasons why, according to Finkelstein, he "was thrown out of every... school in New York" and why "never has one of [Finkelstein's] articles been published in a scientific magazine." Now a Jewish magazine has broken the taboo. Finkelstein's articles should be published, but in neo-Nazi magazines that are read by most of his readers. Finkelstein's books do not sell in the United States, but they have been best-sellers among neo-Nazis in Germany. That is why one prominent neo-Nazi called him "the Jewish David Irving" and

Open your
heart.

Awaken
your mind.

Offer
them to
the world.

One Spirit Interfaith
Seminary is a two-year
part time professional
training that explores the
world's religions & spiritu-
al diversity. Designed for
working adults, the pro-
gram leads to ordination
as an interfaith minister.

Other Programs: Spiritual
Counseling, Explorations in
Essential Spirituality: An
Integral View, and more.

On-site NYC & distance
learning available.

For more info call:
(212)931-6840

OneSpirit
INTERFAITH SEMINARY

A division of One Spirit Learning Alliance

www.onespiritinterfaith.org

another admiring anti-Zionist described him as "the Jewish Ward Churchill."

The excerpt published by TIKKUN, though mild in comparison with his typical writings, still invokes the American Jewish "conspiracy" and blames anti-Semitism on "the philo-Semites," "the American Jewish elites," and "Israel." In the same issue of TIKKUN, Rabbi Lerner implores: "please don't say, 'Well, the Jewish state is causing this anti-Semitism.'" Yet this is precisely at the heart of Finkelstein's argument.

TIKKUN magazine owes its readers and the Jewish community an explanation for why it would lend its imprimatur to the neo-Nazis' favorite Jew.

ALAN DERSHOWITZ
Cambridge, MA

Norman Finkelstein Responds:

In August 2003, Alan Dershowitz published *The Case for Israel*. The book is a hoax. Indeed, large swaths are plagiarized from, amazingly enough, another hoax: Joan Peters's *From Time Immemorial*. Dershowitz's central thesis is that Israel's human rights record is "generally superb." He doesn't cite a single mainstream human rights organization—Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, B'Tselem—to support this claim. Rather, he cites preposterous sources or falsifies sources or fabricates sources out of whole cloth.

Upon learning that I had produced a book-length study exposing his hoax, Dershowitz panicked. He sent multiple minatory letters to my publisher, University of

California Press, putting them "on notice." When this tactic failed, he hired one of the most powerful law firms in the country, Cravath, Swaine, to intimidate my publisher. When UC press still stood its ground, he went to *The Terminator*, California's Governor Schwarzenegger. And now that this tactic has failed, Dershowitz is resorting to a smear campaign.

Dershowitz cites an article slandering me in the *Washington Post*, but not the retraction that the *Post* was forced to print. He claims that historian Peter Novick is my "mentor," although I've never met or corresponded with Novick. He claims that I've "praised" Osama Bin Laden and Libya, although it's a demented lie. He claims that for a "Jewish magazine" like TIKKUN to publish me breaks a "taboo," although the *Jewish Quarterly*, England's venerable Jewish periodical, has published my work on the Nazi holocaust. Dershowitz claims that my books "do not sell in the United States," although *The Holocaust Industry* alone sold some 50,000 copies. He claims that I say "nice things" about David Irving in *The Holocaust Industry*, although the cited praise (as well as condemnation of his Holocaust denial) comes from historian Gordon Craig in the *New York Review of Books*. Dershowitz claims that *The Holocaust Industry* was "widely condemned," but forgets to mention that the undisputed dean of historians on the Nazi holocaust, Raul Hilberg, generously praised my abilities and scholarship in a blurb for the book, concluding that "I am by no means

the only one who, in the coming months or years, will totally agree with Finkelstein's breakthrough."

Dershowitz is a desperate man. Having failed to block publication of my forthcoming book, he is trying to turn me into the issue so as to deflect attention from his fraud. In all fairness, Dershowitz's predicament does warrant sympathy: Were I the author of *The Case for Israel* and knew an expose of it was about to be published, I would be desperate, too.

NORMAN FINKELSTEIN
Chicago, IL

Michael Lerner Responds:

The notion that publishing someone in TIKKUN is equivalent to giving an imprimatur is ludicrous. We published Alan Dershowitz in the past, though his views legitimizing the assassination of suspected terrorists we find morally abhorrent. We published Elie Wiesel, though his consistent refusal to use his moral authority to critique the Occupation we find morally abhorrent. We've published views defending Reagan's policies in Nicaragua, views in favor of the first and second wars in Iraq, views totally supporting the Occupation of the West Bank, and even once published what was in my mind the most disgusting piece we ever put forward: one that offered a broadside against lesbian sexuality by a sometimes-feminist author. None of these views were meant to lend an imprimatur to anyone.

So why did we publish them? Because, unlike many intellectual magazines, including many of the most famous from Left to Right, we really take seriously the view articulated by John Stuart Mill that the deepest truths emerge from robust debate among alternative worldviews. That's why I've gone out of my way to solicit attacks on my own editorials—for example, most recently publishing long critiques of my views on what I call re-investment, from both the Right and the Left—not as letters to the editor (which other magazines do) but as full-blown articles in the magazine itself.

This ideal obviously has fallen out of mode in other places. So let me say again what I've said many times before: if you want to know the TIKKUN perspective, read our editorials. If you want to hear intellectually stimulating and provocative articles, approximately 60 percent of which I personally disagree with, read the rest of the magazine.

RABBI MICHAEL LERNER

Intern at TIKKUN

We're looking for interns for the summer and beyond to help with TIKKUN Magazine and the Tikkun Community at TIKKUN's National Office in Berkeley, California. You can help with:

The magazine by reviewing article, fiction, and poetry submissions; proofreading articles; researching illustrators.

Growing the Tikkun Community through development, outreach, and events locally, to our national community, and to college students.

To apply, send a resume and cover letter to Liz Winer by email at liz@tikkun.org or fax to 510-644-1255.

To the Editor:

I must confess that Jerome Slater's article in *TIKKUN* ("The Missing Pieces in *The Missing Peace*," May/June 2005) has been an eye-opener. It's the only really good critique of Dennis Ross that I've seen. But it's not much of a defense of Arafat either. I too thought that Ross gave short shrift to Taba and was more definitive about Arafat's "true" intentions than I felt comfortable with. Nevertheless, without a ceasefire and with a disastrous election looming for Barak, Taba was clearly too late; if Ross's advice to Clinton to hold back helped make it so late, Ross deserves harsh criticism indeed.

Still, it should be emphasized that Slater, Malley, and Shlaim (the others I've read on Ross) all acknowledge that Arafat sought advantage from the start of the Intifada and was woefully wrong in thinking that violence would advance the Palestinian cause.

Furthermore, Slater's bias undercuts some of the power of his article: he alleges that the Palestinians didn't engage in "terrorism" until six months into the Intifada, contenting themselves with attacks on the settlements. But these at-

tacks on civilians (including children) also constituted terrorism. If he wanted to excuse or mitigate Arafat's responsibility for these years of carnage and still be fair, Slater would have had to point out that Sharon refrained from reoccupying towns and cities from where terrorist attacks originated for more than a year, until the Passover Seder slaughter in Netanya in April, 2002; Sharon did not retaliate at all for the slaying of twenty teenagers at the Dolphinarium disco in June 2001, but you wouldn't know this from Slater.

And Arafat is even more implicated in terrorism than these writers admit. None have ever refuted the documentary evidence that shows the al-Aksa Martyrs Brigades invoicing Arafat for expenses incurred in obtaining explosives for suicide attacks (he paid, but also stiffed them with less money than they asked for). Furthermore, I recall media coverage of tensions building months prior to Camp David, during which Arafat's PA incited popular outrage, even running a camp training youngsters in terror tactics (according to an article in the *New York Times*).

Finally, I find Slater's bias especial-

ly irritating in his concluding paragraph. He can't understand why "we Jews, of all people, cannot distinguish between oppression and resistance, cannot understand or refuse to acknowledge clear injustice ... when it is our brethren who are the perpetrators rather than the victims." But I can! Because the crime of wanton terror, which intentionally targets civilians regardless of age or gender, is so heinous that it obliterates any clear line marking one side as total "perpetrator" and the other as total "victim."

RALPH SELIGER
Editor, *Israel Horizons*, and
Vice President, *Meretz USA*
New York, NY

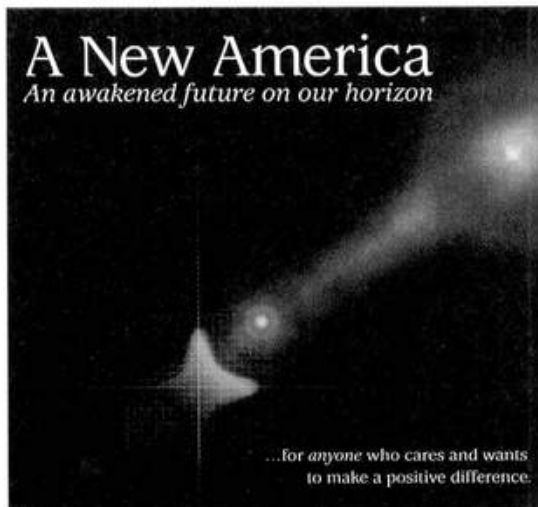
ERRATA

In our May/June 2005 issue, there are two corrections to make. First, we reported that Thandeka is the president of the Center for Community Values. She is, in fact, its co-president. Second, we incorrectly attributed authorship of the cartoon "Red Emma Goldman, Born Enemy of the State," to Nicole Schulman. The author is Sharon Rudahl.

A Special Edition from Global Awakening Press

A New America

An awakened future on our horizon



"This is the time for humanity to see itself in a greater light and create something new that is more closely aligned with our highest aspirations as spiritual beings."

www.pfcn.net/newamerica.html
TO PREVIEW & SECURE ONLINE ORDERS

A New America

An awakened future on our horizon

The essential message of *A New America* is that we still have the potential to develop new ways of being that transcend old patterns of fear, conflict, retribution, and domination.

Revealing in-depth results from a nearly one million dollar research study of American values, beliefs and consciousness, *A New America* offers profound insights into socio-cultural dynamics for personal, community, and global transformation.

- Embraces a great majority of Americans with new political strategies grounded in a radically new analysis of the 2000 election and voting patterns.
- Presents two evolutionary strategies for positive social-cultural change that brings unity within diversity, and includes insights and commentary leading to new potentials for humanity.

Invaluable for anyone who desires to lead, influence, persuade, or draw upon the energies of the American people and all humanity to achieve a common goal of a more positive future.

Why Are We Here?

George Vradenburg

This is a question pondered by mankind throughout history. But it would seem as if it is a question that many progressives would argue cannot be explored in American schools or in the public arena by a speaker with a spiritual perspective. The current and continuing effort to deny access to the teaching of Intelligent Design has the eerie ring of the know-nothing Scopes Trial, just in reverse.

Today, we can teach evolution—"how" we got here. But we don't seem to be able to teach "why" we are here.

Steven Hawking, in his best-seller *A Brief History of Time*, explores the fascinating question of how the universe works, yet observes that it is only after understanding "how" the universe works that we can explore "why" the universe works the way it does—what he calls "the mind of God."

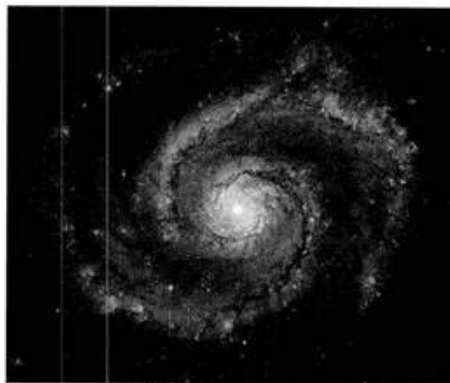
Why is it that mathematics is the language in which the workings of the universe can be explained? And why do human beings have the ability to create that language and understand it? Why do the "mind of man" and the "mind of God" connect through a common vocabulary?

The same can be said about other universal languages: art and music. Steven Spielberg, in his famous movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, posits that beings from another universe would converse with us in color and music tones. What is the source of this shared resonance?

What is the nature of this mysterious connection between human consciousness and the persistent and singular human longing to connect to something bigger than ourselves?

Is it possible to be truly human and not wonder about our place and our role in the universe? Is it possible to think that the universe is totally random and not ordered in some fashion? And, if ordered, does the universe perhaps have a velocity and a trajectory? And, if there is an arrow to time, might there not be a beginning and an end and something in between?

Why was there a beginning to human history, and, if there was, can we refer to that as the "creation"? Might human history end, and if so, can we refer to that as the "end of time"?



Is it possible that we can affect the timing of the end to the human story, and, if so, how? Are we alone in the universe in our self-consciousness and in our feeling that we can make decisions of consequence?

If we are part of an ordered universe, is it not possible that there is a structure and order to human relationships that may enable us better to shape the quality and duration of human history? If we are connected to that universe and to each other, is

there not a manner of relating to our fellow human beings and to the universe that better suits our human nature—and thus that is more "satisfying"—than other ways of relating? Is it not possible that there is an "intelligent design" to the universe and to our role in it?

These are questions traditionally characterized as "spiritual," which philosophers and spiritual leaders have addressed since the beginning of our human experience on this earth. They are the questions at the heart of our identity as individuals and as members of civil society.

Many who consider themselves "secular," and thus have little or no spiritual self-identification, have a point of view on these topics, arguing that the introduction of spiritual considerations into the educational or public arena would inevitably lead to domination of a Religious Right worldview and a loss of individual freedom. There is no question that individual freedom to explore these critical issues is central to our free society. Yet, to permit a "secular" worldview that excludes any "spiritual" perspective is to permit precisely the domination of a single belief system and loss of freedom we seek to avoid.

The honest discussion of these questions should be part of the education of our children and of the public life of our society. The effort to take spiritual considerations out of our educational system and our public arena is to rob us of an important set of intellectual and emotional tools that we need in order to "get at" these questions.

We should not seek to fend off the domination of a possibly exclusionary spiritual worldview by denying its right to be voiced or by demonizing it, but rather by finding the spiritual voice to counter it.

We will all be the richer for the dialogue.

George Vradenburg is co-publisher of TIKKUN.

AP PHOTO/MAJESA

What is a Network of Spiritual Progressives?

Michael Lerner

The brilliance of the American Right has been its ability to bring secular and religious people together in an unholy alliance that has given it the authority to shape America's future.

It wasn't any easier for them than it will be for liberals and progressives.

The American Right has its secular materialists who are just as skeptical about God and religion as anyone on the Left. It also has its religious fundamentalists who think that Bush is sacrificing their interests by not pushing for an amendment to the constitution barring gay marriage and abortion. The American Right has always had a strong sense that unless religious and secular conservatives can work together and support each other, it'll get nowhere. And so, since the early 1970s, they've made common cause, supporting each other's think tanks, media, and colleges, and collaborating together on Republican electoral campaigns at both local and national levels.

The strength of the American Right is its willingness to stick by its own ideas rather than compromising them for the sake of momentary victories. Consider, for example, the amount of dedication it took to carry the banner of militarism at a time when most Americans were sickened by the war in Vietnam, or to continue their support for tax-cuts for the rich even in the face of overwhelming evidence that such measures rarely trickled down to the middle class and the poor. Conservatives held on in their lean years, from 1964 to 1980, continuing to repeat their mantras of domination and control, of discrimination, and of preferential options for the rich, even when it was against their own electoral interest to do so.

Imagine how much impact it would have if there were a Left with similar clarity and commitment to its principles, combined with a genuine openness to building an alliance among secular, spiritual, and religious progressives.

Well, that is precisely what we propose to do with the Tikkun Community's newest project—the creation of a Network of Spiritual Progressives. Building on the Core Vision of The Tikkun Community, we are taking the first steps to create an interfaith network that will link together on a grassroots level

anyone who might want to be part of a Spiritual/Religious Left.

The key, however, is to get a buy-in from secular progressives.

The sad truth is that there is a significant tendency within the Left to be hostile to religion and spirituality. The problem is that you can't build an alliance if one of the necessary partners finds it difficult to not be antagonistic. And yet, there are sections of the Left where the anger at religion is so intense that anyone who cares about God or about a spiritual practice is going to rightly feel unwelcome.

Such animosity is certainly understandable. Many people on the Left are refugees from religious communities that were filled with racism, sexism, homophobia, and conformism. Many liberals and progressives identify religious life with those distortions in the religious world and so want to have nothing to do with God or religion.

Unfortunately, this is a tremendous political error. Over 95 percent of the American public says that they believe in God, and over 60 percent say that they pray regularly. Winning a democratic progressive majority in such a country requires situating oneself in comradely relationship with this majority, even if one retains their skepticism. To build a force capable of changing American society, we need a Left that feels friendly rather than hostile to the spiritual aspirations of the American people.

This does not mean advocating that secular people must become religious or tone down their criticism of the policies of the Religious Right. But it does mean asking secular progressives to extend the Left's ethos of inclusivity so that it encompasses progressive religious and spiritual people. This acceptance must truly be genuine. Just as we would not ask a member of a previously demeaned group to be part of our community and then tolerate derogatory jokes or comments about their group, we should not expect religious and spiritual people to endure such insensitivity in our own circles.

Can secular progressives get over their religio-phobia? Or would they prefer to continue to alienate religious and spiritual people who are potential allies? The logic seems quite simple: they can't afford not to get over their fear of religion. Unless the secular Left learns to form alliances with the



religious and the spiritual, the Left will never become a broad enough movement to effectively challenge right-wing political initiatives. Most importantly, it will never be in a position of assuming electoral power. With the weakening of the separation between church and state, continued attempts to subordinate the judiciary, and further assaults on the rights of gays, lesbians, women, and people of color, the reasons for forming such an alliance are clearer than ever. Yet the Left continues to be an uncomfortable place for those who believe in God.

One group that might play a critical bridging role in this process is people who are "spiritual but not religious." There are many Americans who have rejected traditional religious communities and theologies, but who nevertheless are deeply spiritual. Some of them find themselves practicing yoga, meditating, or engaging in other spiritual disciplines. Others are not involved in a spiritual practice, but have a spiritual sensibility that gets aroused when they are in contact with nature, the arts, or scientific discovery. Some are involved in organized communities like the Unity Church, Unitarianism, the Jewish Renewal movement, or Buddhism. Others want nothing to do with anything organized around spiritual themes, but pursue their spirituality in purely private, individual ways separate from any existing community.

Although many such people reject traditional theological stances about a Supreme Being, they are nevertheless in touch with a spiritual dimension to their own existence and to the universe that makes them understand what religious people may be yearning for. And they often share with religious people a sense of being unwelcome in a secular Left that has militantly excluded them. These "spiritual but religious" folk could articulate both to religious and to militant secularists the need for higher levels of tolerance of difference and join with us in building a Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP).

As a project of the Tikkun Community, the Network of Spiritual Progressives will work within the context of the Core Vision of Tikkun. [For the full version, please go to: www.tikkun.org/core_vision]. For this purpose, central components of this Core Vision are as follows:

We are a community of people from many faiths and traditions, called together by TIKKUN magazine and its vision of healing and transforming our world. We include in this call both the outer transformation needed to achieve social justice, ecological sanity, and world peace, and the inner healing needed to foster

loving relationships, a generous attitude toward the world and toward others unimpeded by the distortions of our egos. Our movement will encourage a habit of generosity and trust, and the ability to respond to the grandeur of creation with awe, wonder, and radical amazement.

We are guided in our work by our belief in the principle of solidarity. For us, this principle has spiritual roots in the Jewish commandment to remember that we were all slaves in Egypt; we believe that we are all harmed by oppression directed at any group or individual. This is a message which is common to most of the religious and spiritual traditions of the past several thousand years, and is part of the tradition also of many secular and

even "orthodox atheist" groups that came into existence in the past few hundred years, when the religious and spiritual communities that supposedly were committed to these values actually failed to take them seriously and became, instead, embedded in economic and political realities that were oppressive.

We in the Tikkun Community use the word "spiritual" to include all those whose deepest values lead them to challenge the ethos of selfishness and materialism that has led people into a frantic search for money and power and away from a life that places love, kindness, generosity, peace, non-violence, social justice, awe and wonder at the grandeur of creation, thanksgiving, humility, and joy at the center of our lives. We believe that many of the secular movements that exist in the world today actually have deep spiritual underpinnings, but often they are themselves unaware of those foundations, unable or unwilling to articulate them, and sometimes even holding a knee-jerk antagonism to explicit spiritual or religious language. This antagonism limits their effectiveness, though it derives from legitimate anger at the way that the language of spirituality and religion has been sometimes used to justify war, oppression, sexism, racism, homophobia, ecological indifference, or insensitivity to the suffering of the poor and the homeless of the world.

We hope you can come to our two founding conferences for the Network of Spiritual Progressives—one this very month of July (20–23) at the University of California, Berkeley, the second in Washington, D.C. Feb. 10–13, 2006. Even if you don't come to our conferences, we still want you to become a member of the Network of Spiritual Progressives. But if you can come, it will help us tremendously to have your thinking and involvement in this project. Obviously, whether this moves from being a "good idea" to being an actually existing project depends in large part on who comes (and how many people come to our gatherings), and whether they are

One group that might play a critical bridging role in this process is people who are "spiritual but not religious." There are many Americans who have rejected traditional religious communities and theologies, but who nevertheless are deeply spiritual.

willing to do the ongoing work that will make this Network a powerful force. If you are a paid-up member of the national organization of the Tikkun Community, you don't have to re-join—your membership in Tikkun covers all of our projects, including the Network of Spiritual Progressives (and gives you a discount for our conferences). If you are not a member, please go to our website www.tikkun.org to join the Network of Spiritual Progressives, or call 510-528-6250.

The Goals of the Network of Spiritual Progressives

The Network will:

- Challenge the misuse of God and religion by the Religious Right and champion a progressive spiritual politics.
- Challenge the anti-spiritual and religio-phobic tendencies in liberal and progressive cultures.
- Challenge the American ethos of selfishness and materialism by championing a New Bottom Line for American society: Institutions get judged efficient, rational, or productive not only to the extent that they maximize money and power, but also to the extent that they maximize love, caring, kindness, generosity, ethical/ecological sensitivity, and awe and wonder at the grandeur of the universe.

We will defend the separation of Church and State, but will insist on a role for spiritual values, like love and caring, in the public sphere. We will defend gays and lesbians, choice, and contraception. And we will seek a spiritual dimension to sexuality and resist the commodification and vulgarization of this sacred dimension of life. We will explore areas of potential cooperation between science and spirit, overcoming a narrow technocratic consciousness and economic reductionism that characterizes a good deal of progressive thinking, because it saves little room for the mystery and miracle of human consciousness for the celebration of the holy, the sacred, and the Unity of All Being.

We enthusiastically embrace the Left's commitment to social justice, peace, non-violence, international solidarity, and ecological sanity. In addition, we seek to forge a spiritual politics that encourages the development of an inner life, celebrates the dimensions of being that go beyond politics and economics, recognizes the importance of diversity, and acknowledges that there is no one correct path to spiritual truth.

NSP Focus Areas for April 2005 to April 2007

1. The Conferences on Spiritual Activism July 20–23, 2005, Berkeley, CA and Feb. 10–13, 2006, Washington, D.C. The idea of these conferences is to bring together spiritual activists who share our goals, and then to seek to further define the approach that we have been developing and its implications for social policy and political activism.

We hope to have a yearly conference of this sort.

2. Support for an Independent Judiciary. The Right's attempt to portray the courts as involved in a conspiracy to undermine religious values poses an immediate danger to the separation of church and state. This danger goes beyond the specific efforts of the Bush Administration and its allies in Congress to pack the courts with right-wing judges, something it has already been doing successfully. The greater danger is that the Right will succeed in creating a climate of fear in which liberals and moderates in every branch of the judiciary, government, and civil society will feel intimidated about speaking out or pursuing their own views for fear that they too will be vulnerable.

For this reason, the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP) will encourage its members to organize local activities in support of an independent judiciary. We'll also encourage local groups to launch a weekly information picket in front of court houses aimed at supporting the independence of the judiciary, encouraging judges and potential jurors to use their own intelligence and intuitions in making judicial determination, and to educate the public to the many benefits that have accrued to American society by virtue of an independent judiciary. We will similarly seek to do outreach to the legal profession and the media around these issues.

3. Political Education. The NSP will educate the Democrats, the Greens, other political parties, environmental organizations, women's organizations, gay and lesbian organizations, the labor movement, and civil rights organizations about the need to create a climate welcoming to religious and spiritual people and concerns.

Members of the Network will meet with elected officials, party and social change movement activists, and others in these movements, to develop political platforms that have a spiritually progressive message and to seek to uproot attitudes and messages from these movements that are hostile, ridiculing, or unfriendly to progressive spiritual and religious practices and beliefs.

NSP activists will seek to strategize with these movements about ways to incorporate a spiritual-positive approach into their movements and to avoid religio-phobia.

The NSP will create an ongoing spiritual progressives caucus in the Democratic Party, the Greens, and other political parties and social change organizations where we are welcomed to articulate our ideas. We hope that these caucuses will play a significant role in inserting our ideas into the public discourse by the 2008 and 2012 primaries and elections.

4. Study and Theory Development. Using my book *The Left Hand of God* (HarperSanFrancisco, Jan. 2006) and Jim Wallis' book *God's Politics* as foundational, the NSP will educate both itself and other organizations about what a progressive spiritual politics could look like in the United States. In particular, the NSP will attempt to convince progressive movements to adopt and popularize the Spiritual Covenant with America that will be proposed in *The Left Hand of God*. Theory development is an important element in building the

EDITORIAL

NSP, and we will seek to highlight the work of many other authors whose thinking goes in similar directions. If you know such people, please urge them to come to one of the two founding conferences so that they can become known to us and us to them.

5. Think Tank Activity. Under the direction of Julie Oxenberg, the NSP will seek to develop an ongoing think tank that produces detailed analyses of contemporary policy issues. We will also work in conjunction with many other liberal and progressive think tanks, particularly those that have a spiritual sensitivity.

6. Conference Calls. To link activists in a more interactive way, we will have a biweekly conference call. It is understood that the conference call is not a decision-making instrument for the Network, but rather a way to exchange ideas and information.

7. Media Outreach. The NSP will seek to hone media-oriented skills so that members may effectively spread our message and encourage participation. There are many media people who do not like being servants to conservative-controlled media and who might sympathize with our positions. Similarly we need to support the development of independent media like Air America, Indymedia.org, "Democracy Now," TIKKUN, *Yes!*, and many other like-minded outlets for progressive politics.

8. New Bottom Line in Your Profession, Union, or Work Place. The NSP will encourage people within each profession or workplace to form ongoing discussions and consciousness-raising groups aimed at developing a concrete vision of what a New Bottom Line might look like when applied to that particular profession or workplace.

9. Spiritually Progressive Music and Other Outreach to Youth. Just as Christian rock helped spread the message of the Religious Right to young people, we need to develop a spiritually progressive music that speaks to today's youth and rejects the materialism, sexism, and homophobia that prevails in mainstream contemporary pop culture. The NSP must encourage the creation of such music. It will build musical outreach programs on high school and college campuses.

10. Fundraising. We all know that the Religious Right has been powerful in part because it has convinced millions of middle-income people to make regular donations to their cause. Liberals and progressives have done this in a serious way only to support political candidates, but not to build the grassroots intellectual, spiritual, and media infrastructure that is essential to launch an effective counter-movement to the Religious Right. If you have skills or connections that could help us launch an effective fund-raising drive, please work with us on this.

Membership in the Network of Spiritual Progressives

To Join: The Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP) is a project of The Tikkun Community. Membership fees are the

same as membership in the Tikkun Community. (If you are already a member of The Tikkun Community, you do not have to pay any more money to become a member of the Network because it is free to paid-up members. Just drop us a note saying that you wish to be part of the NSP project, and include your email address and phone number).

Fees:

- Incomes under \$40,000: \$40/yr.
- Incomes between \$40,000 and \$80,000: \$80 yr.
- Incomes over \$80,000: \$120/yr.

Want to actually help us get enough money to make this a powerful force? Help us financially by becoming one of the following donors:

- World Transformer: \$1,000/yr
- Founding Member: \$500/yr.
- Associate: \$250/yr.

Send a check made to TIKKUN and specify: NSP Membership (Network of Spiritual Progressives) at the bottom left of check. Mail to NSP, c/o Tikkun, 951 Cragmont Ave, Berkeley, Ca. 94708.

When sending your check, please indicate in an accompanying note that you are either just joining to support the NSP, but are not interested in activism, or that you are interested in activism. If activism is your preference, please tell us which of the projects described above interest you and for which you have time.

Two Questions

1. Has the Tikkun Community abandoned its concern about Israel/Palestine? Not in the least. On February 13th, the last day of our Washington conference, we will be doing a Teach-In to Congress on the latest developments in the Middle East. We anticipate that by then the Gaza withdrawal will be complete, and that the real issue will again return to the agenda: Will Israel withdraw to roughly the pre-1967 borders as agreed to under the Oslo Accords and re-conceptualized in detail in the Geneva Accord? Or will Israel attempt to use sympathy for standing up to the Gaza settlers as an excuse to show why it would be too painful and disruptive to give up the West Bank settlements—guaranteeing a rejection by Palestinians and the perpetuation of violence. Join us at both the conference in D.C. and the Teach-In to Congress the next day.

2. Does the Network of Spiritual Progressives seek to be the main organization of spiritual politics? No. But at the moment, it is the only explicitly interfaith grassroots organization with an agenda to build a New Bottom Line in the United States that criticizes both the manipulation of God by the Right and antagonism to spirit on the Left. However, there are other organizations emerging that are similarly concerned with challenging the Religious Right. We hope to work collaboratively with them in larger coalition efforts.

What will happen at the conference? We've provided its agenda on the following pages.

Conference on Spiritual Activism

Conference Agenda

Wednesday July 20

8:00 am	Registration Opens: Pauley Ballroom, UC Berkeley, corner of Bancroft and Telegraph Ave.
9:00 am	Opening ritual, small group discussions
9:45 am	Introduction, Robyn Thomas, Michael Nagler, and George Lakoff
11:00 am	"The Politics of Meaning," Peter Gabel
11:30 am	"Small Groups, Big Changes," Thandeka
12:00 noon	Entertainment, Ray Hanania
12:15 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm	Workgroups
4:00 pm	Workshops
5:45 pm	Mutual recognition groups
6:15 pm	Dinner
8:00 pm	"Movement to Transform American Society," Reverend Jim Wallis and Rabbi Michael Lerner
10:00 pm	Musical performances

Thursday July 21

8:00 am	Prayer, yoga, meditation, and dancing
9:15 am	Follow-up, Rev. Wallis and Rabbi Lerner
10:30 am	"Building a progressive spiritual politics on sexuality and family," Revs. Debra Haffner and Ignacio Castuera, Lynne Canning, Ama Zenya, Susan Linn
12:00 noon	Lunch
1:30 pm	"Spiritual Values in the Public Sphere," David Korten, Carl Pope, Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dave Robinson, Jim Winkler, Joan Borysenko
4:00 pm	Workgroups and Workshops
5:45 pm	Mutual recognition discussion groups
6:15 pm	Dinner
7:30 pm	"God's Politics...and Ours," John Shelby Spong, Carol Flinders, Van Jones, Rev. Romal Tune, Rick Ufford-Chase
10:00 pm	Concert and dancing

Friday July 22

8:00 am	Prayer, yoga, meditation, and dancing
9:00 am	"Religion and Spirit Transforming Politics," Dr. Welton Gaddy, Rev. Brenda Peterson, Congressman Jim Moran, John Cobb, Robert Inchausti
12:00 noon	Lunch
1:30 pm	"Sabbath Economics, Societal Transformation" Ched Meyers, Riane Eisler, Matthew Fox

4:00 pm	Workgroups and Workshops
5:45 pm	Mutual recognition discussion groups
6:15 pm	Dinner
8:30 pm	Wisdom from theologians, spiritual teachers Rita Brock, Arun Gandhi, John Dear, Rebecca Solnit, and Ahrar Ahmad
8:30 pm	Shabbat Service, pot-luck, singing, Rabbi Michael Lerner
10:30 pm	Concert and dancing

Saturday July 23

8:00 am	Prayer, yoga, meditation, and dancing
9-11:00 am	Spiritual practices: Michael Nagler, Carol Flinders; Michael Lerner, Sylvia Boorstein; Louis Vitale; Kabir Helminski
9-11:30 am	Buddhist Peace Fellowship Sessions
9-11:00 am	Workshops
9:00 am-5:00	Nonviolence Workshop, Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service, Ken Butigan, Laura Slattery, Ken Preston-Pile
11:00 am	"Moral and Spiritual Imperatives to Address Threats to the Global Commons," Jonathan Granoff, Andrew Kimbrell, Carol Wolman
12:00 noon	Lunch
1-3:30 pm	Buddhist Peace Fellowship Sessions
2:00 pm	Policy Statements from Workgroups
3:30 pm	"From the Frontline," Congresspeople Lynn Woolsey and Jim Moran, and consolidating platform ideas from workgroups
5:00 pm	Closing ritual for the conference
8-11:00 pm	Music and dancing with political songwriter David Rovics and others

Workgroups

The Workgroups meet for 3 days and then propose platform planks to the Network on Saturday.

A. VALUES-ORIENTED ECONOMY. What would an economic system look like that was designed to build a world of kindness, justice, peace, and environmental sanity? What is progress and when is it appropriate to limit it in the name of other values? Rick Lowery, Rabbi Steven Jacobs, Horst Lehrheuer, Rev. Fred Morris

B. UP FROM MATERIALISM. How is the prevailing corporate-dominated culture holding back the evolution of human consciousness and spiritual development? Is there a global clash of cultures—and what if we think both sides are distorted? Robert Inchausti, John Cobb, David Korten, Maggie Mansueto, Anthony Mansueto

C. EDUCATION FOR SPIRITUAL HEALTH. What if liberals fought not only for better pay and buildings, but also for a new content

EDITORIAL

to education—geared to developing values like caring, intellectual curiosity, social justice, nonviolence, awe and wonder, kindness and tolerance. Lauren Chamberlain, Kirk Schneider, James Hernandez

D. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY. How do we channel spiritual and religious wisdom into the environmental movements? How do we build a movement for ethical consumption? Carl Pope, Mary Elizabeth Moore, Cheraga Thea Levkovitz, Rev. Craig Scott

E. THEORY AND PRACTICE OF NONVIOLENCE. How can nonviolent practice actually work as an alternative to armies and military interventions? How might we build nonviolence as a central part of a strategy for world peace and conflict transformation? Michael Nagler, Arun Gandhi, Mubarak Awad, Mel Duncan, John Dear, Azim Khamisa, Jordan Ashley Pearlstein

F. SEXUALITY. What would a healthy and spiritually sacred sexuality in America look like? How do we address the fears that the Right manipulates into an anti GLBT hysteria? How do we resist the commodification of sex by the market without falling into repressive or anti-pleasure modes? Rev. Debra Haffner, Rabbi Debora Kohn, Lynne Canning, Carol Flinders, Ignacio Castuera, Joe Fischel

G. SCIENCE AND SPIRIT. How can we heal the current radical divorce between science and religion? Can we undertake such a project without compromising the intellectual and moral integrity of each enterprise? Can one be a serious scientist and take religion seriously? How? How can we defend/discuss evolution, and should alternative theories be taught in schools? Stanley Klein, Rami Shapiro, John Cobb, Matthew Fox

Workshops

At the same time as the Workgroups are meeting, there will be a set of Workshops available. Each Workshop meets only once.

Wednesday, July 20

A1. PROGRESSIVE PRO-FAMILIES AGENDA. How can spiritual wisdom change social policy to build strong and loving families? Allen Kanner, Susan Linn

A2. END THE WAR IN IRAQ AND OTHER WARS FOR "FREEDOM". The media tells us that the real problem, and our real enemy, is religious fundamentalism. How can religion be a resource for peace? Mark Levine, Osagyefu Uhuru Sekou, Dave Robinson

A3. THE EFFICACY OF LAW FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. The Left's recourse to the judiciary has engendered political apathy and a populist backfire. What is the role of law in a spiritual progressive politics? Peter Gabel

A4. REDISCOVERING AWE. A new front in Humanistic Psychology, politics, and spirituality. Kirk Schneider, David McLean

A5. SPIRITUAL HUNGERS MEET FEMINIST THIRSTS, AND A MOVEMENT IS REBORN. Revitalizing feminism through its reconnection to its spiritual roots. Carol Flinders

Thursday, July 21

B1. THE CHALLENGE OF ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM. How can we best support the voices for peace, tolerance, and social justice in the Islamic world? Kabir Helmlinski, Sayyed Nadeem Kazmi

B2. AGING AND DEATH. How can we restructure society to show more respect for the aging and more support for those facing death? Debora Kohn

B3. HEALING ISRAEL/PALESTINE. How can we use spiritual wisdom to resolve the Israeli/Palestinian struggle? How can we successfully lobby legislators? Rabbi Michael Lerner, Mubarak Awad, Rabbi Joshua Levine Grater

B4. FIRST AMENDMENT. Will introducing spiritual and religious discourse into social policy and politics undermine the First Amendment and the value of the separation clause? Brenda Peterson, Welton Gaddy, Glenn Smith

B5. WRITING ON THE WALL: THE ART OF SPIRITUAL CULTURE JAMMING. Learn to spiritually jam the dominant culture with a new meme and message. This is not a seminar or lecture, but a hands-on experience. Rabbi Rami Shapiro

B6. CREATING AN AUTHENTIC PROGRESSIVE CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY. Maggie Mansueto, Anthony Mansueto

Friday, July 22

C1. THE LABOR MOVEMENT. What would a spiritually sensitive labor movement look like, and what could be done to challenge the materialist consensus that currently dominates unions? Jay Youngdahl, Travis Donoho

C2. SABBATH, THE WORLD OF WORK, AND FOOD. How might the biblical injunction to rest challenge the corporate ethos of endless accumulation and perpetual labor? Could appreciation of the Sabbath affect our relation to food and consumption? Andrew Kimbrell

C3. AIDS AND OTHER CRISES. How can our spiritual wisdom support our approach to dealing with pandemics? Rabbi Joseph Edelheit

C4. CHRISTIANITY ISN'T WHAT THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT SAYS IT IS. Carol Wolman

C5. MEDIA REFORM. THE POWER OF INDEPENDENT, SPIRITUAL MAGAZINES. Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, Joel Schalit

C6. SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF PEOPLES OF ASIA AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS. Jeffrey Kuan

C7. SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS. Romal Tune

Saturday, July 23

D1. CITIZENSHIP FOR JUSTICE—BUILDING ALLIANCES ACROSS DIFFERENCES. We will engage how diverse communities affirm social justice as sacred practice, drawing on critical and heretical interpretations supportive of shared dreams. Angana Chatterji, Richard Shapiro.

Remembering Kosovo

Joel Schalit

Six years ago today, I found myself stranded at Malpensa airport in Milan. My connecting flight to Tel Aviv was two hours late, and no one at the Alitalia desk had been able to tell me why. Exhausted from the twelve-hour flight from San Francisco, I kept looking at my watch, thinking that the later I arrived in Israel, the more difficult it would be for my seventy-nine-year-old father to come and pick me up.

An hour later, a middle-aged man carrying a briefcase sat down beside me. “*Atah medaber ivrit?*” (Do you speak Hebrew?) he asked, as he extended his hand. “*Lo kulkach tov,*” (Not so well) I told him. “I’ve been living in the U.S. for nineteen years, and it’s kind of rusty.” He proceeded to introduce himself, telling me that he was a fashion wholesaler who’d come to Milan for the spring shows. I told him that I was a writer on my way home to Israel to visit my parents.

“Do you have any idea why this flight is running so late?” I asked. “Alitalia can’t even give an estimate as to when we’re actually going to leave.”

“Yes,” he replied. “NATO has taken over all of the sky lanes that are usually reserved for air travel between here and the Eastern Mediterranean. I bet they haven’t assigned a passage for this flight yet. Besides, most flights between here and Tel Aviv usually fly over Yugoslavia.”

As astute as my newfound friend was, however, he was only partly right. When an Alitalia representative passed in front of us, I decided to get to the bottom of it. “Prego Signora, could you tell us what’s going on with our flight?” My neighbor stared at her,



amused. “Of course,” she said, looking a little flustered. “We have a shortage of pilots due to the war in Kosovo. They’ve all been requisitioned for military duty.”

I’ve been replaying this scene in my memory a lot these past few weeks, the memory triggered by watching Germany’s sixtieth-anniversary commemorations of the end of the Second World War on Deutsche Welle TV. The irony of the sixth anniversary of NATO’s air war over the former Yugoslavia coinciding with these commemorative activities has made me want to remember everything about that fateful time in 1999. Despite all the talk of remembrance, it felt like something was being forgotten.

While it would be impossible to deny the contemporary relevance of World War II today, the last of the Balkan Wars holds more immediate significance for me and perhaps many people of my generation. Even though the West brought the Bosnian War to a negotiated end, and turned Bosnia-Herzegovina into NATO’s first formal protectorate, the astounding level of force it brought to bear over the skies of Serbia has always felt like it broke some kind of metaphysical taboo.

For sixty days, NATO bombed everything from bridges and power stations to factories and military targets. By the time the campaign was over, though Milosevic’s murderous forces had withdrawn from Kosovo, his country lay in absolute ruins. After the aircraft had returned home, progressives on both sides of the Atlantic—many of whom had initially supported intervention—felt deeply conflicted about what had just been done.

Expressing one of the clearest opinions of anger on the Left about what had really been lost, Michael Parenti argued that NATO had dismembered one of the of the last multicultural socialist nations. Focusing on the meaning of the Western alliance’s actions, Noam Chomsky and Slavoj Žižek contended that NATO’s intervention represented the first time in which imperialist-style military force had been used to achieve liberal—albeit multicultural—political ends. Watching footage of new German troops on their way to Afghanistan, following yet *more* coverage of the World War II commemorations on Deutsche Welle, all I could think of was how much I missed being clueless about where my plane to Tel Aviv really was and why I was going to be late meeting my father.

Ignorance is by no means bliss, I muttered under my breath as I finally found the courage to turn off my television set. Trying to understand the ideological significance of everything I’d been watching, wishing that someone would point out that this was also the sixth anniversary of NATO’s military intervention in Kosovo, I felt overwhelmed. *Maybe it’s just that there are too many wars to keep track of*, I thought, as I began my morning commute to TIKKUN. □

Joel Schalit is managing editor of TIKKUN.

FREE ASSOCIATIONS

Someone Got it Right

History has a way of morally vindicating muckraking media, even on those painful occasions when they make bad decisions about the reliability of their sources. Such is the case with an eighteen-day period in May, when *Newsweek* first reported on May 9 that military personnel at the infamous Guantanamo Bay detention facility had flushed copies of the Koran down the toilet, only to discover after the fact that the deep throat for this disclosure—a “knowledgeable government source”—had fed the periodical false information.

Following several days of violent protest throughout the Muslim world, on May 15 *Newsweek* officially retracted the story and issued a formal apology to an incensed Pentagon and a gloating army of right-wing pundits, many of whom vociferously denounced the publication for disseminating ideologically motivated falsehoods. However, in a May 15 interview published by Reuters, *Newsweek* editor Mark Whitaker was still not certain his publication had got it all wrong. “As to whether anything like this happened, we just don’t know,” Whitaker stated. “We’re not saying it absolutely happened but we can’t say that it absolutely didn’t happen either.”

Was *Newsweek*’s decision to retract the story a result of political pressure? Whitaker’s

reluctance to fully endorse his own magazine’s backtracking is particularly telling. Especially when one reviews a May 19 CNN report in which the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) claimed its representatives gathered “credible” reports about U.S. personnel abusing the Koran at Guantanamo throughout

2002 and 2003. According to CNN, the Pentagon issued strict guidelines about how to properly handle the Koran immediately after the ICRC brought this to their attention. No further incidents were reported by the ICRC thereafter.

If the *New York Times* May 20 cover story on U.S. military abuse of Afghan pris-

oners is any indication, the jury definitely remains out.

Reporting on the charging of seven enlisted personnel with criminal offenses “ranging from dereliction of duty to maiming and involuntary manslaughter” over the death of a twenty-two-year-old taxi driver held prisoner at the Bagram detention center, in the most lurid of detail, the

Turning Eighteen? Welcome to a World of Fear

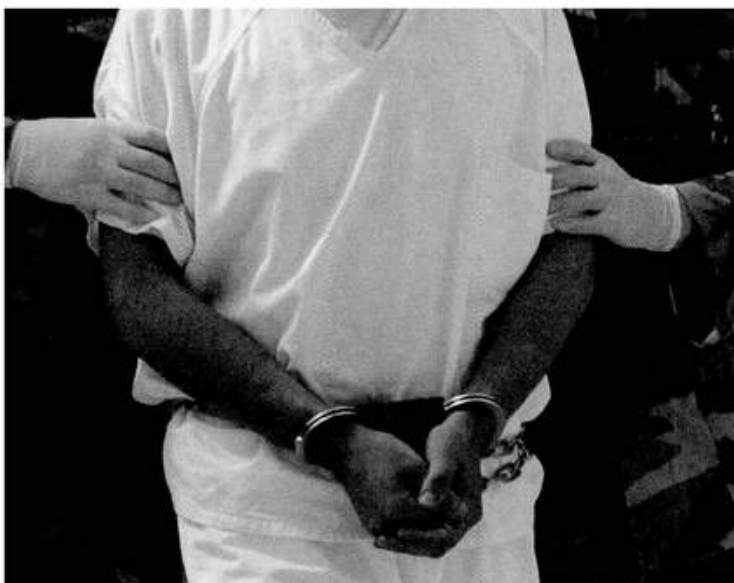
This month the State Bar of California proudly issued its first “Survival Guide for Teenagers.” You may have thought that the turn from teenager to adult should mark a time for hope and optimism, a time of opportunity, even freedom. Think again. To the ponderous lawyers of the Bar, this “important milestone” means only that “you are now an adult in the eyes of the law.”

Thrilled to be able to drive without a learner’s permit? Don’t think that car will free you to explore a new world, young lady! Instead, remember that you are now subject to laws on reckless driving, speed limits, seat belts, even littering from your vehicle—just four in a list of ten “do nots” splashed across the survival guide’s pages.

Thinking about “having fun” (a real subtitle in this document!)? “Keep in mind,” states the Bar, “that there are legal limits [to fun].” You better not “disturb the peace . . . disrupt a sporting event” or “express yourself with spray paint.” Drinking alcohol, besides being illegal, can “wreak havoc on your health and life.” Even sex must be strictly regulated. “You may see it as love,” states the Bar, “but having sex with anyone under age 18—even if it is with your consenting 17-year-old girlfriend—is against the law.”

Discipline and fear. Our teenagers are being ushered into the world of adulthood under the aegis of a regime of dire duty and perpetual surveillance, of which the Law is only one manifestation. There’s a reason this sixteen-page tabloid is titled a “survival guide.” Trooping off to college because they are told they need the credentials rather than for any suggestion that learning might be an end in itself; enthralled by a consumerist society that seduces them with easy credit and the mantra that they will never have enough; instructed that pleasure of any kind will lead to danger and despair—teenagers will need every ounce of their strength to survive indeed.

Teenagers need to be able to hear a different message, a message of hope rather than fear. The move to adulthood should be a time to test and explore, to describe a path for oneself that may be different from what came before. Adulthood does bring responsibilities, but one of the primary responsibilities of adulthood is to create a better world than the one we meet. What teenagers—and all of us—need is a guide to meeting responsibility with joy, optimism, and a sense of freedom. —Jo Ellen Green Kaiser



New York Times article recounts—based on a 2,000 page U.S. military report—repeated incidents of sadism and abuse inflicted on detainees: stepping on prisoners' necks, delivering blows to their genitals, chaining inmates to ceilings, forcing them to kiss the boots of interrogators, and in one documented instance, exposing a Saudi prisoner to an interrogator's penis, while threatening them with rape.

Based on Seymour Hersh's assiduously documented revelations of abuse at Abu Ghraib prison last year, such horrific incidents of military-vetted cruelty should not come as any surprise. This is why it remains difficult to cast ab-

solute doubt on the unverifiability of *Newsweek's* May 9 report regarding U.S. personnel desecrating the Koran. The problem is not so much *Newsweek's* continuing inability to determine what it got wrong. The issue is how to report on the logic of a completely immoral environment in the U.S. military in which there is no respect for human rights or international legal norms.

In such environments, perhaps its best to not rely on deep throats, but to let the military hoist itself on its own petard. Pressed on all fronts to admit that something was wrong, on May 27th, the Pentagon confirmed five instances of Koran desecration at Guantanamo. —Joel Schalit

Sex Workers Unionize

As a general rule, sex workers of any stripe have a low market value and are under-protected by current law. Competition is fierce, and management is adept at keeping the workers divided and struggling. So how did the workers at the Lusty Lady manage to not only join the Service Employees Union in 1995, but also to become a worker-owned collective in 2003?

It may be in part because the San Francisco-based strip club operates predominantly as a peep-show—the dancers perform in a windowed room surrounded by small booths. The customers watch the show from the booths, dropping quarters into a machine and thereby opening the curtains on the windows to the performance space. Thus, it is unnecessary for the dancers to vie with one another for an individual customer's attention. This unusual arrange-

ment of cooperative dancing fostered enough fellow feeling between the dancers that they were able to work collaboratively to force management to meet their demands, and the union was born. And when, following union negotiations regarding pay cuts, the dancers were notified of the impending closure of the club, they opted to buy it and run it as employee-owned.

There's no doubt that you take your life in your hands when you tangle with an angry stripper. But what are the broader implications of the Lusty's successful union drive and subsequent worker-ownership? Is the Lusty's success merely an example of top-notch grassroots organizing? Or can its triumph be construed as an inherently feminist statement that strikes a blow for economic justice, social equality, inclusion, and really kick-ass high heels? —JoAnna Minsbew

Trading on Grief

It's no surprise that the death of Pope John Paul II elicited a media landslide. Alongside analyses of his legacy, biographical pieces, and devotional volumes came countless commemorative books, magazines, and other merchandise that publishers had no doubt been anxiously waiting to wave under the noses of grieving Catholics.

One of the most bizarre pieces of Papal memorabilia comes from Paradigm Trading Cards, which issued a limited-edition set of Pope John Paul II trading cards, including images of the late Pope with everyone from Nelson Mandela to Ronald Reagan. While prayer cards are considered an important devotional aid by many Catholics, it's hard to believe

that the motive of Paradigm, best known for its series of Playboy-cover cards, was a spiritual one.

No matter how one might view the late Pope, many Catholics around the world feel his loss deeply. Their grief should be met with

compassion, not crassly manipulated for material gain. —Liz Winer



An Interview with the Orthodox Anarchist

Daniel Siwek

Anarchists love slogans. They practically invented them, and though it may be a cheap shot, one is tempted to know which of their famous slogans they would apply to the state of Israel. Resist to Exist? Property is Tyranny? How about: Anarchy is Order, Government is Chaos? Dan Sieradski's version might read something like: Judaism is Order, Israel is Chaos. You see, although Sieradski is an Anarchist, he also happens to be an on-again-off-again Orthodox Jew, but one of the most *unorthodox* Jews you will ever meet. The more Sieradski observes *Halachah* (Jewish law), and the closer he gets to his quest of becoming *Baal Teshuva* (born again into Orthodoxy), the more he becomes convinced that Israel is failing the Jewish people.

Sieradski is representative of a growing number of young, counter-cultural, devout Jews who increasingly are finding the Occupation in contradiction with the moral teachings of their faith. Instead of inspiring him to support the settlement project as though it were the fulfillment of a Biblical mandate, the Occupation has inspired Sieradski to engage in political activism that he equates with the righteous behavior of *tzedakah* (charity).

Fast becoming one of the most recognized Jewish literary voices on the Internet, this pop culture and technology savvy radical Yeshiva student expresses himself as the primary author and editor of the world's most highly trafficked Jewish blog, *Jewschool.com*. Sieradski is also the man behind the Jooglebomb, which succeeded in knocking the anti-Semitic Jew Watch web site off the top Google spot,

Daniel Siwek is an Israeli-American music critic who divides his time between New York and Los Angeles, a contributor to XLR8R, and a freelancer for numerous publications nationwide, including the LA Weekly.



and he runs his own heavily trafficked blog, the Orthodox Anarchist. Sieradski doesn't care if his political and religious views seem bi-polar. Instead, he insists, "an arch stays up because you have two sides pressing against one another, so to me [my views] don't clash; they're congruous, if not interconnected."

Rebellion Starts at Home

"For some reason I always had a natural inclination towards antiauthoritarianism," Sieradski tells me—via instant messenger, of course. "Maybe it's because I hated my rabbis. They were all mean to me, but then, so were my public school teachers, with the exception of a few." Though Sieradski was raised in both Brooklyn and Teaneck, New Jersey, his mom made sure she raced back to Brooklyn when giving birth to him and his older siblings so her

kids could be natives of the borough. And why not? His family has history in oy a Bruch-lyn (blessed Brooklyn) and the Lower East Side, with his father's side associating with the socialist labor group, the Arbeter Ring (The Workmen's Circle), and his mother being descended from a long line of distinguished Haredim. In fact, Sieradski is the great grandson of the Yehudi HaKadosh, the founder of Przysucha Chasidut, while his grandmothers' nephews are the Munkacser Rebbe and the Dinover Rebbe of Flatbush and Boro Park, respectively, and his maternal grandfather is a former Vice President of the Ultra-Orthodox organization, Agudath Yisrael.

Sieradski's parents raised their kids under the veneer of Modern Orthodoxy, but it went from "put your kippah on" to "take your kippah off" after the family had a falling out with the Orthodox community. It only took him a little while before he started eating *treif* (nonkosher food), and not saying *brachot* (blessings over food). Sieradski recalls, "By the time I had my Bar Mitzvah, I was all but done with

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAN SIERADSKI

Judaism." If the event turned him off to the potentially ugly combination of religion and business, it was partly to his sister's credit that he didn't completely abandon Judaism; she inadvertently pushed him closer to Orthodoxy.

"My Haredi sister turned into a Kahanist, so she's a theological and political right-wing extremist," Sieradski laments. "As I was exploring ideas of progressive Judaism, she would tell me I was a *rasha* (wicked person) and that I was going against God. She did more to turn me off from Orthodoxy than any other person. A lot of the reasons why I've become so active in re-engaging with my Judaism is because I'm trying to teach her, through authentic Torah, that what she believes, and what many members of the Jewish nation like her believe, is antithetical to Judaism's *Klalim Gedolim*" (the general Jewish population).

The Electric Manischewitz Acid Test

Despite early traumatic experiences with both religion and its establishment, Sieradski maintains that his relationship with anarchism had nothing to do with Judaism at first. Though he was slightly turned off to religion, Sieradski would simultaneously undergo an ideological overhaul and a spiritual awakening that would both challenge and honor his Jewish upbringing. BBSing (pre-Internet messaging) by the age of twelve, he read the notorious *Anarchist's Cookbook* online, and while performing at a Memorial Day parade with a local drum and bugle corps, he met some kids from the North Jersey Anarchist Federation and the Paterson Anarchist Collective.

"I went up to them with my blatant ignorance of anarchism and started talking to them and they were like, 'Oh, you need to read, boy.'" By the time Sieradski was fourteen, he was not only contributing to local anarchist papers, he put out his own. He recalls, "I got hardcore into anti-war and anti-globalization [politics]. I became the New York state regional coordinator for Students For A Free Tibet for two years, and did work with Amnesty International while I was in college." But what was so anarchist about that? Sieradski admits, "My understanding of anarchism was muddled until I was twenty-one or so, but when I began to learn and understand the theory behind it, I became certain it was the only morally just and legitimate political position for a person to take."

Sieradski gives credit to Sarah Chandler, a close friend and Jewish educator, for challenging his dogmatic, anti-clerical preconceptions of Judaism: "She broke me open on the women-as-rabbis issue, introduced me to egalitarian services, and truly inspired a love of yiddishkeit in me, which drove me to study Judaism far more intently," he states. After Bush's coronation in 2000, Chandler and Sieradski started an event called "The Thursday Night Bush Bash," a weekly anti-Bush protest in Washington Square Park. "It was a *Time Out* critic's pick for 'What To Do,'" he boasts. Then 9/11 happened, which for Sieradski ushered in a period of heavy

involvement in the New York antiwar and anti-globalization movements. Then, in 2004 he moved to Israel. Till now, he's been supported with a Dorot Fellowship, which looks for North American Jews they perceive as future Jewish leaders and sends them to Israel for a year to study and engage in social action work. For Sieradski, what this has meant is fighting the Occupation. "I'm doing activism in Israel because I refuse to allow the actions of the Israeli government to transpire in the name of the Jewish people," he declares, "I refuse to let them own Judaism in that way."

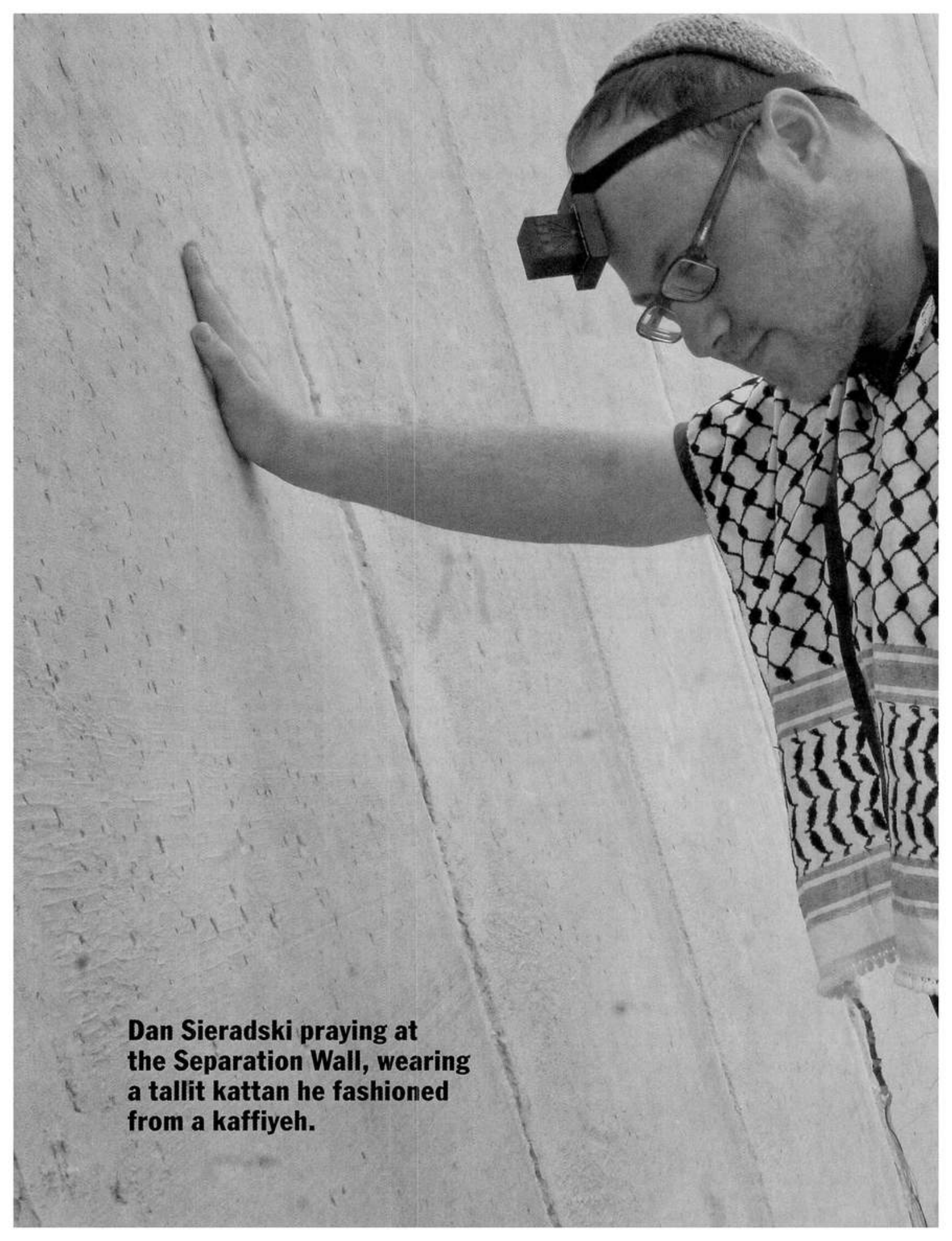
Leader of the J(N)ew School

Sieradski may have been a small fish in the New York City activist scene, but in Israel, he's become a big fish, fast. When he shows up to the Separation Wall to daven in a *talit kattan* he has fashioned from a kaffiyeh and posts photographs of the event on his Orthodox Anarchist blog, Sieradski is making a profoundly provocative political statement that angers some and motivates others. When bloggers on *Rafah Pundits* (a pro-Palestinian blog) responded by attacking Sieradski for being a self-hating Jew, fellow blogger, "Rachel," leaped to our protagonist's defense calling him, "...the best advocate for Israel I have never met." Rachel states, "Through his passionate writing about Israel not only have we come to see a different side of the country, but a different side of the people who live there, and by that I mean the characters who 'live' in Jew School and *Israelity*." If words could blush, then Sieradski's farts would be rosy.

Sieradski knows he is making a big impression, both in Israel and abroad. He schvitzes about impressive job offers but is quick to point out he never takes corporate jobs, as he only works for non-profits. He's not out to cash in on the new Diaspora chic or help popularize the "Jew-fro" either. Deriding the likes of novelist Jonathan Safran Foer and *Heeb* magazine for being "a fabricated new Jewish cultural elite," funded by Jewish philanthropic organizations, Sieradski goes to great lengths to trump the superiority of his own hipster cred. Admitting that his popularity as a writer is a product of the very same scene, Sieradski regards himself as one of its few true radicals.

"I take a lot of cues from the Situationists in that respect," Sieradski says. "*Detournement* was the process of taking that which was created for commerce and turning it on itself to become an instrument against capitalism," but he adds, "Our tools are only as valuable as our intentions." Nevertheless, Sieradski continues to place himself at the center of the New Jew Cool, a scene he feels is dead, or should be. "I know all the folks running the Bikkurim- and Natan-funded projects like *Heeb*, JDub, and Storahelling, [but] in the end, it's become a cult for selling Jewish cool," a criticism he levels at continuity-obsessed sponsors.

So what's so new about the ideology proffered by JewSchool.com? According to Sieradski, it's the blog's



**Dan Sieradski praying at
the Separation Wall, wearing
a tallit kattan he fashioned
from a kaffiyeh.**



reconciliation of radical political concerns with Jewish traditionalism.

"I believe the left has failed, and of course it would; the left is the same demon as the right. Politics could care about what is just; politics has only one agenda—power. Jewschool is unique in that it offers a left/liberal perspective without flying entirely in the face of tradition," Sieradski pitches. "Liberal Jews reject Orthodoxy because of dogmatism and the provincial attitudes toward gender and race issues," he reasons, "however, these traits are not 'Orthodoxy,' they're simply negative traits which have boiled over from the pressure cooker of shtetl Judaism. You can be a deeply religious person and not buy into Chabad's bullshit about Jews being metaphysically superior to goyim."

I tell Sieradski that he seems to be *the* Orthodox dude that the progressive readers of TIKKUN can agree with, on more points, even, than he agrees with the traditional Orthodox community. But despite his provocative moniker, he backs away from it, qualifying, "I'm not exactly Orthodox. I'm reengaging with halakha, on the path to becoming Baal Teshuva. I envision myself as becoming Orthodox, but yeah, not like 'them.' I would say I'm a Jew. Period."

Sieradski is about to let the cat out of the bag. For an anarchist, being a 'new-school Jew' implies deconstructing denominational labels, which, according to the logic of his midrash, means that there should be no such thing as Reform, Conservative, Orthodox; "Denominations are dead and dying," he submits. "I don't identify with any of them, and I'm sure they don't want to identify with me." He elaborates, "You're not religious because 'your grandparents didn't go through Shoah for nothing,' you're religious because God calls out to you and 'hineini' rolls off your tongue."

In fact Sieradski's even stopped going to Shul, believing the trend of *chavurot* (groups of practicing friends) should replace the typical congregation, and to be sure, Sieradski agrees with Douglas Rushkoff's notion of "Judaism without

religion." "He got a lot of flack for his book [*Nothing Sacred*] because of the secular, academic nature of his language, so I'll put it to you in my terms: God and the service of God are ultimately more important than the Jewish identity or the Jewish state." Sieradski considers himself an anarcho-Zionist, "in the tradition of Gershom Scholem, of course."

Outside of Society

Not that we're singing Patti Smith's "Rock And Roll Nigger," but to quote the song, "outside of society" seems to be exactly where Sieradski's anarchists and haredim really "wanna be," united in their shared distaste for the nation-state and their desire for ideological transparency. Sieradski explains that this disposition is the only way that both communities can offer a truly utopian vision to the Jewish world: "It is the need to both protect the purity of their intentions and also to serve as a clear example of an alternative. If they get all wrapped up in the dominant paradigm, then they have no potential of manifesting an alternative one."

As heterodox a synthesis as Sieradski's thinking might appear, he regards his ideological explorations as being a natural extension of the history of Jewish radicalism. Starting with the Torah itself, moving to theology and the intellectual history of modern Jewish progressivism, Sieradski sees himself as both helping to rearticulate and synthesize the best of both Jewish worlds, the religious and political. For Sieradski, the key is discovering how secular political radicalism is very much a product of a Jewish commitment to social justice.

"A lot of the Torah I've learned in the last year smacks of socialist values," he states. "The ideas of tithing, compulsory tzedakah, and basic values such as ... *v'ahavta l're-ekha kamokha*" (love your neighbor as yourself) "seem completely consistent with socialist values. Which is why, for me, the idea that ghetto Jews from the Pale became *haskalah* [enlightened] socialist thinkers makes perfect sense...I mean, Marx's brother was a rabbi. You think his ideas developed in a vacuum?"

As we wrapped up our interview, Sieradski decided to close things out by telling me an anecdote about how he chose the logo (a star of David/anarchy symbol transfiguration) for his Orthodox Anarchist blog. "The idea for the site logo hit me while I was in the bathtub on mushrooms. I don't think I was trying to stick it to anyone; I was just kind of putting forth those two poles. I come from an orthodox upbringing and I am a radical anti-capitalist, anti-fascist activist who engages in direct-action-style civil disobedience."

Amen to that. □

For more information, visit Orthodoxanarchist.com and Jewschoool.com.

Dan Sieradski's Favorite Jewish Anarchists

ORTHODOX: Yeshayahu Leibowitz and Reb Simcha Bunim of Przysucha.

SECULAR: Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkowitz (despite completely disagreeing with their positions on propaganda by deed), Rudolph Rocker especially (though he was not exactly Jewish), and Noam Chomsky. I've never had the pleasure of speaking with Noam Chomsky, but I bet we'd have a hell of a chat."

Bringing It All Back Home

Joel Schalit

On August 15, Israel will begin its withdrawal from Gaza, the first step in Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's vaunted disengagement plan. Israel has pulled out of occupied lands before—most notably from the Sinai—but no other Israeli pullback has aroused such dramatic and fearful speculation. Having exhausted legislative means to block the withdrawal, Gaza's 8,000 settlers and their supporters have threatened every manner of resistance—from staging acts of mass civil disobedience, to encouraging soldiers to refuse orders to evacuate them, to firing on IDF personnel involved in the operation. In short, the Gaza settlers have succeeded in raising the specter of Israel's first civil war.

Israel's security establishment has taken this threat seriously and prepared itself for such a horrific contingency. Fearful that an extremist might attempt to take the life of the Prime Minister, the Israeli government has assigned Sharon a level of protection that the late Yitzhak Rabin would have envied. In the West Bank, the IDF has already started to place settler leaders whom they suspect of plotting terrorist attacks under administrative detention, a procedure normally reserved for Palestinians, not Jews. Because of fear that religious army units might turn into the nuclei of fundamentalist militias, last spring they were ordered disbanded. Equally telling, Israeli police have been discussing the need to protect the Temple Mount from rocket and mortar attacks by settlers, arguing that it will require over 5,000 officers to protect Al-Aksa during the withdrawal.

Such preparations for violent civil conflict between the Israeli state and its citizenry are unprecedented. While Israeli politics has always tolerated a level of fierce political debate without many parallels in the Diaspora, Israel's remarkably diverse political communities did not become so polarized until the commencement of the peace process in the early Nineties. It was only with the 1995 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that Israelis began to realize that ongoing conflicts between Right and Left, the religious and the secular, and nationalists versus the peace camp might indeed lead to full-scale inter-Israeli violence.



The ironic value of the Al-Aksa Intifada is that it allowed Israelis to temporarily put aside such differences, however uncomfortably, and collaborate together one last time in defense of their country. Even though the IDF's brutal counter-insurgency campaign had its obvious dissenters—take the refuseniks, for example—the second Palestinian uprising from 2000–2004 allowed Israelis to put off dealing with nearly every significant internal political debate that took place during the affluent and peace-driven 1990s. Pushed aside by the need to mobilize the entirety of Israeli society to deal with the war, questions about the relationship between religion and state, the development of a constitution, civil rights for non-Jewish citizens, and increasing discrepancies between rich and poor were postponed indefinitely.

However, with the death of Yasir Arafat in late 2004, it became increasingly apparent that Israel had won its fifth major war. With suicide bombings at an all time low, prisons overflowing with captured guerrillas, and a new Palestinian leadership waiting in the wings that was willing to cooperate with Israel, it was inevitable that the specter of internal civil unrest put off by the Intifada would reassert itself. Those internal conflicts were exaggerated further by Sharon's decision that now was the time to withdraw from the clearly indefensible settlements in Gaza.

As divisive as Sharon's disengagement plan has been, it has served to align the pragmatists within his own Likud party

with Israel's parliamentary Left. Leftists who were once harsh critics of Sharon's counterinsurgency policy now hold seats within a Sharon-led Likud/Labor government. However, if it appears that the withdrawal has blurred distinctions between Left and Right, that is only a mirage. Despite personal friendships that transcend party lines—such as that which exists between Sharon and Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres—this alliance will only last as long as Sharon needs Israel's Left to support the disengagement.

Even with the coalition government in place, the threat of civil war looms on the horizon. Whatever form Israel's government takes over the coming months, and perhaps years, it remains incumbent on Israel's Left and its growing number of supporters in the Diaspora to begin thinking outside of the box of the withdrawal. The Left must not only begin laying the groundwork for a full withdrawal from the West Bank as well as Gaza, it must begin to address how the internal conflict between religious and secular, settlers and peaceniks, might be avoided. Even though it may be impossible to influence Israeli government policy at this immediate juncture, to paraphrase Antonio Gramsci, if we don't start to cultivate a new common sense about the meaning of this crisis, no new political directions will ever follow. For a country so paralyzed by its inability to resolve its own conflicts—both with the Palestinians and with Jews—any attempt to address these internal issues will indicate that the Left has a sincerely heart-felt desire for political transformation.

The Left's first step should be to really listen to settler threats of civil conflict and take them both seriously and thoughtfully. On the one hand, they must be understood for what they are: direct attacks on the state. On the other, we must read between the lines of such violent rhetoric in order to hear in it the sense of trauma settlers believe they will experience trying to fit themselves back into a society that they reject and that has rejected them. Even if the settlers are brought back peacefully, with no attempt to violently block their evacuation, we must remember that they are coming from a religiously homogenous world of frontier Judaism where rabbis constitute the political leadership, halachic law is considered more important than civil law, and the experience of violence is so commonplace that it will be difficult for former settlers to imagine living life without it. Despite Israeli society's identifiable deficits in all of these areas, integrating people who are accustomed to living in a world as extreme and anti-modern as the settlements will be an enormous challenge.

Because the settlers really do hate modernity, they will be intolerant of the elements of modern political life we take for granted, including civil law, multiculturalism, equality between men and women, and ethnic minorities. And, based on their bitter experience of parliamentary democracy—the kind which *voted* to remove them from their homes—ex-settlers will clearly have problems with democratic political processes. Though settlers will be extremists on such issues, however, they will not be unlike many other constituencies in

Israel that are unhappy with the country's current social and political constitution.

The settlers' difference from the many other groups in Israel and the much larger problem that Israel faces with them is that the settlers are coming from a closed community in which they have always known they are right and everyone else is wrong. An uncomfortable analogy to cultism is in order here. Like the survivors of a utopian commune gone terribly wrong—think Jonestown, or the countless countercultural communities of the 1960s like Philadelphia's Move that devolved into violent millennialist sects—settlers will require their own version of deprogramming. To work, such deprogramming will have to compassionately address—from a uniquely Jewish perspective—how the religious Zionism these persons were indoctrinated with perverted their Judaism, severing it from every caring and humane element within the Jewish tradition itself. In other words, in order to integrate the settlers, Israel will have to develop a process in which Judaism is essentially *re-taught* as a tradition of civility, tolerance, and respect for the Other. In essence, settlers must learn that Judaism can be a religion at home with liberal democracy.

As sentimental as such a proposal might sound, it is the only appropriate cultural framework to begin such a project of reeducation. Why? Because it isolates the religious reason that lured people to settle in the Occupied Territories: *Judaism*. Communicating that we understand the importance of the settlers' faith would reassure them that the evacuation was not an exercise in religious persecution but a political decision made on behalf of preserving the welfare of the entire state of Israel. While it would be impossible to empty the Occupied Territories of their religious significance—even from a liberal Jewish perspective—such an exercise would, over time, prepare the ground for withdrawing from the Occupied Territories in their entirety by reminding the settlers that their faith is stronger than any particular policy decision or piece of ground.

What I am suggesting here intentionally does not speak to the settler's blatant disregard for the humanity of the Palestinians or to the crimes that they committed against the Palestinian people. The Left must be pragmatic. There will be no support in Israel for criminalizing the settlers—the Right, in any case, will quash any such attempts to do so. The demand for justice will come with time. The new mentality we are speaking of—one that reconciles Judaism with the values of liberal democracy—will play an enormous role in that process. And perhaps that understanding of Judaism will help both settlers and the Israelis who live within the Green Line and have suffered through every Arab-Israeli war since 1967, recognize how successive Israeli governments have cynically played the religion card to everyone's detriment: the settlers, residents of Israel, and the Jewish people as a whole.

Zionism can continue to live with Judaism. Just not the settler's kind of Judaism. Because in this instance, it is a synonym for civil war. □

The Greening of the Jewish National Fund

Alon Tal

It has become fashionable for progressive Jews throughout the world to distance themselves from the Jewish National Fund (JNF), dismissively expressing ecological and political reservations or citing general alienation from anything Zionist. For those who care about Israel's environment and social equity, however, this is an irresponsible position.

As an Israeli environmental leader, in the past I found myself at odds with the JNF, at one point even authorizing a successful Supreme Court legal action against JNF forestry practices. But since those combative times, I have come to see the organization very differently.

The JNF is evolving. It offers an example of how the Zionist movement can yet become the force for social and environmental restoration it was designed to be. Three years ago I reached the conclusion that it was time to become directly engaged in expediting that change and influencing the organization from the inside. So, following a rather heated election, for the past two years I have been a member of the JNF's international board of directors. Along with several other "green colleagues," I discovered an organization in transition, one that in many ways is open to change and new ideas as it matures and develops a more clearly articulated environmental orientation.

As we work toward a more satisfying, mature relationship between Israel and the Diaspora during Zionism's second century, the JNF, the largest and most important surviving Zionist institution, is a critical test case. Progressive Jews must step up to the plate and help in its transformation. In order to understand the issues that are on the table—what is at stake and what needs to be done—a brief review of the Jewish National Fund's 104-year history is in order.

Dr. Alon Tal represents Mercaz on the International Board of the Jewish National Fund, where he chairs its sustainable development committee. He was the founder of the Israel Union for Environmental Defense and the Arava Institute. Dr. Tal is a professor of Environmental Policy at Ben Gurion University.



A Corporation Owned By and For the Jewish People

Most people are unaware that the Jewish National Fund is neither a non-profit organization nor a government agency. Rather, it is a corporation owned by the Jewish people via the World Zionist Organization. The World Zionist Congress, as the governing body of the World Zionist Organization, has always taken the somewhat pretentious position that it is the parliament of the Jewish people. Practically speaking, it serves many similar functions.

The international board of the JNF (or Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael [KKL] as it is called in Hebrew) reflects the makeup of the political parties that participate in the World Zionist Congress. Representation is allocated according to Jewish demography throughout the world. Roughly a third of the delegates represent the Zionist factions in Israel's parliament. The rest are a hodgepodge of international Jewish institutions, from Hadassah and B'nei Brith to the Conservative and Reform movements. Based in Jerusalem, the organization coordinates a network of independent JNF offices around the world. This has been the case for over a century.

When the First Zionist Congress heard a proposal to set up a "National Fund" in 1897, Theodore Herzl was not enamored of the idea. He was too busy creating a political movement. The original, seemingly prosaic idea sketched

out by Professor Herman Schapira, was to create a Fund that would serve as the operational arm of Zionism. This National Fund would be charged with purchasing the lands necessary for the establishment of a third Jewish Commonwealth. Two Congresses later, after Schapira's death, a less bombastic and more practical Herzl changed his mind and spearheaded the creation of the JNF.

Schapira's vision was in fact a remarkably progressive one, which happily serves as the centerpiece of Israeli land policy to this day. Land in Palestine (and Syria) was to be purchased on behalf of the Jewish people in perpetuity. That means, by definition, it could never be sold. The forty-nine-year land leases, based on the normative biblical Jubilee-year constraints, are now the rule for all holdings managed by the government—some 93 percent of the pre-1967 lands in Israel. If the earth is the Lord's, then presumably the most we can do is rent it.

While the JNF is frequently associated with planting trees, this is a relatively recent stage of the organization's development. In fact, when the British colonial officials unceremoniously left Palestine in 1948, they left behind ten times as many planted trees as those planted by the Jewish foresters at JNF. Archival records suggest that during the first half of the twentieth century, JNF leaders perceived the tree planting largely as an effective gimmick for involving Jewish communities around the world in the efforts of the Zionist pioneers. And they were right.

The trademark JNF "blue box" and the tree certificates remain a potent trademark and sign of solidarity even today. By putting a "blue box" in every Jew's home, Zionism became a popular movement. Jews from Krakow to California to Sydney, through the collection of kopeks, pennies, and shillings, took an active part in establishing a Jewish homeland in the land of Israel.

In practice, the JNF's operational orientation focused on support for Jewish settlement. Given its extremely limited resources, it did so with remarkable efficacy. As envisioned by the UN Partition Plan, the borders of 1948 Israel were to a large extent a reflection of where the JNF had managed to purchase real estate. For example, a major deal was still in the making in 1948 to purchase territory in Samaria. If it had gone through, much of today's West Bank would probably be within the "green line" and join the internationally recognized lands of Israel.

When the dust settled in 1948, however, the JNF was faced with something of an identity crisis. The original mission statement of "acquiring lands in Syria and Palestine" had largely become irrelevant. The State of Israel was far more expansive than the UN Partition Plan or even the most optimistic Zionists had hoped for, and a national real estate agent

had become superfluous. Indeed, the JNF's own holdings increased by roughly 200 percent immediately after the War of Independence, as millions of dunams, classified as abandoned Arab lands, were purchased from the government.

This left JNF holdings at roughly 13 percent of lands of the country. Yet, when one considers that 25 percent of Israel is off limits for development, zoned as nature reserves, 10 percent more designated as forests, and additional territory cordoned off as military training zones, JNF holdings—on behalf of Jewish people everywhere—constitute a huge chunk of land. Those who utilize the lands pay rental fees, which make up the lion's share of the corporation's budget.

As soon as the State was established, Prime Minister Ben Gurion was quick to redirect the venerable institution's corporate energies. With hundreds of thousands of refugees languish-

ing in temporary camps, the Zionist imperative of the hour was employment. In charging the JNF with planting "one billion trees," Ben Gurion was not promoting a progressive Jewish response to the greenhouse effect or even an anti-desertification strategy; it was a social agenda. One shovel and a box of saplings could give two Jews work. Thus, the JNF's serious institutional commitment to afforestation was born.

While Ben Gurion was out of touch with the existing operational capacity of the JNF, he had hit on something.

For many "pioneers," this seemed a chance to bring some of the Eastern European scenery that they missed to a homeland that had indeed suffered massive desertification and erosion due to millennia of mismanagement. The organization zealously embraced its new mission statement. Roughly 270 million trees planted in Israel by the JNF to date constitute a remarkable achievement in afforestation, given the semi-arid terrain in which much of the woodlands are located.

Over the years, the JNF picked up other jobs as well. It still served as a "patron" to the agricultural community, particularly in the periphery, and its work in soil drainage and erosion prevention was critical. But forestry remained the centerpiece. Perhaps its greatest environmental achievement during the state's first fifty years was drafting and shepherding through the government a national master plan for afforestation that sets aside 10 percent of the country's lands as forests. The plan mandates that the JNF maintain a diversity of stands—from plantation-style conifer groves to the more natural Mediterranean old growth where all human intervention is prohibited.

It was in the late 1980s that the JNF became cognizant of the transition it had undergone and began to consider redefining itself as an environmental organization. The move came in the wake of several decades of ferocious

*A sustainable
development paradigm
holds the promise of
resolving a dissonance
that has always been
part of Zionism.*

debate with Israel's nascent ecological community, which abhorred the organization's industrialized, pesticide-intensive monocultures. Ecologists and green activists attacked the so-called "Pine Deserts" that stifled all indigenous flora and fauna under their densely planted rows.

In retrospect, the JNF did something extremely courageous. It invited ecology professor Immanuel Noy-Meir in for an entire year to evaluate the integrity of its activities. Noy-Meir offered many suggestions. Within a decade, not only had the organization substantively adapted its afforestation practices to address the traditional ecological critique, but it also produced an internal cadre of "green foresters" who have since gained international recognition in the combating of desertification, high-tech seed quality upgrading, and other afforestation innovations.

New organizational challenges were also adopted. For anybody listening, Israel's streams and rivers—abandoned for decades by Israeli government and society and left as putrid sewage conduits—gasped out for help. The JNF agreed to be the lead agency within Israel to restore life to these ecological orphans. Water scarcity remains the most fundamental dynamic in Israel's hydrological reality. The JNF adopted an ambitious program that established over 170 reservoirs, involving water harvesting (capturing rainfall and runoff) and expanding capacity for sewage reuse. Current estimates suggest that these efforts may have increased the national water supply by some 7 percent. A range of local environmental initiatives have also benefited from generous JNF support.

This is not to say that the JNF does not make ecological mistakes or that it no longer finds itself in conflict with other environmental groups in Israel. But the present controversies are quite different than those of the past. They center on definitions of "sustainable development," a concept that has emerged as the dominant environmental strategy in the global arena. The paradigm has come to drive JNF practices and formally define the JNF's institutional identity.

Sustainable Development and the Zionist Experience

Demographically, Israel still appears to be a developing country, adding a million people each decade to its one million original citizens. At the same time, it has established a post-industrial economy. Accordingly, modern Israel is something of a *shatnes*, or bizarre hybrid, on the international scene, embodying internally some of the historic problems associated with "north-south" global tensions. For example, some environmental advocates deplore the government incentives for large families, while others claim it is actually the gluttony of an affluent society that lies behind the country's ecological crisis.

A sustainable development paradigm holds the promise of resolving a dissonance that has always been part of Zionism. If one looks at the evolution of early Zionist atti-

tudes towards the environment, it is easy to identify two competing streams of thought that existed largely independent of the passionate ideological divisions that engaged much of the Jewish world at that time.

At the most basic level, Zionism was born into the Romantic movement that captured the imagination of so many intellectuals in nineteenth-century Europe. Zionist philosophy, such as that espoused by the "prophet" of Socialist Labor Zionism, A.D. Gordon or implicit in the imagery of national poet "Rachel," waxed lyrical about a new relationship between Jews and the land. Zionism sought to return an ecological harmony between the Jewish nation, whose status as wandering exiles had left it alienated from the earth, and its homeland. In today's rhetoric, the very essence of the Zionist message was to reclaim the Jews' rightful status as indigenous people.

But the practical challenges of creating a state would force a more pragmatic but ecologically obtuse perspective on most of the early Zionist leaders. Providing the food, infrastructure, and army to create a Jewish state against unthinkable odds left little room for evaluating human impact on the physical environment. While many never lost Romantic notions about the land of Israel, they found little time or opportunity to manifest them. And so, by the end of the twentieth century, the Zionist economic miracle had left an appalling ecological legacy in the very land the Jewish people had come to redeem.

In a sense, "sustainable development" represents the merger of these two competing streams of thought. With demographic expansion continuing for the foreseeable future, and with enormous social challenges, the economy will have to continue to expand. So the question becomes: "how should we grow?" Can the country learn to find prosperity without sacrificing quality of environment and life? For many of us, restoring the "harmony" between the Jewish national enterprise and the people's "Promised Land" constitutes the great challenge for the second century of Zionism.

The Jewish National Fund today is attempting to embrace this challenge. The results promise to be a fascinating, if not inspirational, experiment. The reason why the JNF's work may hold universal interest is connected to its somewhat unique position.

For many green organizations, endorsing the rhetoric of "sustainable development" is largely tactical. Having lost campaign after campaign, fighting an uncompromising battle against the forces of development, they believed it was time to try something new. Sustainable development offered a better opportunity to influence matters at the outset and try to forward their agenda on the inside. But the fundamental inclination remained "preservationist," or in resolute opposition to development. At the same time, for many corporations, integrating "sustainability" into their mission statement was also tactical—a fuzzy and sometimes disingenuous "greenwash" of a profit-making impulse that

remained fundamentally unchanged.

But the JNF really is different. Here we have a one-hundred-year-old development agency that has come to adopt all the trappings of a green organization. The jury is still out as to whether it can truly find a healthy balance between preservation and development, but it is trying. Recently, the international board of directors unanimously adopted a series of position papers that delineated basic principles of sustainability in areas such as afforestation and river restoration. Policies formalizing the organizational norms to encourage public involvement in planning, reservoir construction, and land policy are next. To some extent, the process was simply transcribing an "oral Torah" into a written one. But there were dozens of substantive shifts, such as phasing out destructive herbicides or embracing increased sensitivity to Israel's estuary ecologies.

What Is to Be Done

The Jewish National Fund's transition offers a unique opportunity for World Jewry's progressive community to change its approach and begin participating in Israel's pressing challenges. It is not so much that progressive Israelis mind the Tikkun Community's proclivity for Israel bashing—although at times some of us do take umbrage at its sanctimonious, moralizing tone. Rather, it is the implicit lack of solidarity that radiates from the tone of an outsider's criticism, and the alacrity with which de facto coalitions are unwittingly built with Israel's enemies that is of concern.

Ultimately, there are plenty of us in Israel who share similar views on many of these issues. What troubles me is that the liberal sermonizing is rarely backed up by constructive involvement. How easy it is to pontificate and point the finger. How much tougher, (but ultimately, more responsible and effective) it is to throw in one's lot with the Jews of Israel, play the messy democratic game, and make a real effort to shape Zionism into a progressive vision of what a Jewish state should be. And the thing is, one does not have to be an Israeli citizen to play.

Thus, I salute people like Vermont Reconstructionist Rabbi Michael Cohen and his wife Alison Hill, who in 2002 established "The Green Zionist Alliance" (GZA). They drafted leading Jewish environmentalists across the United States and ran a slate of candidates in the last elections for the American Zionist Organization. The GZA put forward a platform of environmental reform and increased institutional transparency at the JNF and the Jewish Agency.

Lo and behold, through emails and word of mouth, their grassroots effort garnered enough support to send a delegate to the Congress. A subsequent agreement with Conservative Jewry's Mercaz organization allowed them to appoint two "green representatives" to the JNF board—who have since led the fight for environmental reform there. In next year's election, they will look to expand their influence and are seeking support. Those are the kind of initia-

tives that make much more difference on the ground in Israel than countless disgruntled articles or even checks. For those involved in the mainstream, it is important to influence the policies of the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox movements around the world.

There are a host of issues on Israel's agenda that progressive Jews throughout the world could address through the JNF: land policy discrimination, environmental restoration, as well as assistance to peripheral communities and the rural sector, for starters. For instance, recently the question of whether the Jewish National Fund should lease lands to Arabs reached the table of the Board of Directors and made headlines across Israel. How unfortunate that only representatives of Conservative Jewry and one Reform representative spoke out against the traditional, antiquated JNF policy which prohibits land sales to non-Jews.

Mercifully, Israel's Attorney General Mani Mazoz weighed in on the issue and informed the Supreme Court that he would not defend a discriminatory position. But when one considers that roughly two-thirds of the JNF board is comprised of diaspora representatives, the absence of a powerful progressive voice for equity for minorities was unfortunate. Why shouldn't the JNF be the leader in working out an equitable solution for the Israeli Bedouin in the Negev? Given its vast experience, surely the JNF could do more to assist developing nations to combat desertification. But this won't happen without some changes in JNF leadership. To do this, one need only register as an American Zionist, vote for the party that reflects your values—and then make sure that your party fights for its agenda.

There are other, non-political ways to help ensure the JNF's ecological/progressive transition. American JNF donors have become the leaders in making Israel's parks accessible to the large disabled community that also would like to get out of the crowded cities and be in touch with nature. The JNF leadership in the United States is talking about a major initiative to clean up the contaminated toxic waste site at Ramat Hovav that constitutes such a pernicious public health insult to the neighboring Bedouin and kibbutzim. The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, an advanced teaching and research center that brings together Israeli, Jordanian, Palestinian, and international students, enjoys growing JNF support. And the Australian JNF has begun massive fundraising to finally clean up Tel Aviv's contaminated Yarkon River.

But donations are not the only contribution. The next World Zionist Congress is set for June 2006 in Jerusalem. It is time for Jews everywhere to become reengaged with the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. Diaspora Jewry, including the Tikkun Community's willingness to become involved in Zionist politics and vote for its vision of a Jewish State, is essential. Together, we can help transform Zionism into the compassionate, creative, and spiritually edifying initiative it was designed to be. □

University for Sale: Campus Watch, Israel Studies, and the Demise of Dissent at Columbia

Gil Anidjar

A few months after 9/11, the son of one of the most virulent anti-Communist ideologues of the Cold War made a dramatic appearance on American television. With astonishing self-confidence, Daniel Pipes pointed a threatening finger at the camera and warned teachers and scholars of Middle East Studies in no uncertain terms: "We are watching you. Your students, in your classrooms, are watching you." By that time, Pipes had already become a major figure in a deeply unequal contest: a massive collective effort that sought to define Islam as the new enemy of the United States and of democracy. The televised admonition's "pedagogic" gesture was, however, specifically intended to "correct"—indeed, to direct—the manner in which Islam, Middle East politics, and the history of U.S. policies and actions in the Middle East are taught at American universities. One striking materialization of the unequivocal warning was an elaborate and professional looking website where college students were invited to communicate their concerns, their opinions, or simply their complaints regarding their professors and classes they were taking on Middle East-related topics. The "Campus Watch" campaign, directly targeting the classroom but part of a much larger neo-con apparatus, was just beginning.

What were the main charges against Middle East studies departments? Dominated (so the accusation went) by the work of Edward Said on Orientalism, they had renounced the pursuit of their true purpose: to advance the kind of knowl-



Bari Weiss, left, a sophomore at Columbia University, speaks at a press conference organized by Columbians for Academic Freedom as a crowd listens outside the gates to Columbia University in New York Thursday March 31, 2005. Weiss, and Columbia University senior Ariel Beery, second from left, co-founders of Columbians for Academic Freedom, held the press conference in response to the university report stating that Columbia University's Middle Eastern studies professors did not engage in large-scale intimidation of pro-Israel students.

edge that could strengthen American policy in the Middle East, and to ensure in a quasi-prophetic manner the prevention of terrorist attacks such as those of 9/11. Having failed on both counts, the field as a whole had to be transformed and reinvented (presumably in the same way the whole of political science, German studies, and Slavic studies should have been after 1989). It had to be purged, moreover, of its dangerous elements. Books and individuals were singled out. Minimally, they would have to be countered by more "balanced" or "serious"

Gil Anidjar teaches in the Department of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University, New York.

scholars and research, by which was meant more engaged support for American policy and for Israel. Congress was mobilized, as was the media. On Campus Watch's website one could find an impressive number of articles and texts collected in various student-run or other newspapers and journals (often of exceedingly poor quality), or written on interminable blogs by experts with apparently limitless time and resources. In addition, a number of "files" were gathered, targeting specific professors, most of whom were Palestinian, Iranian, Lebanese, and so forth. More recently, the finger-pointing ideologue Pipes (who has the ear of the White House and of a large public audience thanks to substantial media coverage) was calling for a revision of the history of the American concentration camps built during World War II against Japanese Americans. According to this argument, not only were these camps necessary (and merely "Spartan" rather than brutal), they were also important and legitimate means in the pursuit of "homeland security." Implicit was the justification of comparable steps taken toward the containment of that other threat, the Muslim "fifth column" in our midst. Hunting season was now open against professors or any individual who supported the Palestinian cause or publicly opposed American policy in the "war on terror."

Parallel to this massive effort and apparently without direct link to it, Jewish studies (a well-established if still nebulous concept institutionalized into departments, programs, or institutes, depending on the university) were undergoing a singular development. While the 1960s and 1970s had seen a significant increase in Jewish studies programs, and the 1980s and 1990s an explosion in chairs and programs in Holocaust studies, in the last decade or so there began to emerge a new field called "Israel studies." Ahead of this peculiar trend, Columbia University—currently embroiled in controversy over alleged anti-Semitism in its Middle East studies department, and a privileged target of Campus Watch—had distinguished itself in a number of ways. Columbia established the first chair of Jewish history in any American university in 1930 (closely following on Harvard's 1925 decision to have a chair in "Hebrew literature and philosophy"). In 1980 Columbia took the lead by establishing the Center for Israel and Jewish Studies. Today, the Center has a faculty roster of about fifteen professors or lecturers (many of whom are world renowned) and it boasts six endowed chairs

disseminated through the departments of history, religion, German literature, and Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (Barnard College houses an additional Jewish studies chair). Young scholars and senior visiting and adjunct professors and lecturers, often from Israel, teach in these departments, as well as in the School of International and Public Affairs. All are able to maintain close contacts with the prestigious faculty of Columbia's neighbor, the Jewish Theological Seminary, and of New York University (with its own Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies and its newly created "Center for Israel Studies"), with which Columbia has formal agreements that enable students to benefit from the

arrangement as well. According to the current president of Columbia University, however, Jewish and Israel studies suffer from a lack of comprehensiveness and balance. (By way of comparison, note that Columbia does not have a full-time position in African literatures.) There is therefore reason to be confident that the Center for Israel and Jewish Studies is about to grow—an unusual development in the humanities, where programs are more often shrinking, but one likely to happen at other universities as well.

Is there reason to see a link between neocon activities like Campus Watch, the growth of Jewish studies and the emergence of Israel studies as a discipline? When the very same ideologues who advocate the overhaul of Middle East studies are regularly issuing calls for strengthening the professorate with pro-American and pro-Israel scholars, such a link is difficult to dismiss. Moreover, the overt strategy

*The "Green Peril" is thus
the latest in a lineup of
historical figures serving to
justify repetitive and ever-
renewed concerns and fears
regarding homeland
security and the future of
civilization, as well as anti-
Semitism—this last issue all
but erasing the distinction
between Judaism and
Zionism, and between
Israel and the Jews.*

of Campus Watch was precisely to locate the battlefield in the classroom (and the current accusations do target directly the teaching of Israeli history and politics, and the alleged behavior of professors toward their students on that very issue). Finally, and in the larger frame, Israel continues to be presented as the vulnerable and courageous first line of defense in a global attack said to be directed at the United States, Europe, and—the association is repeatedly made—the Jews. The "Green Peril" is thus the latest in a lineup of historical figures serving to justify repetitive and ever-renewed concerns and fears regarding homeland security and the future of civilization, as well as anti-Semitism—this last issue all but erasing the distinction between Judaism and Zionism, and between Israel and the Jews. (But do recall the name of Columbia's Center for Israel and Jewish Studies, and ask:

Who is it that fails to maintain the distinction?) Officials and pundits handle the charge of anti-Semitism with great skill, if little acumen, and the competition is fierce as to who will voice their concern loudest over the “enabling climate” allegedly produced by naïve or misinformed left-leaning liberals, “deconstructionists,” and all those said to dominate American campuses and—why not?—American society.

Are we witnessing a new McCarthyism? Is this a concerted and frontal attack on free speech? Is this a battle of ideas? Absolutely, for it is those in the seat of power or close to it, and whose opinions are currently leading the country and its policies, who are on the offensive, while claiming vulnerability and harassment. Yet, I would suggest that invoking ideas and free speech is not the way to deal with the specific issues at hand, which, ultimately, are U.S. policy and Israel’s existence.

I do not mean to diminish the significance of these issues, but I do want to suggest that very little of what I have described so far reflects a genuine concern with intellectual or critical positions. The role of Campus Watch and of those seeking to expand the peculiar field called “Israel studies” has, after all, little to do with identity politics or with recently emerging or narrow interest groups seeking to gain some equal access, some control over all-too-often biased or even racist representations. At stake, rather, is dominance and a much larger pattern of inequality, a matter of power and management that forces us to call into question the role and value of dissent in what is still called democracy. And here the choice of Columbia University neither to resolve nor to dismiss the Campus Watch-style campaign (as ex-Provost Jonathan Cole had swiftly and courageously done in the past), but rather to give it credit, to legitimate and even foster it, makes more than perfect sense.

Sad but true: There is no longer a need to suppress information or alternative knowledges, for it is our relationship to dissent and to knowledge that has fundamentally changed. Inequality rules, but information *is* available. (Who doesn’t know that Bush and others have repeatedly lied? But who still thinks it matters? Who needs the media to tell them that we, they, that is, 95 percent of the U.S. population, of the world’s and, most certainly, of Palestine’s, are poorer and poorer? That the war on drugs and the war on terrorism are only a part of an all-out war on poverty? Who manages to care?) In the United States at least, this is hardly a matter of information or of education, both of which are equally dismal in quality but largely available nonetheless. In spite of the scandalous cuts on education, a general knowledge can certainly be accessed or bought everywhere in this country and even elsewhere. But is it not rather striking that it is of little use? And that dissent has long been *neutralized*? That is why today, in this country, one no longer needs censorship, much less a Ministry of Information. Part of that frightening but massive trend is no doubt that free and courageous speech is no longer current on university campuses. It does not take much insight to notice that knowledge is hardly

power—rather, power is and determines (what qualifies as) knowledge—and that the academy is no nest of rebellious revolutionaries about to embark on some anarchic and value-defying rampage. Or that “tenured radicals” and intellectuals have less than a significant effect on public opinion. By now, it is not even clear that professors have any effect, much less an *intimidating* one, on their students, those young and fervent consumers of professional guarantees and corporate futures or champions of the information superhighways and of human rights programs. It has long been the case that courage and integrity have few forums or outlets aside from the Internet, that endless sea of commercial white noise where each is entitled to an opinion more narrowly defined and targeted, if even less effective, than advertisement spots on a specialized cable channel. In this open space empty of amity lines, the confines of good conduct mandate that one must allow for “pros” and “cons” in a balanced manner, and innumerable “rights” must be respected at the risk of producing more self-righteous “victims.”

Respect is no doubt due to the valiant efforts at nuanced explanations and active interventions of those who believe in dissent and who have in fact become the very real targets of death threats or at least of explicit and efficient intimidation campaigns strangely aimed at silencing them, or worse, inventing red herrings in order to determine the agenda (“anti-Semitism”). Indeed, the question no longer seems to be what one is protecting or defending, or whether fear is even remotely justified. One would like to think that truth, justice, or simply the freedom of expression or ideas, will be defended. That they are what is at stake. But the questions raised by the combined effects of the developments we have been considering seem rather to be the following: What is it that is being sold? What new product, what new thought, what new university, what new chairs and programs—what new *inequalities*—are here being hyped up, advertised and peddled? What new forms of governance and dominance? And to whom is this capital campaign really addressed? What donors are being successfully wooed? What corporations expanded or created? (Until recently Columbia University proudly equipped its I.D. cards with the logo and magnetic strip of none other than Citibank.) It may be that a dangerous game is being played, for controversies and discontent, even fear tactics, can famously swerve, and quite unpredictably so. But universities, like all great corporations and the governments who serve and represent them, know how to take calculated risks. They know how to play the already uneven field (and the growing fear) and thus to manage dissent so that it becomes a positive moment in the popularity and fundraising contest they have set for themselves. Dissent, like customer surveys, works to the benefit of those who already determine the agenda. For in politics as in marketing two rules continue to apply against all better judgment: business is not war (or, finance and economics are not politics), and there is no such thing as bad press. □

The Ethics of Anti-Anti-Semitism

Alan Sussman

Like many readers of this magazine, I receive a number of fund-raising letters from major Jewish organizations, which is both unsurprising and proper. What is surprising, however, is the number that ground their request on the growing threat of anti-Semitism. What seems improper is the manner in which their appeal to anti-anti-Semitism is displayed.

For example, a letter from the Hillel Foundation, written by Edgar Bronfman (President of the World Jewish Congress) begins: "I know you share my commitment for fighting anti-Semitism, one of the most ancient threats to Jewish communities." One would think, given this opening paragraph, that the theme of anti-Semitism would continue. But it is followed by:

However today—with young Jews immersed in American secular culture, and an alarming increase in anti-Israel propaganda permeating college campuses across the country, more and more Jewish students feel insecure and uninformed about what it means to be Jewish and live Jewishly. Quite simply, more and more young Jewish people are not choosing to be Jewish.

The reader strives to make connections. Is Bronfman claiming that anti-Semitism is the cause of young Jews' immersion in American secular culture? Does anti-Semitism cause Jewish students to be uninformed about what it means to live Jewishly? It would seem that blame for being uninformed is more properly placed upon the lack of motivation of Jewish students or their parents than on the felon who set fire to a Jewish school in France.

Bronfman concludes: "And while assimilation may be harder to see than a Swastika painted on a synagogue, or an anti-Israel rally in the street, I assure you that it is a threat to Jewish survival." I assume that the "it" in the final clause—that which threatens Jewish survival—is assimilation, the subject of the sentence. But the subject of the letter is (or was) anti-Semitism. Is the point that anti-Semitism is the cause of assimilation? Or that we must consider anti-Semitism, an anti-Israel rally, and assimilation three species of the same genus, because all three threaten Jewish survival?

Appealing to this tangle of fears is neither salutary nor ethically honest. It is unethical because it cuts too wide a

swath across sociological, political, and religious territory that must, for the sake of cogency and fairness, be differentiated. Assimilation, Jewish insecurity, anti-Israel propaganda, and being uninformed about what it means to be Jewish are not identical, nor are they necessarily manifestations of anti-Semitism.

The term "anti-Semitism" is in danger of becoming less meaningful as its boundaries encompass ever increasing territory. The term itself is an obtuse nineteenth-century euphemism, burdened by the seemingly endless European discourse of emancipation, "race," and identity, ranging in consequence from parlor room slander to state-tolerated pogrom to state-sponsored genocide. For the present, I wish it to be considered simply anti-Jewish behavior, however mild or horrible. This might seem axiomatic, but it becomes necessary to mention as the term was coined before the creation of the state of Israel and the founding of the Zionist movement, both of which have considerably clouded the issue to the detriment of rational discussion.

Anti-Jewish sentiment—expressed in word, image or action—may be directed at a single Jew, a group of Jews or the entire Jewish people. The argument advanced here is not that anti-Jewish activity has disappeared (it has not) nor that it has no meaning or impact, nor that anti-Israel or anti-Zionist statements, threats, and acts of destruction cannot be motivated by hatred of Jews. It is rather that they who charge anti-Semitism have an obligation to make clear what they are talking about.

Anti-anti-Semitism is more than an allegation. It is a concept with a rhetorical thrust capable of claiming more than the object of the criticism has claimed for itself. In critical terms, it is an accusation that has the power to signify more than that which is signified. In political terms, it permits widening the frame of the accusation in order to distort and taint the argument of the accused. Given the obvious power of post-Holocaust victimhood, it grants the anti-anti-Semite the ability to raise the unapproachable and unanswerable image of Jewish extinction in an effort to silence what may not even qualify as anti-Jewish sentiment. Hence, the need for ethical caution.

A second fund-raising letter was received from the World Jewish Congress (WJC), also written by Bronfman. Its ire focused upon Europe, where "anti-Semitic violence, vandalism and rhetoric are now rampant in almost every European country." Enclosed was a "European Anti-Semitism Scorecard," a full-page map of Western Europe surrounded

Alan Sussman is an attorney and visiting professor at Bard College, where he teaches Constitutional Law and Ethics.



by boxes on the margin, filled with bold red icons in the shape of bombs, swastikas, fists, and tombstones with pointers leading from the icons to each offending nation.

For example, the box pointing to Denmark contains a red fist (the key tells the reader this signifies physical assaults), a red computer with an "X" across its screen (hostile websites), and a red newspaper (anti-Semitic press or public discourse). France's box displays red symbols for physical assaults, verbal assaults or hate speech, cemetery desecration, vandalism or graffiti, and firebombing or arson. Of fifteen countries on the map, only Luxembourg shows a positive sign, a blue thumb pointing up, indicating the absence of anti-Semitic incidents.

I assume these representations are correct, though no timeframe is given to indicate if all the incidents happened last month, last year, or in a five-year period. But whatever the frequency, the map does not look good. Europe is literally surrounded by swastikas.

On the other side of the scorecard, an explanation of sorts is set forth. France is listed (again with the red icons), beneath which is printed the following description: "significant increase in anti-Semitic violent incidents and threats." Germany and its icons are underscored by the words: "Anti-Semitism has increased as much as 69 percent in the past several years." Belgium: "Acts of anti-Semitism have significantly increased since 2000."

This simple reduction creates a number of questions, even if allowance is given for the circumstance of a fundraising letter, where one does not expect essay-length descriptions. Nevertheless, The WJC scorecard is irresponsible in two important aspects:

The first reason is numerical. The reader, who is meant to be alarmed, is given no sense of the magnitude of the problem. No finite numbers are provided. How many discreet acts are being discussed? Does the icon of physical assault mean 1 or 10 or 100? Without exact numbers, rates of increase are meaningless as well. The assertion of a "significant increase" in France, without indicating the dates

between which the increase occurred or the frequency of harm (from 6 to 12? 50 to 300?), conveys very little information.

Of even greater concern is the absence of relative numbers. If we re-examine the icons for France, we see physical assaults, verbal assaults or hate speech, cemetery desecration, vandalism or graffiti, and firebombing or arson, but we are not told if there were 100 cases of arson and 10 cases of hate speech, or 100 cases of hate speech and 10 acts of arson. This failure to differentiate is of enormous import, not only for the targeted reader, who is apparently assumed to be too unintelligent to notice that matters of grave consequence are being melded with those of far less consequence, but for the benefit of the true anti-Semite, who can point to the hyperbole in order to justify his claim of denial or minimization.

The second reason is descriptive. What does a "hostile website" mean? Anyone who goes to Denmark and surfs the Internet will discover anti-Jewish anti-Israeli sites, yet there is probably no nation in the world where these cannot be found, especially in democratic countries. The text explains that it is not illegal to display Nazi symbols in Denmark, "as the symbols themselves are not considered insulting or degrading to Jews." It is not illegal to display Nazi symbols in the United States either, but this is hardly a reliable index of anti-Semitism in America. And what can the WJC possibly mean by claiming that the swastika is not considered insulting to Jews in Denmark? Surely the Jews of Denmark are no less sensitive than Jews in Germany or the United States to the dread symbols of Nazi power and persecution. It can only be read to suggest that the Danish government does not consider them insulting to its Jews, a claim which is preposterous (and insulting to the Danes who displayed more courage and philo-Jewish sentiment under Nazi occupation than many other Europeans).

Or consider the terms "verbal assaults or hate speech" and "anti-Semitic press or public discourse." Thirteen of the fifteen nations on the map have scorecards carrying one or both of these icons. But what does "hate speech" mean? That one private individual called another a dirty Jew, or an enormously different circumstance in which a public official called a Jewish group parasitic? Does "anti-Semitic press or public discourse" mean that there are established anti-Jewish newspapers or television stations or, worse, that the government actually runs one? Or does it mean that some editorials criticize Israel's separation barrier? One certainly cannot learn the answer from reading the WJC scorecard, even though the differences are crucial.

The Importance of Israel

It is impossible to overlook the importance of Israel—and finding fault with its policies—in a discussion of anti-Semitism. This is because those who have been most

vociferous in raising the alarm against the “new” anti-Semitism believe that, for the most part, anti-Zionism and criticism of Israel is merely a new suit of clothing, a more acceptable or fashionable form of expression of what is in essence the same “old” anti-Jewish malady. Recent writings of Abraham Foxman and Mortimer Zuckerman, among others, champion this view. Indeed, this was the consensus of almost all the thirty-six speakers in a four-day international conference sponsored by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in 2003, entitled “Old Demons, New Debates: anti-Semitism in the West.” (There were a small number of exceptions: Ian Buruma, Daniel Goldhagen, and Anthony Julius presented more nuanced analyses.)

There are, of course, genuine anti-Semites who have sought refuge behind the anti-Zionist shield for generations. Those who in the late 1930s blamed Zionists for urging Roosevelt to enter the war against Germany were speaking of Jews. Super-nationalists in contemporary Europe augment their appeal by attributing any number of social ills to immigrants and Zionists, and no one misunderstands the meaning of the latter term. But the problem with the “old demons” perspective is that Israel is now a nation, and criticism of the political Israel is not necessarily a subterfuge for criticism of the religion of most Israelis. Nor is it synonymous with the calumny that Israel has no right to exist. This seems so elemental that one must question the motives of those who attempt to conflate finding fault with Israel with hatred of the Jews.

If my proposal that anti-Semitism be replaced by anti-Judaism is accepted, criticism of Israel can be assessed more dispassionately on its own terms. We must, as recently suggested by Tony Judt, create a “firewall” between the two topics. Israel does not speak for, represent, or exemplify the highest aspirations or ethical standards of Judaism or all Jews. It is a *nation*, providing many of the benefits and prone to most of the moral contradictions that nationhood involves.

The proper task of honestly combating anti-Semitism is best conducted by avoiding the broad-brush approach and paying attention to distinctions. The anti-anti-Semite does his cause no favor by failing to distinguish between teenage toughs mocking boys on their way to *cheder* (Jewish religious school) and governments prohibiting Jews from attending law school. Neither is acceptable, but they are by no means equivalent. We need, as others have suggested, a taxonomy of anti-Jewish activities.

Even more importantly, we need to differentiate among

three categories or levels of anti-Jewish activity, distinguished by the actor rather than the act. On one level exists private behavior, that is, an individual or organization acting on his or its own. In this category would fit cemetery desecration, a Nazi web site, even an assault or murder, the crucial variable being the perpetrators’ lack of connection to state policy.

A second category is marked by governmental toleration of private anti-Jewish behavior—acts of omission that suggest sympathy, agreement, or purposeful neglect of hateful or illegal conduct. A third level is defined by direct state engagement in anti-Jewish policies and activities. A government that denies citizenship to Jews because they are Jews, closes the door to their practice of professions, prevents them from marrying non-Jews, denies them passports, or restricts their residence are obvious signposts of an anti-Jewish state.

There are certainly more levels of anti-Jewish activity to consider. But why is it important to make even these distinctions? It is not because one level is more horrid than another; the private murder of worshipers in a synagogue is worse than denying them passports. But there is a significant change in the calculus if in one case the murderer is arrested and vigorously prosecuted by the state, and in another the government only observes with passive eyes. The former may indicate that a government is strongly committed to the eradication of anti-Jewish activity, yet a scorecard of anti-Semitism, such as the one discussed earlier, misses or misinterprets this fact completely.

There is complexity in the measure of state toleration of private acts of anti-Jewish behavior as well. In democracies, the right to engage in free expression encompasses the right to engage in wrongful expression. Hate speech may be anti-Semitic, but a free state’s failure to suppress it is not. The constitutional principle that prevents a democratic government from selecting which form of expression is acceptable and which is not, is the same one that constrains it from deciding which religious group is entitled to obtain passports and which is not.

A murder, the denial of a passport, and hate speech all may be forms of anti-Jewish behavior. But this does not give license to the anti-anti-Semite to claim all are the same, ignoring matters of magnitude, source, and context, which determine their meaning and political import. The distortion of meaning may be the goal of the anti-anti-Semite, but, if so, it cannot be justified simply because it is employed in the pursuit of exposing or condemning reprehensible conduct. □

*Israel does not speak for,
represent, or exemplify the
highest aspirations or
ethical standards of Judaism
or all Jews. It is a nation,
providing many of the
benefits and prone to most
of the moral contradictions
that nationhood involves.*

When the Right Breaks the Barrier, How Should a Spiritual Left Respond?

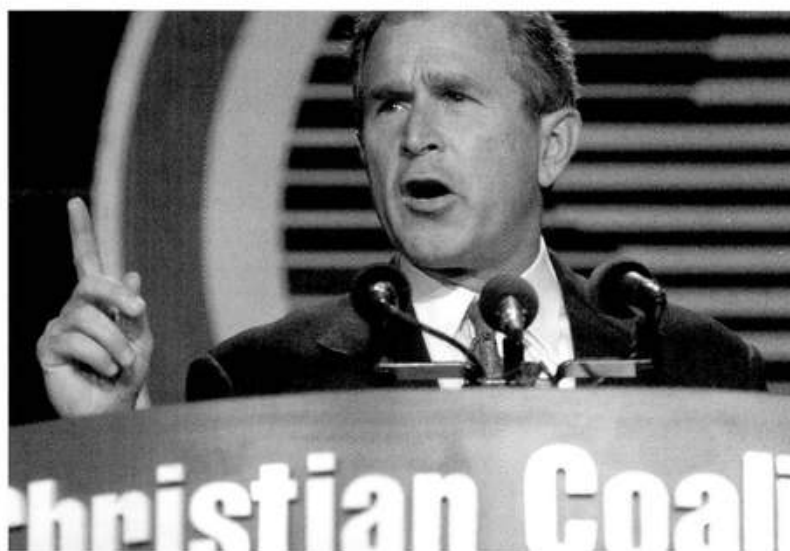
Michael Lerner

At the private, progressive, Christian grammar school called Far Brook Country Day in Short Hills, New Jersey to which my parents sent me in the early 1950s, there was a beautiful Christmas play each year in which all of us students reenacted a New Testament account of the birth of Jesus. In early grades I was one of the “townspeople” who came to worship the baby Jesus, and then later a shepherd who heard the angels proclaim the imminent birth of “our savior.” As one of the very few Jewish kids in this school, I knew better than to complain, and in any event the story seemed beautiful and inoffensive. Each student was also asked to paint a religious scene on our classroom window, and my fifth-grade teacher, a progressive and tolerant Christian, suggested I do a Chanukah scene. As I was completing it, my classmate Dickie Holden came over to me and slugged me in the face, yelling “you killed Christ.” It was an unpleasant way of learning that religion did not always bring out the best in people and helped me understand why many Jews wanted religion out of the public sphere.

One reason I remain particularly adamant about church/state separation is that I’ve watched how religious coercion has been one of the major factors contributing to the overwhelming anger that most Israelis have at God and religion, making Israelis among the most secular people in the world. From my standpoint, this has been a tragic loss, because I believe that Judaism separated from coercion would have much to offer the Jewish people.

So getting the state out of the God business is important for those of us who take God seriously.

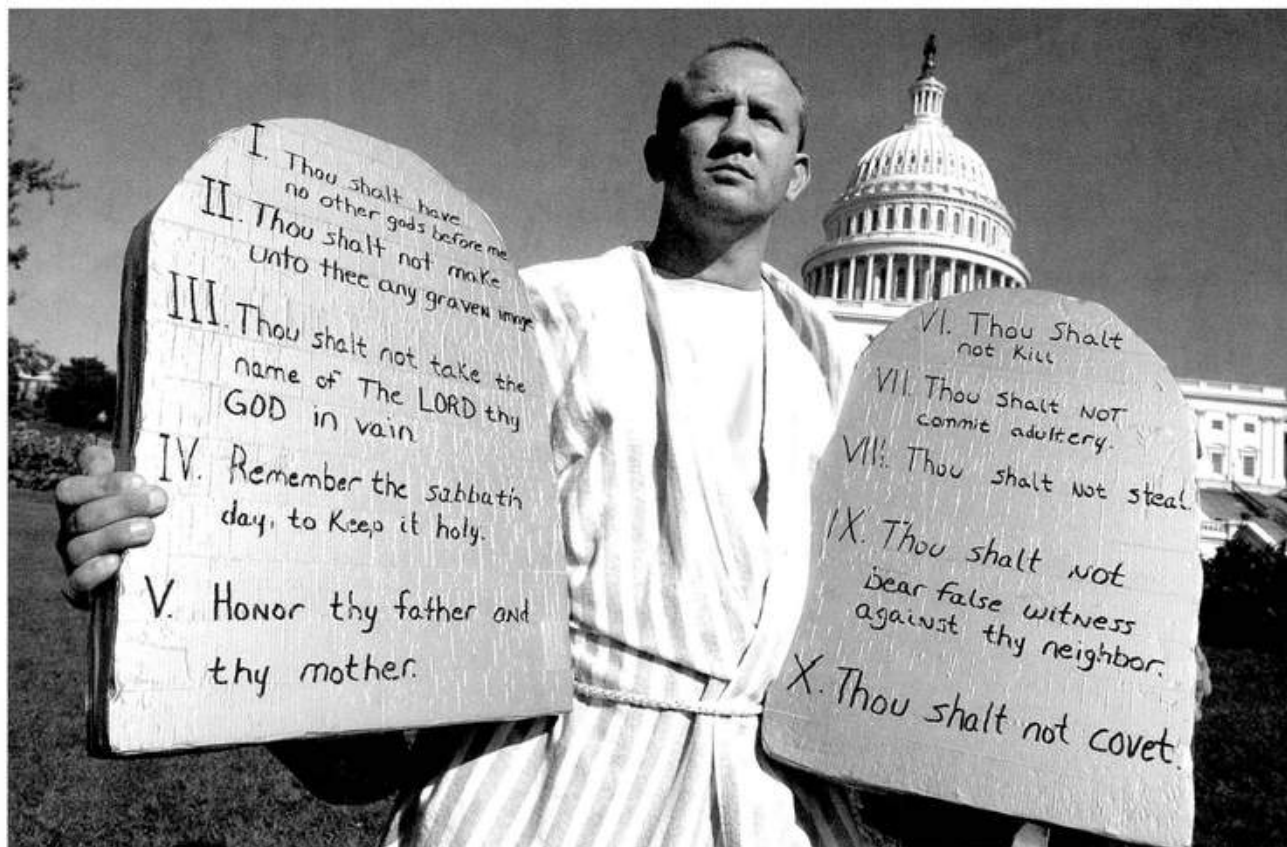
I remain a proud civil libertarian on these issues. Yet in retrospect, I think that some of my civil liberties comrades may have become First Amendment fundamentalists who suspect that any spiritual or religious values are a violation of church/state separation. That perspective, in turn, may be contributing to a backlash that might eventually lead to re-imposition of religion in a far more virulent form than it had taken in the past. The fact is that most Americans are religious, and many have come to feel that their religion is under assault



by a militant secularism that allows no place for their beliefs and shows no respect to their culture.

What is particularly outrageous to many of those religious people is the way that many secular liberals and progressives think that secularism is on a higher intellectual and moral plane than any form of religion. Tolerant religious people recognize secularism as a legitimate perspective, one of many possible perspectives on ultimate questions about the nature of reality. But too often they find secular people talking and acting as though secularism is the only position compatible with intellectual sophistication and scientific truth.

In maintaining this sense of superiority, secularists are pulling a fast one that doesn’t stand up under scrutiny. Science does not and could not take any stand on religion—any more than it could take a stand on whether divorce is a sin or whether insider trading should be illegal or whether the knowledge of the atom developed in science should be used to create atomic weapons or whether those weapons should be placed in space. Or even whether it is a good or bad thing that continued destruction of the environment will diminish the world’s resources and may end human life in the next two hundred years. These are not questions that can be subject to



empirical observation or laboratory experimentation, and though scientists are as welcome as anyone else to have their positions on these questions, they are not scientific but moral and spiritual questions.

So it is a self-deception for secularists to think that somehow their position on God has a scientific foundation that puts them at a higher level than religious people.

Secularists often talk about religious wars, witch burnings, the Inquisition, and the general persecution of nonbelievers, rightly pointing out how disgusting these were. Yet why blame religion for these distorted uses of religion without similarly blaming atheism or secularism for the First World War, generated by secular imperial powers, the Second World War, generated by secular imperial powers, and the mass murder of millions under self-avowed secular regimes led by Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot? The inconsistencies are just one of the many reasons that the Religious Right has been able to portray secularists as aggressively trying to destroy their religious heritage and to rally to their side many people who are not fundamentalists but who do want religious values to play a role in their lives and the lives of their children.

In my view, their concern is legitimate—but not for the reasons they think. There is a massive undermining of religious and spiritual sensibilities in the modern world, but the main problem is not secularists but rather the materialism and selfishness that have become the common sense of global capitalism. Free market ideology encourages us to see each other in narrow utilitarian terms, to “look out for number one” and maximize “the bottom line” of money and power. It is the values of capitalism that are undermining our spiritual capacities, not the refusal of liberals to allow prayer in schools (why

don’t religious people encourage their children to do what I did—pray each morning before school?) or nativity scenes on public property.

The task of the Tikkun Community and our Network of Spiritual Progressives is to acknowledge what is legitimate in the Religious Right’s concern about the undermining of spiritual consciousness, but then to show that the solution is not to impose religion or spirituality through the mechanisms of the state, but rather to challenge the capitalist ethos in every aspect of life (and in the process to defend secularists from being unfairly targeted by the Religious Right). Conversely, the most effective way to defend the separation of church and state is to insist that spiritual values have an important role in public policy to counter the values of capitalist social relations. However, those values should be argued for on universal moral grounds and not on the grounds that they are mandated by a particular religious tradition.

Religious and spiritual people have as much right as anyone else to have their values presented and argued for in the public sphere. And, if they are convincing, adopted by others who do not share their religious perspective but can respond to the universal ethical content of those beliefs (for example, when religious or spiritual people warn about the dangers of creating new seeds for food that can be patented, or the dangers of cloning human beings and creating designer versions of the human race). But when their arguments don’t resonate universally, as they do not in the case of abortion or homosexuality, where many religious people come up with different conclusions (most Jews, for example, are deeply opposed to any attempts to legally limit abortion or discriminate against homosexuality), we want to be sure that no state

There is a massive undermining of religious and spiritual sensibilities in the modern world. The main problem is not secularists but rather the materialism and selfishness that have become the common sense of global capitalism.

mechanism can be used to impose them on the rest of us.

That does not mean keeping spiritual values out of the public realm, which essentially leaves that realm dominated by capitalist values. Let's take the most essential issue: what counts as "efficiency, rationality, or productivity." In the contemporary world, these are defined largely by how much any given institution can produce money, power, or some other empirically verifiable outcome. But there is no scientific experiment that will ever prove that this is the only scientific standard for rationality or efficiency.

The Tikkun Community contends that it is equally valid to demand a "New Bottom Line" in which institutions get assessed as rational, efficient, and productive not only to the extent that they maximize money and power but also to the extent that they maximize love, caring, ethical and spiritual sensitivity, and enhance our capacity to respond to other human beings and to nature with awe, wonder, and radical amazement. We don't cite Divine or religious authority to legitimate this position. But we do claim that this spiritual per-

spective has a right to be championed in the public sphere because it offers a redemptive alternative to the allegedly neutral, "values free" ethos of capitalist social organization.

In fact, it is precisely by allowing this kind of values debate in the public sphere that a Spiritual Left can strengthen the barrier between church and state, by showing that this barrier, while preventing the state from imposing any particular religion on the rest of us, does not keep us from exploring and considering spiritual values when we shape our public policies.

We chose to discuss these issues with two of the leading students of religion in America: Martin Marty and Robert Bellah. A historian, Marty is a columnist for *The Christian Century*, a Lutheran pastor, and co-editor of *The Fundamentalism Project*, a multivolume series on global fundamentalisms. Best known for his groundbreaking 1985 study of American individualism, *Habits of the Heart*, sociologist Robert Bellah is the author of numerous works on religion and society, including *Beyond Belief* and *The Broken Covenant*.

Interview with Martin Marty

TIKKUN: What's the appropriate boundary between religion and politics? Here's why I'm asking: We're trying to create a network of spiritual progressives—essentially, an interfaith spiritual Left. Some liberal colleagues object and say, "Can't you see what the Right is doing? They're pushing religion into the public sphere. The only appropriate response is to make sure that religion has no place in it."

MM: There's a wonderful Dutch book titled *Everything is Political, But Not Everything is Politics*. When religions convert themselves into nothing but political forces, in the perception of the larger republic, they hurt religion and they hurt the republic. But, you cannot separate religion and politics in a neat way. In a political world—and there is no other world—not to be political *is* political. That is, if you are silent, if you create a spiritual, political vacuum, it will be filled. Therefore you are voting by not speaking. So, there's no place to hide.

We have to define what a political world is. Francis Crick says that in a totalitarian order, you don't have politics. Poli-

tics involves that you can make a difference. You can't do that under tyranny, so you have to have a republic. If you have that, your job is to try to influence that order, and you're going to use whatever instrumentalities you have for it. To ask profoundly religious people to leave at home, and out of politics, that which shaped them would be very artificial. It can't be done. What you have to do is ask them, "Will you be in politics, or are you trying to become the new, not totalitarian, but totalist... theocracy," for example.

Paul Ricoeur once said that history's dirty secret is violence. The best instrument you have against it is the human invention of politics, which assures that nobody gets everything. But through give and take, through rhetoric, through lobbying, and through fundraising, you get some measure of human good. This gets complex in our republic when some group aspires to run the whole show, which is what we're seeing right now.

The current danger is that they're not trying to get their share of politics, they're trying to dominate by using the

CHURCH & STATE

sacred book, which changes the rules of the game and goes beyond the Constitution. You are to be influenced by the sacred book, but you can't impose that reading on others.

TIKKUN: Some people in the Religious Right would respond by saying, "Well that's what's been happening with the secularists for the past fifty years. They've been imposing their views on the rest of us." Though I don't agree, I think we have to acknowledge their arguments.

MM: I tell those Religious-Rightists, "if that's your perception, fight back against the secularists, because that would be their version of religion and a lot of people have discerned that." But, what they're doing in the fight against the secular is that they're trying to change the rules of the game in which the secular is one of the fighters among all the other forces. The Religious Right is trying to say that secularism dominates us. I think their big plot is to say America is all secular.

Our public square is not naked; it's festooned with religion. It's just that there are about fifty square yards in this city that shouldn't have a privileged religious symbol on them. You have 30,000 lawns in a town where you can put Mary and Jesus and a Menorah and all the rest. We're not a secular society. They're trying to say that we are because a lot of people in universities and in the media feel otherwise.

TIKKUN: Well, they use as an example that in our society evolution is taught in schools and non-evolution positions are not allowed to be taught in school.

MM: I think non-evolution should be taught in the school, just not as science.

TIKKUN: The theory of evolution is weak science, but it's nevertheless an attempt to be science.

MM: I'd be very happy if they would teach the Genesis story. But then they better know that they have to teach the Navajo

creation myth about the Grand Canyon, too.

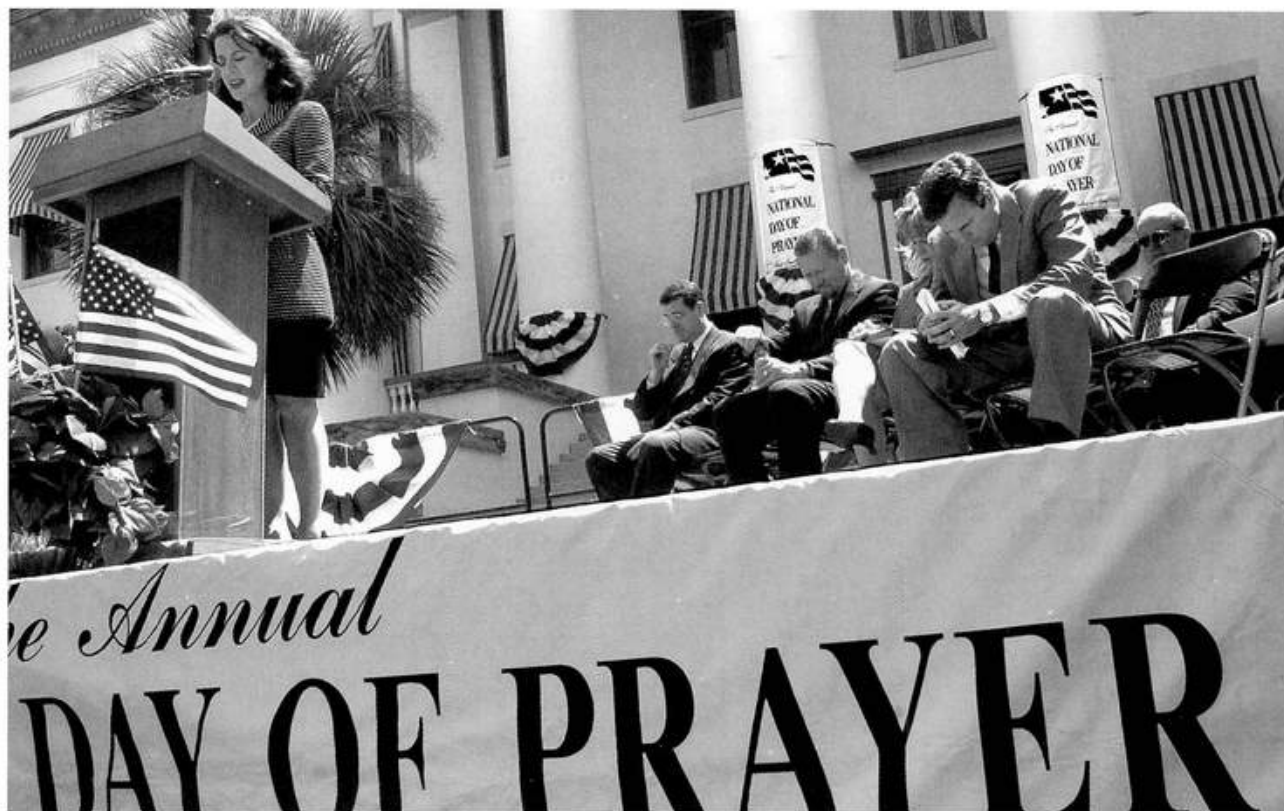
TIKKUN: They'd respond by saying, "How can liberals justify a public education system in which any topic in the world can be taught, but religion can't be taught? That is, taught about, not taught as advocacy, but taught as part of the human enterprise that has been an integral part of the development of human consciousness."

MM: Well, here's where I fight the liberals, because they're being very stupid about human motivation and human understanding. Teaching about religion is perfectly legal. How would we understand a speech of Abraham Lincoln if you didn't know religion? So, it should be taught. In our five volume fundamentalist study (*The Fundamentalist Project*), we kept saying we really got caught off-guard, because Americans didn't know what religion was and they didn't know how it functioned. They didn't know its limits and they didn't know how to counter it.

What you have to be careful of is the rules of the modern world: "science is science, and religion is religion." For example, my kids went to a regular public high school. They had a wonderful Madrigals group and at Christmas they sang to Mozart and Bach with Christian words, and they sang Chanukah songs, and would throw in a Buddhist chant if they wanted. The point was, it was made very clear in the program: this is performance, not worship. If somebody's sitting there who wants to make worship out of it, that's their business.

TIKKUN: Then liberals have to rethink the way they've set up the schools, because the vast majority of the schools in this country teach nothing about religion.

MM: I know, but a lot of us have been working for years to try to change that. One of the things that holds us back is not only liberals who are tone-deaf to religion, but the far Right,



What happened was that the Religious Right learned how easy it was to grab power. So they started grabbing power. In doing so, they moved from the politics of resentment to a politics of the will to power.

who want their religion taught as the truth about life. They have a real passion for it, but don't want the Navajo creation story. They don't want you to know about Hinduism.

TIKKUN: Their position has some plausibility even in the eyes of some not-far-right Americans because most public schools don't teach the Navajo creation story—or anybody else's stories. They teach nothing, so the Religious Right is able to say, "Look, they're teaching secularism, because they will not allow any of the religious stories to be told."

MM: Yes, that is an important point. It has been said, "Don't attribute to malice what you can attribute to lethargy." And here I would say, "Don't attribute this failure to teach religion to a liberal crack down on religion when we're often only dealing with ignorance." You simply remind a school board, "Here are statements from the courts that tell us that teaching about religion is legal. Here's the department of education statement encouraging it. Let's get it going—here are textbooks ready to go." When my kids were done with school, they knew why Hindus are Hindus. I don't know anybody who went to the school that turned Hindu because they learned what Hindus were. But they learned more about what humans were.

TIKKUN: Liberal and left forces in this country, fearing the attempt by the Right to take over the public sphere, are, if anything, more rigid in trying to keep the teaching of religions out of the public schools.

MM: Well, number one: they won't win. Number two: they're not following the legal option. Number three: they're going to leave a vacuum that these right-wing religious forces will fill. When you get a typical school board of seven people, and you're a town of let's say ten thousand—eight thousand of whom are nominally Judeo and Christian—and you get in a fight over this, the school board's going to cower. They're going to say, "All right, we've got to have it all there," and you're going to have the wrong version of it there. So I think a religious Left can perform a real service by presenting a better and balanced version of teaching the world's religions.

TIKKUN: So, from your standpoint, spiritual progressives should be also calling for the teaching of religion in schools.

MM: I've written about it for a long time. Let's not just blame [this situation] on aggressive secularists. Let's notice that very often apathy, indifference, and ignorance is on the local level, where people don't care that much about it, because they're interested in only having their own religion taught.

TIKKUN: You said that religion is religion and science is science. But some religious people respond this way: You're telling us that science is on a higher or more solid intellectual grounding than religion. Isn't science based on some theory that assumes that which is real is that which is observable by empirical observation and can be confirmed through repeated experimentation? What is the foundation of that belief, except a belief system?

MM: Yes, it is a belief system. There's no way to be in the world without a belief system. The issue is what goes with the belief system. If somebody is teaching out of evolutionary studies that the consequence of the evolutionary process is that evolution is the be all and end all of existence, and they surround that with ceremonial reinforcement and metaphysical sanctions, then it's evolution being taught as religion. Teilhard de Chardin, the great Jesuit, fused evolutionary science with religion into explicitly Jesuit, mystical forms of great beauty, but it didn't belong in a science classroom.

TIKKUN: Again, to represent the religious critics, they might say "Now look, the theory of evolution talks about various stages in the evolutionary process but it has no account of what the agent of change is, of what really causes the change." So, how about we come in and say, "We have one possible theory about what the agency for change is, namely God, or a divine spirit, or some spiritual aspiration in being or matter." Why can't the explanation of change in evolution be a spiritual one? Why must it only be a scientific discussion?

MM: Well, it can be a spiritual discussion, but it belongs in a social science or humanities classroom, not in a laboratory. The difference is, you can someday check out the scientific search. We may not yet know, but we have a means of beginning to do it. We're very critical these days. Evolution doesn't get a free ride, because nothing post-Enlightenment gets a free ride. We all learned to relativize that in post-modernity, but what makes a claim scientific is that the instrument is there for checking out further the claims, and when you can check it out further, it can be and sometimes is revised. No one has yet shown a way to check out further religious or spiritual claims to the satisfaction of other testing agents. God is revealed, you get an experience, you get into a tradition, a text, a community, but you can't check it out. You need to have belief in a particular book to get it.

TIKKUN: What's your theory about the growth of the Religious Right in the Seventies and Eighties? What spiritual or social forces can we refer to in order to account for the resurgence

CHURCH & STATE

of religious energy—in a right-wing direction—at this particular historical moment?

MM: First of all, it is universal or global. In *The Fundamentalism Project*, Scott Applebee and I rephrased something from Harold Isaac's book *Idols of the Tribe*: Around the world there's a massive, convulsive ingathering of peoples into their separatenesses, to protect their pride and power and place from the real or presumed threat of others. Almost always, this will be done on religious terms, because you want to use the highest level of ingathering. In other words, the Enlightenment envisioned that the religion that survived would have an ecumenical, tolerant, responsive, and open approach. But instead, what survived was a hard line, a closing off from other humans.

In a very short period, a lot of formidable, thought-out rivals of religion collapsed, namely Soviet life. In a year and a half, the entire Soviet Union imploded. Maoism isn't believed in anymore. Whatever is left in China, Cuba, and North Korea is not believed in—it's just a matter of power. Sixty years ago this week, Hitler's [Germany] met doom. Under Nazism, you had all these ways of organizing human life with ultimate concerns. They did everything religion did. They had ceremony, metaphysics, ritual, and myth.

When you get a vacuum so big that half the human race suddenly is creedless and free to be what it was, and what we think it was—after seventy-two years, with rivers of blood and oceans of ink spent to defend Soviet communism, the day it's over we find Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews, Latter Day Saints, Lutherans, Orthodox; every ethnic group is there in spades—clearly, you can't put it down formally. It's a very profound thing in humans. Religion was an instrument to survive. It is an instrument again, now that you have freedom to propagate it.

Secondly, the forces of modernity reach everywhere, into Bin Laden's caves and everywhere else, mediated mainly by mass communications, but also by global economy, by rapid transportation, etc. They reach everybody, and it means that your social and personal identity is threatened. Twenty years ago, Jerry Falwell said that in the Civil Rights era, right-wing Christians used to say it was sinful for the church to be in politics. Now it's sinful not to be, because we used to think we could keep the world from our door, the way the Amish do, or Orthodox Jews do. But you can't. Our kids get MTV and all these other forces by the time they're four, five, six years old. So we have to fight back.

Fighting back is the big thing, and that's what everybody's doing: reacting, counter-acting. Fighting back.

When you do that you've got to have heavy ammunition, and you're not going to do it in a mild way. I've long been interested in religion and sports. There are no Unitarians or reform Jews in the National Football League, but there are plenty of Pentecostals. There are plenty of people who know God's on their side and will bash the other guy's face in God's name. When you're on the front line, you must be sure you're really loaded up with pretty heavy stuff. So you have to have

an authoritative book, an authoritative teacher, an authoritative moment, and that's the simplifier. There was an old bumper sticker a few years ago that stated "God said it, I believe it, that settles it." That's a very efficient kind of thing.

Beyond that, I would say that liberals and moderates didn't stress religious experience. For example, in every little town I go to in Guatemala or Bolivia, I can walk up and down the street and there are ten little evangelical or Pentecostal things going on, and they don't wait for structure. They just start right in. They pick you up off the street, they give you an exuberant experience, you jump up and down. You've got experience, and that's a very popular thing. I'm going to use an analogy: With the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, you buy a \$70 ticket. But U2 comes to town, and they have \$160 tickets and it's sold out every night. It has its own drama that pales our own drama. This is what happens with Pentecostal and exuberant forms of religion. People are starved, and this gives them an emotional high.

Now how does this get into politics? Almost all of these evangelical groups, as Falwell once said, were non-political or anti-political. When I started writing on these themes in 1956, through the next twenty years, my own distinction in Protestantism was between the public and the private. The public were the liberals, the moderates, and the mainliners; and the privates were the fundamentalists, the evangelicals, the Southern Baptists, and the Pentecostals, all of whom said this world doesn't count much. The other world is what counts; we want to save souls. Dwight Moody, the great Chicago founder of all this stuff, said, "The world is in a flood, God gave me a lifeboat. 'Moody, rescue all whom you can.'" Then, in our country as Dixie became the Sunbelt and people from New England and the industrial states moved to California, Texas, and places in between, you had a huge demographic and morale shift happening.

But they carried with them a lot of resentment against those who had previously shaped the mass culture and had put down religious people. So we get from many on the Religious Right a politics of resentment. They were represented in mass media as hillbillies, holy rollers; they were backwoods, dribbling-spit-in-their-beards types. So they organized against the people who put them down. You still see a lot of that. It's almost weirdly ironic that these people who now run the country still see themselves as a beleaguered little group, even though now they have the senate, they've got the house, they want the courts, they've got the entertainment industry insofar as its religious. They've got it all. And they still have that resentment—heavily.

TIKKUN: Its typical nationalist self-victimization.

MM: Right. What happened was that they learned how easy it was to grab power. So they started grabbing power. In doing so, they moved from the politics of resentment to a politics of the will to power. Now *will to power* in the past meant that Polish Catholics didn't like Irish Catholics, that Benedictines didn't like Jesuits, that Left didn't like Right—and there was

The number of people in America who explicitly are non-religious is very small. You can't rally enough of them, and when liberals talk in a language that is tone deaf to religious concerns, they are just unintentionally helping the Right gain more ground.

no chance for Catholicism or Judaism to run America. The Presbyterian Church was half Republican, half Democrat. The Episcopal Church was called the Republican Party of Prayer. Baptists favored the "socialist" Tennessee Valley Authority and things like that. There was little aspiration to make this "a Christian America," or a "Judeo-Christian America," which really means "a Christian America."

But today, suddenly, you have people who haven't had power, who realize how easy it is to get it, and use these instruments of emotion, experience, organization, and hostility to the surrounding world, and it doesn't take long before you have Jimmy Carter. He had the right religion, but no aspiration to have his Southern Baptist thing run the country. Things began to change with Reagan. The senior Bush didn't do much. Clinton they resented, but suddenly they have a moment when they have a chief executive (George W. Bush) being very explicit.

Bush has learned not to be as overt as his backers are—and want him to be. Confronting the Muslim world, trying to make friends in Georgia and Russia, he has to be more ample than they are, and they don't like that. But Bush is so close to them that he is their man. I just wrote in *The Christian Century* that we don't have a theocracy, but we have a theocratic impulse there. The number of people in America who explicitly are non-religious is very small. You can't rally enough of them, and when liberals talk in a language that is tone deaf to religious concerns, they are just unintentionally helping the Right gain more ground.

tionally helping the Right gain more ground.

My image is very Madisonian—the tenth and fifty-first Federalist Papers: The security of the republic is in the diversity and multiplicity of its factions and interests, its sects. What you do, says Madison, in both of those, is when somebody in one part of the republic starts a conflagration, the best check against it becoming a great fire is the activity of all the other factions and sects.

The way to fight this off is not to sit back and mourn, but to be up on the front lines. On that front line will be secularists. Many of my best friends are secularists. I don't think we could have pulled off anything over the last fifty years—the Selma marches, Civil Rights, freedom of the press—if we didn't have motivated secular people up front. But, by themselves, they can't begin to face off all of these forces. They need all of the religious help they can get. And that means that we don't write off the evangelicals, because of the great diversity among them. We'd still have the politics of resentment, but they wouldn't have the chance they have to be gaining if we had an effective religious Left.

In Madisonian terms, we'd have all the evangelicals we can get, all the African-Americans you can get, all the Jews you can get, every kind of Protestant you can get in a religious Left. They don't have to agree on policy. They have to agree on fighting off the theocratic impulse and resisting those who say that unless you have *our* god, *our* text and *our* community, you won't have virtue. □

Interview with Robert Bellah

TIKKUN: We're trying to reflect on the appropriate role of religion in politics at a time when many liberals feel that the best response to the Religious Right is to create a much stronger separation/distinction between religion and the public sphere, arguing that what we really need is to rally the troops around the First Amendment.

RB: The fundamental problem is that the First Amendment cuts two ways: it has a free-exercise clause along with the non-establishment clause. Free exercise has always been interpreted—from the earliest days of the republic—to mean that

religion has a perfectly appropriate presence in the public sphere.

When the Religious Right first became visible towards the end of the Seventies, I would get telephone calls from newspaper reporters saying, "Isn't it terrible that religion is entering our public life? What do you think?" I said, "Look, have you ever heard of Martin Luther King?" Then I would get this stone silence, followed by "Oh, oh," [as if to say] as long as religion is on our side, it's fine, but when it's not, it should be kept out. But there's no way to keep it out. It's simply a



part of public life, both constitutionally and as a part of the American tradition. There's no reason it shouldn't be in the public sphere. The problem is what the appropriate guidelines are.

We can legitimately criticize religious positions, as we can secular positions, and when some fundamentalists bring in religious discourse in a way that seems disrespectful to others, progressive spiritual activists can model a better way, critiquing religious perspectives with which we disagree and doing so respectfully, without demonizing them and without compromising the fact that we have different kinds of politics and differences in interpretation of the Bible. [For example,] what does the Bible say about abortion and gay marriage? I haven't been able to find any text about it, but it does have a lot to say about oppression of the poor. And that is perfectly appropriate to present in public discussion and to challenge the Religious Right from the standpoint of a religious Left. And when people cross boundaries and behave in a way that lacks civility, they should be called on it.

TIKKUN: One of the arguments made in response to that position is, "Yes, civility itself is your value but it's not a value that we necessarily share." What is your foundational basis for civility when it's not one of the parts of the Constitution and it's not required of people who participate in the public sphere? "Isn't civility just another liberal trick," these opponents argue, "to keep us from articulating the passion of religious

commitment?"

RB: There's nothing wrong with passion. You and I have as much passion as they do. We who are liberals or progressives don't want to be human beings without passion.

As I wrote in *Habits of the Heart*, there is a set of moral understandings in any society that is not legally enforceable. But maybe even more important than the law is maintaining a free society, a democratic society. And a democratic society requires a level of civility; otherwise things break down on the most elementary level.

So no, I can't argue for civility on legal grounds, but I certainly can argue for it on political grounds. I guess there have always been people that have crossed those lines.

But the idea that we could kick religion out of our own liberal and progressive world by not talking about it ourselves is the craziest idea I've ever heard. It means we abandon a very large sector of the American populace to the worst kind of religious rhetoric.

TIKKUN: But that is exactly what the Left has done.

RB: I know. I'm fighting a two-front war all the time: against the religious fundamentalists and the Religious Right, on the one hand, and against those on the Left who dismiss religion as reactionary. Ironically, given the weakness of the secular Left, I often see that it is religious groups who are the most prominent force in the public arena fighting for the liberal and progressive things that I believe in.

AP PHOTO/GERALD HERBERT

The idea that we could kick religion out of our own liberal and progressive world by not talking about it is the craziest idea I've ever heard. It means we abandon a very large sector of the American populace to the worst kind of religious rhetoric.

TIKKUN: What's your theory about why the new Religious Right developed the passion it did in the mid Seventies and became a major political force. What were the social and political dynamics that suddenly made it a major reality? It wasn't nearly as prominent in the religious world between the 1940s and 1960s.

RB: I think that the Religious Right was first mobilized by the Civil Rights movement. The Religious Right was amongst the first to organize to stop giving equality. They woke up to the idea that it wasn't too smart, and they're still fighting that battle—at least non-publicly.

TIKKUN: They were mobilized to support inequality?

RB: Exactly. George Wallace and so on. And then the feminist movement began to mobilize, then the gay movement mobilized...

TIKKUN: So you're saying they were only mobilized in a negative way...?

RB: Yes.

TIKKUN: To be generous to those with whom we disagree, can't we also acknowledge that the Religious Right mobilized energy to fighting for their ideals?

RB: Yes, but what ideals were they fighting for? They had no politics. The things that they get upset about are all negative. They are always against something. Tell me what they're for.

TIKKUN: If you look at the *Campus Crusade for Christ* in the 1970s, they were very much for preserving families and protecting people from the sexual exploitation of the marketplace and of the Left. So, to be generous toward those with whom we disagree, can't we also acknowledge that they wanted to bring a religious vision to a society that had become secularized?

RB: That wonderful code word "family values" is certainly something that they talk about a lot. But they don't know exactly what it means. The Religious Right bought heavily into the neo-liberal program. They often support conservative economics, even though most religious conservatives' and evangelicals' families won't be helped by that. Yes, they supported family values and were opposed to sexual exploitation, though I doubt they would have used the words "sexual exploitation." But what are you going to do when they use family values in politics, and they equate that with opposing abortion and gay rights?

TIKKUN: Well, TIKKUN Magazine has strongly opposed the Right's attempts to criminalize abortion or deny gay rights. We don't want to undermine women's rights in any sphere. Still, there are other parts of the Religious Right's program

that might best be described as an alienated protest against the intrusion of the marketplace into their social lives. The protest was legitimate; the form it takes not legitimate.

RB: That's perfectly true. However, they never saw it in those terms. They never saw it as the market economy.

TIKKUN: That's what we've been saying and why we need the Tikkun Community's Network of Spiritual Progressives to make those connections. We need a progressive politics of meaning to link it to the economy. But the fact that they didn't link it that way doesn't mean that they weren't responding to something very real.

RB: Absolutely! I think that the rise of the Religious Right correlates with the first wave of the impact of globalization on American society. Many American men that are pulled to the Religious Right are people who have lost their well-paying labor union jobs which had health care and retirement, and now are working low-end jobs. And now their wives are working and sometimes their wives are making more money than they're making. Their whole sense of the meaning of life is coming down around their ears, and it's not because of gays and feminists. It's because of globalization. But the Republicans, with their tremendous propaganda machine, are able to turn this alienation, which is rooted in structural changes in the American economy, into a cultural war. It's painfully similar to periods between World War I and World War II in Europe. These are the kinds of conditions that led the rise of fascism.

TIKKUN: What's your theory about why the Left has been so unable to respond effectively to this situation, but have instead dismissed spiritual concerns?

RB: The secular Left are missing something. They're not reaching people. They seem unable to realize that religion is still a very important thing to most Americans.

TIKKUN: Well yes. But why is the Left stuck in a marxist view that religion is the opiate of the masses, when on so many other issues it is so much more nuanced?

RB: Some of these people are refugees of some kind of conservatism. Whether it's right-wing evangelicalism or ultraconservative Catholicism or Orthodox Judaism, they're turned off from religion because they were exposed to a kind of religion that was impossible for them to accept as young people. There is a powerful what I call "Enlightenment fundamentalism" that states the every religion is evil and reason is going to solve all of our problems. It's a mindset that's very hard to grasp. And many have failed to grasp that the Enlightenment did not solve all the problems! □

Remembering Romero: Lessons in Spiritual Activism

Or N. Rose

For Jose "Chencho" Alas: Lover of Peace,
Pursuer of Peace

As word of the death of Pope John Paul II was broadcast throughout the world in late March, several thousand people gathered in El Salvador to celebrate the life of another more radical Catholic leader, Oscar Arnulfo Romero (1917–1980). In his three-year tenure as archbishop of San Salvador (1977–1980), Romero emerged as a champion of social justice, publicly defending the rights of the poor and the oppressed from the brutality of the oligarchic Salvadoran government. Romero was murdered for his outspokenness, gunned down as he celebrated the Eucharist on March 24, 1980. Twenty-five years after his death, Romero is a hero to Christian seekers and activists around the globe. He is a model of integrity and bravery, a man whose belief in God and his people compelled him to speak truth to power, serving as a "voice for the voiceless."

Oscar Romero is not yet a well-known figure in Jewish circles. He did not achieve the kind of political success of Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr. and has therefore not garnered universal acclaim. Additionally, while many of Romero's writings are available in English translation, his religious language, with its heavy emphasis on classical Christian motifs such as Jesus, martyrdom, and resurrection (very different from King's more selective use of these tropes) is uncomfortable or unappealing to many Jews. But it would be a mistake for the Jewish community to ignore Romero, one of the truly great religious personalities of the twentieth century. Although not all of his teachings are easily translatable into Jewish terms, there is much in his biography, letters, and sermons that can help us deepen our work as spiritual activists.

Personal Growth and Transformation

While Romero ended his life as a champion of the poor and the oppressed, he did not begin his pastoral career this way. Ordained as a priest in Rome in 1942, Romero was

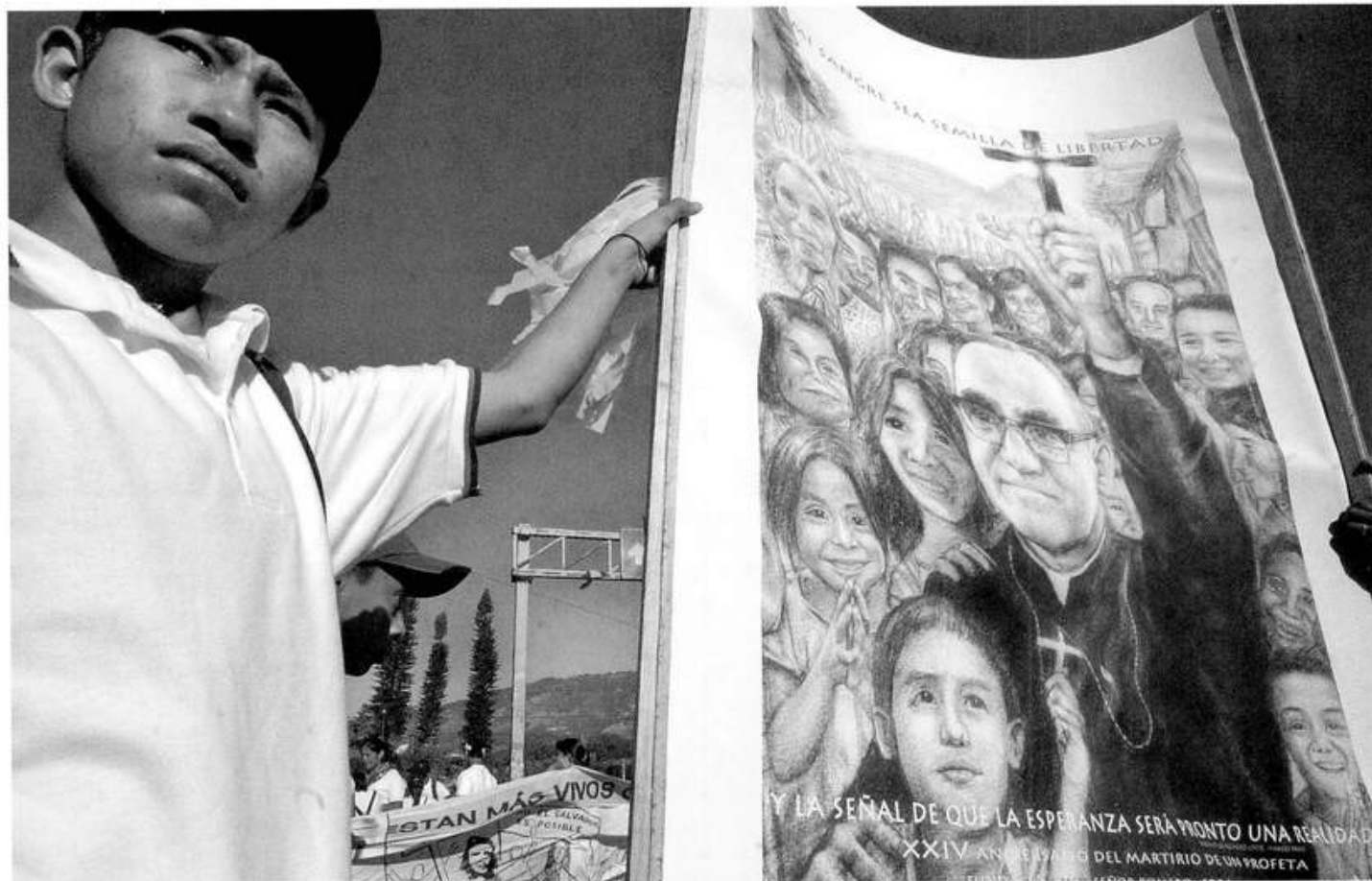
for many years a rather cautious and conservative religious leader. He was disturbed by the "activist" agenda of his colleagues, reflected in the pronouncements at the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and the declarations of the Central American Bishops Conference in Medellin, Colombia (1968). At Medellin, the Latin American bishops rededicated themselves to the poor, pledging to fight the structural injustice that riddled much of life in the region. Romero feared that if the church entered the fray of secular life it would lose sight of the Gospel's essential message of peace and reconciliation, only adding to the division and conflict in the area.

Romero's conversion to a life of activism unfolded slowly over the next several years. This journey began modestly in 1974 when, as bishop of Santiago de Maria in Usulután, he came face to face with official repression of the working class. In ministering to the many coffee plantation workers in his diocese, he learned how the rich and powerful conspired to oppress the laborers. Romero responded by opening the rectory and diocesan buildings to the impoverished and violated, and he began slowly to distance himself from those who would maintain the status quo.

In February 1977, Romero was installed as archbishop of the capital city of San Salvador. He was chosen for this post because of his reputation as a conservative ecclesiastic (despite his advocacy on behalf of the coffee workers), who would reverse the progressive course of his predecessor, Archbishop Luis Chavez y Gonzalez. In fact, the only opposition to his appointment came from the peasants. As activist Nidia Diaz recalls, "We felt it was a huge victory for the conservative oligarchy, and we prepared to confront him." No one could have anticipated that within three weeks of Romero's appointment as archbishop, he would become the single most important spokesperson for the poor and the oppressed in El Salvador.

On March 12, 1977, the Jesuit priest Rutilio Grande, an outspoken critic of the Salvadoran elite, was murdered along with two parishioners. Grande was a close friend of Romero and had served as the master of ceremonies at Romero's installation just a month earlier. Many of Romero's associates and admirers view Grande's death as a watershed moment in the Archbishop's life. In a move that put both church and state on notice, Romero brought Grande's body to San Salvador for a commemorative service in the plaza outside the cathedral. The

Or N. Rose, a contributing editor to Tikkun, teaches at the Rabbinical School of Hebrew College in Newton, MA. He recently served as a scholar-in-residence for the AJWS rabbinical student mission to El Salvador.



Victor Mundo, 16, holds a poster with an image of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero in San Salvador, El Salvador on Sunday March 14, 2004 during a march by young Catholics to mark the twenty-fourth anniversary of his death.

following Sunday, Romero cancelled all Catholic worship services across the country and urged people to join him for one central Mass in the capital city. At this Mass he made public his support for persecuted priests throughout El Salvador: "Whoever touches one of my priests touches me." After the worshippers erupted in applause, Romero added, "This applause confirms the profound joy I feel in my heart in taking possession of the archdiocese ... knowing that my weakness and my inabilities find their complement, their strength, and their courage in a unified priesthood." A timid priest had become a courageous leader.

The Poor: Heeding a Prophetic Call

While many people view Oscar Romero as a modern prophet, in his mind the true visionaries of his day were the poor and the oppressed. It was the peasant activists of El Salvador who opened his eyes to the spiritual significance of the liberation movement. In time, Romero came to experience the Divine most vividly in the presence of his people. "The face of Christ is among the sacks and baskets of the farm

worker; the face of Christ is among those who are tortured and mistreated in the prisons ... the face of Christ is in the poor who ask the church for their voice to be heard. How can the church deny this request when it is Christ who is telling us to speak for him?" As Romero scholars have observed, not only did the Archbishop believe that the church had to stand up for the rights of the dispossessed, but, more importantly, he also believed that they had the capacity to take charge of their own lives. As the Christian writer and activist Marie Dennis states, "Romero's great act of faith was that he believed in the poor. He saw them as protagonists, organizers in forging their own destinies and rebuilding their shattered communities."

In one of his many stirring homilies Romero said,

It is something new among our people that today the poor see in the church a source of hope and support for their noble struggle for liberation. The hope that our church encourages is neither naïve nor passive. It is rather a summons from the word of God for the great majority of the people—the poor—that they assume their proper responsibility ... that in a country where it is legally or practically prohibited ... they set about organizing themselves.... The hope that we preach to the poor is intended to give them back their dignity, to encourage them to take charge of their own future.

The Archbishop now understood the need for the church

OPTIONS FOR CATHOLICISM

to support the poor in their political and economic efforts. Religious leaders could not stand outside of history, preaching a disembodied gospel when so many people were suffering: "Christian faith does not cut us off from the world but immerses us in it ... the church is not a fortress set apart from the city. The church follows Jesus who lived, worked, struggled and died in the midst of ... the polis."

When Romero turned to embrace the peasant struggle, he was careful to parse the differences between religion and spirit, church and state. For example, despite his role as archbishop, he never claimed that Christianity was the only path to God. For Romero, "The Spirit is not the monopoly of a movement, not even a Christian movement, of a hierarchy, priesthood, or religious congregation. The Spirit is free." He acted on that belief by allying with various secular activists in the struggle for justice. Yet he also refused to allow his faith to be identified with any one political movement. While Romero understood the importance of Marxist thought to many of his compatriots, he resisted conflating it with Christianity for both theological and pragmatic reasons. "Let this be clear: when the church preaches social justice, equality, and the dignity of people, defending those who suffer and those who are assaulted, this is not subversion; this is not Marxism. This is the authentic teaching of the church." Romero sought to live out the teachings of Christ in the "polis," while also allowing his experiences in the streets of San Salvador to inform his understanding of Christianity. As he put it, one cannot ignore "the repercussions of faith on the world and also of the repercussions that being in the world has on faith."

Responsibility & Repentance

Amazingly, more than 90 percent of the Salvadoran people tuned their radios to Romero's weekly sermons. They did so believing that the Archbishop would provide them with accurate information (the government controlled media outlets were unreliable) and the wisdom to cope with this information. Romero used this opportunity to address the various constituents—friends and foes—of the Salvadoran public, calling on all of them to take responsibility for their actions and to repent of their wrongdoings. Using the Christian theological proposition that "we are all sinners," he urged his listeners to follow Jesus in answering hatred with love.

Further Reading

Romero: A Life by James R. Brockman (Orbis Books, 2005)

Oscar Romero: Reflections on His Life and Writings by Marie Dennis, Renny Golden, and Scott Wright (Orbis Books, 2003)

The Violence of Love by Oscar Romero, compiled and translated by James R. Brockman (Orbis Books)

To the nonviolent liberation activists who reviled their oppressors he said, "Let us be firm in defending our rights, but with great love in our hearts, because to defend our rights in this way we are also seeking the conversion of sinners. This is the vengeance of the Christian."

To the guerilla freedom fighters who chose a path of violent resistance he said, "Liberation that means revolutions of hatred and violence and takes the lives of others ... cannot be true liberty."

And to the Salvadoran military and paramilitary groups that carried out the most heinous of crimes against their own people he said, "No matter your crimes ... They are ugly and horrible ... God calls you and forgives you."

Romero felt that the teachings of the Bible required him both to call his people to task for their sins and to welcome them back into the church with open arms. Significantly, he also understood that the church itself was sinning as long as it did not challenge the forces of repression. "The church cannot remain silent before injustice; to remain silent is to be an accomplice." This critique emerged from Romero's awareness that he—a priest of God—had remained silent for too long.

Hope in the Darkness

Speaking truth to power became, for Romero, a path to hope, answering hatred with love a path to salvation. Just two months before his assassination, he made the following statement:

I want to reaffirm my conviction as a person of hope that a new ray of salvation will come. I want to encourage those who have the good will to hear me. Nobody has the right to sink themselves in despair; all of us have the duty to search together for new paths and to actively hope as Christians.

For Romero, hope did not mean that salvation would come quickly to his people or that he would live to see the full flowering of Salvadoran liberation. In fact, in the last months of his life the Archbishop embraced with serenity the possibility that he would be martyred for the cause. With Jesus as his model, Romero believed that if he were slain, his death would only strengthen his people, inspiring Salvadorans to bring an end to the conflict. "May my blood be the seed of liberty and a sign that hope will soon become a reality." Romero went so far as to say that if he were killed, he would rise again. "I should tell you that as a Christian I don't believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I will be resurrected in the Salvadoran people."

For Salvadorans today, Romero is truly alive—accompanying and inspiring them in their daily toils. Traveling throughout the countryside, one sees countless murals, photographs, banners, and clothing with Romero's image and words on them. While the Salvadoran civil war is over, poverty and bloodshed continue to take their toll on this small developing nation. The gap between rich and poor continues to widen, and violent criminal activity has savaged the youth of the

country. It is precisely for this reason that Romero's spirit remains so important to his people—he continues to proclaim the “good news,” urging his flock to persevere in the face of adversity.

As a Jewish student of Romero's life and teachings, I feel enriched and challenged by my encounter with this visionary priest. The Archbishop demonstrates through his biography that *teshuvah* (repentance) is always possible; that even a fifty-nine year old, conservative cleric can outgrow his timidity and become a champion of social justice. Romero teaches us that to be a religious person requires that we take action in the world, and that to hide behind the veil of neutrality is sinful. As Abraham Joshua Heschel said, “in a free society some are

guilty, *all* are responsible.” Like Maimonides and other Jewish ethicists, Romero instructs us that we must not only support the poor, but must also help them take control of their own lives. The Archbishop actually goes further than most Jewish authorities in demanding that we humble ourselves and view the poor as our teachers. Romero also reminds us that there is a price to pay for standing up to injustice and that in extreme cases we may have to surrender our lives (*mesirat nefesh*) for the right and the good. Finally, he pleads with us not to despair—to always remember that God loves life and that “love is as fierce as death” (Song of Songs 8:6).

May Oscar Arnulfo Romero's memory be for a blessing—*zekher tzaddik v'qadosh livrakbah*. □

Pope Benedict XVI, aka Cardinal Ratzinger: Can This Leopard Change his Spots?

Matthew Fox

One always wishes for a miracle. I do not rule out *anyone* having a conversion experience at any time. Unlike fundamentalists who talk of one conversion experience, I believe we are all capable of being born again ... and again ... and again. And this applies to popes too. Might it happen with Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI? One can only pray.

But I would not bet on it. Because, as the saying goes, “ya dance with them that brung ya there.” And the forces that have coalesced around this pope for the past twenty-five years are not pretty. Nor are they at all dialogical.

We cannot be naïve about the papacy. Just because a person is dressed in white does not make him holy. Or just. Just because the media salivates over a particular figure does not make that figure authentic or saintly. Celebrity is not the same as character. Many have been the knaves, heretics, butchers, and moral midgits who have sat in “Peter's throne” (not that Peter, a simple fisherman, ever had a throne. In fact the empire killed him rather efficiently.)

What do we know about the character of this man who is

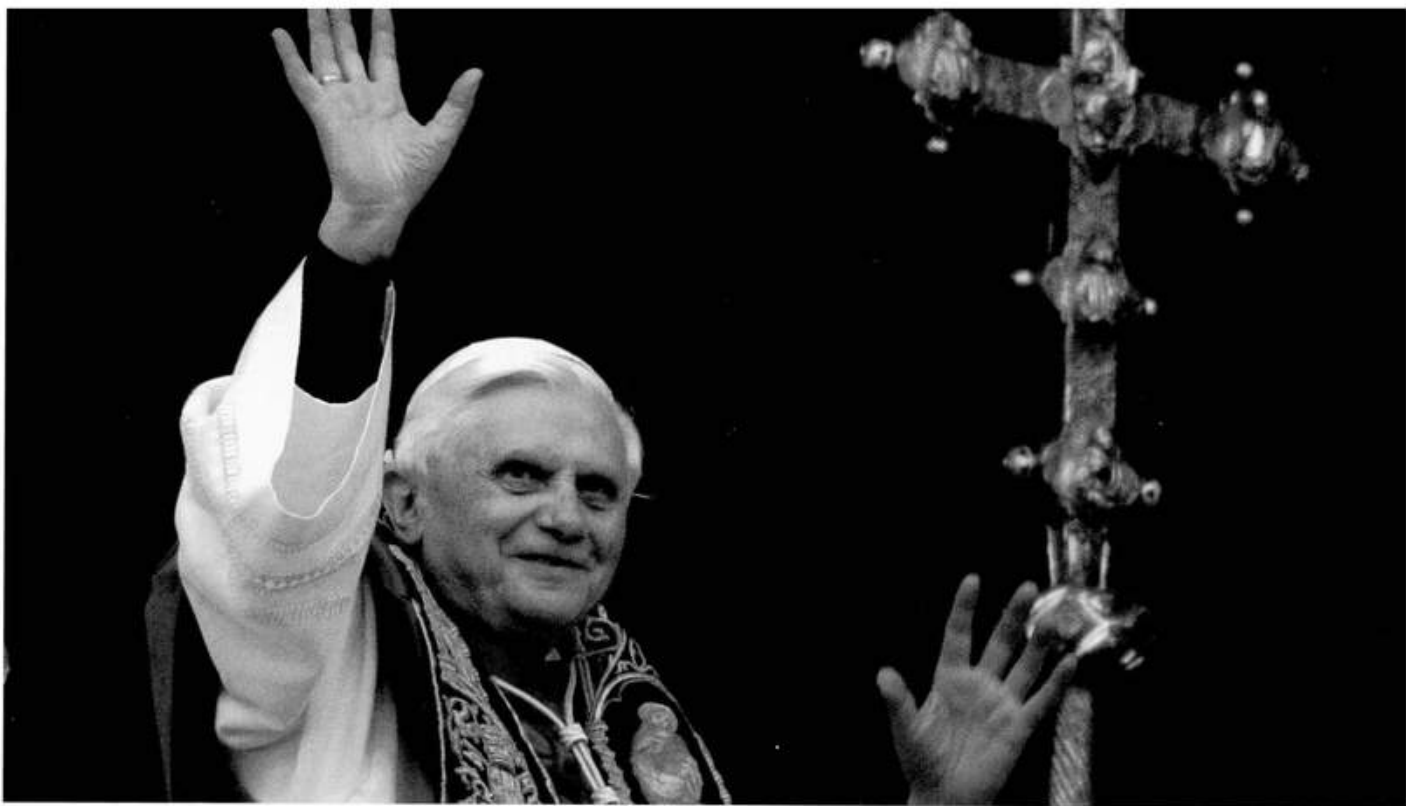
now pope? Along with millions of other viewers, I saw the 20/20 feature in which Ratzinger took a swing at a journalist as he was getting into his limousine. What was that about?

It was about just one of the many burgeoning scandals of the past papacy, a scandal in which Ratzinger was sitting in the middle of it all. It concerned the founder (now in his eighties) of the Legionaries of Christ, an extremely right-wing religious order led by Father Maciel of Mexico. This well-connected priest, it seems, was a genius at raising money. He started many seminaries, schools, and universities. However, over twenty years ago, at least nine of his ex-seminarians started writing the Vatican to report that this priest had sexually abused them when they were boys at his seminary.

Even though these victims wrote document after document to the Vatican, the Vatican did nothing. The case sat on Ratzinger's desk for years, and he commented that it would not be prudent to attack a priest who had done so much good for the church. Only in December of 2004 did Ratzinger take notice, and with Ratzinger as pope, the case was closed by May 22 with no action taken.

One can read about the scurrilous goings on in the past papacy, spearheaded by Cardinal Ratzinger, in two books written by three Catholic journalists. The secrets their books reveal are truly chilling. One is *Vows of Silence: The Abuse of Power in the Papacy of John Paul II* by Jason Berry and Gerald Renner, which recounts the story of Father Maciel. The second

Matthew Fox is founding president of the University of Creation Spirituality in Oakland, California, now known as Wisdom University. He is author of twenty-six books. Fox's most recent publication is A New Reformation! Fox can be reached at www.wisdomuniversity.org or matthewfox.org.



book is *Papal Sins: Structures of Deceit* by Garry Wills, which argues that “structures of deceit” and “Intellectual betrayal” lie at the heart of present-day Vatican Catholicism.

Pope John Paul II, who had a peculiar attraction to right-wing religious groups, was full of praise for Father Maciel and often invited the priest onto the papal plane for his trips to America. He also gave special treatment to Father Escriva, the founder of Opus Dei, another right-wing religious order, which was so chummy with the late Spanish dictator Franco that Franco included three members of Opus Dei in his cabinet. Father Escriva was rushed into canonization by this pope *even though he praised Hitler*. Ratzinger clearly supported the Pope’s intimacy with such orders, overseeing the appointment of numerous Opus Dei cardinals and bishops, particularly in Latin America. The third extreme right-wing group that the past papacy (and the current pope) so strongly supported is the Communion and Liberation group of Italy.

These are the people most wildly cheering the new pope, because they know how ideologically close and personally loyal he was to John Paul II, and how much behind the scenes work he did on the late pope’s behalf. Among Cardinal Ratzinger’s many well-known achievements was silencing over 100 progressive theologians and dismissing most of us (yes, I’m one of them) from the priesthood or our religious orders in the name of doctrinal “orthodoxy.” Ratzinger similarly oversaw the destruction of liberation theology and base-community movements in Latin America, substituting arch-conservative Opus Dei clergy whenever he could—which is why right-wing Pentecostal sects are now flourishing all over the continent.

Yet, nearly three months after Ratzinger’s election as Pope, the press continues to go out of its way to show us how

human this Inquisitor General is. We are told he drinks lemonade and is followed down the streets by cats. But I think we have to judge the spots on this leopard by his actions, not by his love of lemonade or his appeal to alley cats.

The most ignoble of Ratzinger’s actions are his killing of theology in the Roman Catholic Church and appointing churchmen (only men!) whose only qualification was an oath of loyalty. Why do this? In order to create a church of Ideology and a hierarchy of sycophants. This is why the current scandal over pedophilia in the American Catholic church happened: When you pick ideologues and yes-men to run your organization, you can expect moral stupidity and a lack of imagination in times of crisis.

And there *is* a crisis in the American Catholic Church. It concerns not so much the pedophile priests, but the subsequent cover-up of their actions by bishops and cardinals. (The chief poster boy among them, Cardinal Law, has been given a plum job overseeing a fourth-century basilica in Rome.) When the scandal first broke about pedophile priests being shuttled from parish to parish and diocese to diocese under Cardinal Law in the Boston archdiocese, we were in session with a Doctor of Ministry program at Wisdom University (formerly called the University of Creation Spirituality). One of our students, who was a corporate CEO, said this: “If this happens in business, the CEO is gone in twenty-four hours.”

Well, it took Cardinal Law two-and-one-half years to resign. And then he was promoted!

Over the course of the last twenty-three years, Cardinal Ratzinger (with the complete approval of John Paul II) brought back the Inquisition. One prominent theologian, Father Bernard Haering, who was the first church thinker to

AP PHOTO/ANDREW MEDICHINI

be attacked by Ratzinger, had also been interrogated by the Nazis during the Second World War. He reported that his interrogations in Ratzinger's office were far more scary. Ratzinger's attitude has been that he alone (or the pope, in his name) knows theology, and that all real theologians can find work elsewhere. Similarly, Ratzinger denies women any church leadership roles, even though the best scholarship today makes it clear that women were leading from the get-go in the early Christian movement. Some of them even worked closely with Saint Paul.

The prominent Brazilian liberation theologian, Father Leonardo Boff, wrote about the torture that the Sacred Congregation of the Faith (called "the Office of the Holy Inquisition" until 1965) puts a theologian through today. "It is more psychological than physical as in the days of the rack," he points out. But it is deadly. Many theologians have died or suffered from heart attacks and stress because of the hatred directed at them by those who are sure, because Ratzinger has said it, that they are teaching "heresy."

I experienced similar stress when people would not just show up and protest at my talks or lectures with shouts, signs, and pickets, but even, on one very memorable occasion, spit on me as I was leaving a speaking venue. This specific incident occurred at the Cathedral in Seattle where Ratzinger's ideologues had gathered to attack Archbishop Hunthausen who, among other things, had refused to pay his taxes because of his moral opposition to the Vietnam War. I had been invited to lecture on Hildegard of Bingen, and I was spit on by members of

CUFF—Catholics United for the Faith—as I exited the auditorium where I spoke.

This same organization had mailed a large dossier to Ratzinger about my work. Though they are not theologians but religious hooligans, Ratzinger still listened to them. Archbishop Hunthausen was subsequently hounded by Ratzinger, who took most of his powers away—a tactic he employed with many prophetic churchmen in Latin America as well, some of whom had their dioceses cut up or taken away from them and given over to right-wing clergy, such as Cardinal Arns, who, practically alone, stood up for years to Brazil's late military dictatorship.

Being stuck in one's ideology and refusing to come up for theological air has many painful consequences. For example, Ratzinger believes that God revealed to him that no one should use condoms. How many Africans (among others) are dying because of this private revelation? Or that no one should practice birth control? How many species are dying, and how many women are kept in poverty because of that private revelation?

The bishop who replaced the saintly Oscar Romero in El Salvador, who was murdered by the military while celebrating Mass [see page 42], is a member of Opus Dei. Romero, who worked with the poor against the military regime and died a martyr, has not been proposed for canonization by Ratzinger.

There is no doubt therefore about where the man we knew as Cardinal Ratzinger lies in terms of supporting justice movements. His is a preferential option for the rich and powerful,

A Partial List of the Fallen

FR. BERNARD HAERING, a German Redemptorist and moral theologian
OSCAR ROMERO of El Salvador, called in three times to the Vatican to explain his stand against the military. The Vatican sent three visitors to coerce him to be silent.
JACQUES POHIER, French Dominican
EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX, Dutch Dominican
PROFESSOR HANS KUNG
FATHER ERNESTO CARDENAL of Nicaragua
SISTER AGNES MARY MANSOUR of the Sisters of Mercy in Michigan
BISHOP RAYMOND HUNTHAUSEN of Seattle
GUSTAVO GUTIERREZ, Peruvian liberation theologian

LEONARDO BOFF, Brazilian liberation theologian
ALL THE BISHOPS OF PERU summoned to Rome to repudiate liberation theology
FR. GYORGY BULANYI, a Hungarian priest
FR. CHARLES CURRAN of Catholic University of America
BISHOP MATHEW CLARK of Rochester, New York
FR. ALEX ZANOTELLI of Columbia who published an article demonstrating the relationship between arms sales and Italian relief agencies
BISHOP PEDRO CASALDALIGA, defender of the Indians and the rainforest in Brazil

BISHOP HELDER CAMARA'S Institute in Recife, Brazil, which was shut down
FR. EUGEN DREWERMANN of Germany, a psychoanalyst and author
FR. PHILIPPE DENIS, Dominican of France, for criticizing the Opus Dei
IVONE GEBARA, Brazilian sister
FR. PAUL COLLINS of Australia
ANTHONY DE MELLO, Indian Jesuit (who had already been dead eleven years when his work was condemned)
SISTER JEANNINE GRAMICK and **FR. ROBERT NUGENT** of the United States for ministering to gay and lesbian Catholics because they had not "condemned the intrinsic evil of homosexual acts"

not for the poor, as were the theology of base communities and liberation theologies. And that of the prophets of Israel, including the historical Jesus.

Ratzinger's allies can be very violent people.

Ratzinger's two documents attacking gays and lesbians are truly mean-spirited in tone as well as content. So too was his bullying of me (and no doubt the other 100 plus theologians persecuted during the tenure of Pope John Paul II) when he struck up correspondence with my order about my works. In Ratzinger's correspondence, he actually defends the tired teaching of the spiritual path named as the three paths of purification, illumination, and union. Ratzinger rejects the four paths of the creation spiritual tradition that I name: the *via positiva* (joy), *via negativa* (silence and darkness), *via creativa* (creativity) and the *via transformativa* (justice and compassion) as "dangerous and deviant." My paths, as Jewish scholars have told me, are Jewish. The others are not.

The same is true of my work on "original blessing" vs. original sin. His rage at losing a pet concept like original sin did him in. Yet it is not Jewish and it is not Biblical.

Karl Rove is another cheerleader for this pope. He should be, since he owes his job to him after all. In the last presidential election, *Ratzinger actually got Bush elected*. This is how it happened. On June 4, Bush went to the Vatican and complained that the Catholic Bishops were not supporting him enough for his stand against abortion and gay rights. One week later, a document came from Ratzinger to the Catholic bishops of America telling them that they should tell the pub-

lic that a Catholic politician (for example, John Kerry) who is not against abortion ought not to be allowed to take communion. A number of bishops went along.

The result? In Ohio, Iowa, and New Mexico the Catholic vote was 6 percent higher than ever before for a Republican candidate. Thus, Ratzinger got Bush elected. As a head of state, the pope had no right to interfere in an American election. No wonder Bush was the first in line at John Paul II's funeral—he owed him his job (as he owed the Supreme Court his job four years prior).

To get a measure of Ratzinger and his spots, we really ought to name the theologians he silenced, whom he deprived of work and, above all, of serving the greater church. Maybe each one of them can be seen as a spot on his leopard skin. People need theologians—people committed to thinking through the tradition in light of today's needs—no matter what Inquisitors prefer.

Might Ratzinger change? His first two homilies as pope suggest that he wants to. He talks of "the service of reconciliation and harmony between peoples," of wanting to "listen," and of wanting to commit to "interfaith" dialogue. We will have to wait and see. Like many others, I hope he can change.

The Dalai Lama warns, however, that the biggest obstacle to interfaith dialogue is a bad relationship with one's own faith tradition. Benedict XVI has a lot of learning to do about his own tradition, I'm afraid. And a lot of answering to do too. I'm not holding my breath. □

Why the New Pope Isn't Catholic— and Why I Still Am

Anthony Mansueto

The new pope isn't Catholic. Joseph Ratzinger is a Lutheran. And he is not the sort of liberal, tolerant Lutheran we have become accustomed to respecting and engaging in our interfaith dialogues, but rather a dangerous and authoritarian follower of Paul and Augustine who threatens to lead the Catholic world into fascism. As such, Ratzinger has set himself outside the Church and, even if he has taken most of the Church's institutional resources with him, he has left those of us who remain faith-

ful to the historic tradition of the Catholic Church to resist, to guard its message of meaning and hope, and to rebuild.

These are audacious claims that require some justification. There is no way to do this without a bit of church history.

The Emergence of Christianity

Christianity has, historically, been an amalgam of very different socioreligious and political-theological traditions that have all been very much in tension with each other. This tension goes back to the origins of the religion. Most scholars, for example, now regard Jesus as essentially a Hillel-school Pharisee whose teaching focused on ethical conduct, an emphasis still visible in the synoptic Gospels and the Letter of James. Paul, on the other hand, put forward a new

Anthony Mansueto teaches philosophy, religious studies, and history at the University of New Mexico–Gallup and serves as President of Seeking Wisdom, a nonprofit research, education, and organizing institute.

theology that broke radically with Judaism, arguing that it is impossible for a sinful humanity to fulfill the Law and that we can be redeemed only by faith in the crucified and risen Christ.

This tension was amplified by the differing ways in which the various cultures that eventually gave birth to Christendom appropriated the Christian tradition. The Celts, whose tradition had always emphasized wisdom and ethical conduct, stressed the message of the synoptics—who regarded Jesus as a wisdom teacher and moral exemplar—and developed a spirituality centered on learning, penance, and the struggle for social justice. This was the tradition of Pelagius, the British monk whose work captivated the hearts and minds of Europe during the fourth century. The Germans, on the other hand, who were great warriors, regarded Jesus as a victorious warlord who conquered Satan and bestowed the “booty” of eternal life as a free gift on his faithful followers. North Africans, who lived in one of the most exploited regions of the Empire, regarded Christianity as first and foremost an anti-imperial ideology and gave the Church its tradition of martyrdom. After Christianity was legalized under Constantine, many North Africans (followers of Donatus of Casae Nigrae) refused to recognize the leadership of bishops who had collaborated with the Empire during the last persecution. Rome and what was left of the old Roman aristocracy argued that valid office, not personal sanctity, was the criterion for exercising religious leadership. The Byzantine East fused Christian symbols with Neoplatonic philosophy to craft a sacral monarchic ideology that kept the Roman Empire alive for another thousand years.

These struggles all came to a head in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. The pivotal figure in this regard was Augustine, who embraced an essentially Pauline theology and won decisions from major church councils against the Pelagians and the Donatists. North Africa, which would have nothing to do with an imperial church, essentially abandoned Christianity, welcoming the armies of *Dar-al-Islam* as liberators when they arrived some two centuries later. But the Germanic warlords liked Augustinian theology, because it treated military force and conquest as at least a necessary evil, and because its emphasis on salvation as a free gift from God resonated with their own spontaneous appropriation of the gospel. The Romans, meanwhile, liked Augustinianism because it defended the legitimacy of office against the claims of the Donatists and others who demanded real virtue as the condition of leadership.

What Makes Catholicism Distinct from Other Forms of Christianity

In practice, however, popular Catholicism remained profoundly Pelagian, stressing the essential goodness of humanity and our capacity for wisdom and moral virtue. This trend gradually gained strength as civilization pro-

gressed and Christendom prospered. It found its voice when, after Christians took Toledo in the late eleventh century, they began translating the works of Aristotle into Latin from the Arabic and Hebrew in which they had been preserved, along with the works of Jewish and Islamic Aristotelians such as ibn Sina, ibn Rusd, and Moshe ben Maimon. This process eventually culminated in the formulation of what the Church came to regard as its official theology: that of Thomas Aquinas. Thomas completed the long synthesis between the ascent to God by means of rational dialectics and prophetic revelation—a synthesis that had begun with the work of Philo of Alexandria.

For Thomas, God is *Esse*, or “Being as such,” and thus the Good that all things seek. Following Aristotle, he regarded the universe as an expression of the divine nature, naturally ordered to God, but added that each and every thing in it had a created share in God’s Being. God is not, in other words, a divine sovereign standing over and against the universe decreeing whatever he wills, but is rather the indwelling power of Being, the creative purpose in which all things participate according to their nature.

Thomas stressed the value of human reason, arguing that revelation built on but never contradicted what we know by sensation and abstraction. He also defended the essential goodness of human nature, arguing that we are weakened but not ruined by original sin, which darkens the intellect and weakens the will, leading us to pursue lesser goods than we otherwise might. But salvation is about far more than overcoming the effects of sin. Human beings naturally seek to know and love God, but being finite we cannot know or love God in essence. Grace creates in us new capacities that allow us to do this, capacities which, however, we must cultivate.

The Church helps us along in this regard, providing a framework of meaning and moral discipline. The moral law is whatever directs us towards our end—towards the full development of our capacities, natural and supernatural. A just society is one that promotes such development. And the Church, without in any way diminishing its role as spiritual guide, also serves as a guardian of natural law, holding the public authorities accountable when they violate the norms of justice and working to transform structures which stand in the way of human development and the progress of civilization.

The Rise of Thomism

This theology found a powerful popular base among the artisans and other creative sectors of the urban population in the middle ages—a base that was reflected in the rapid expansion of the mendicant orders and especially the Order of Preachers; but it threatened the emerging monarchies of the late middle ages and, later, the emerging bourgeoisies, neither of which wanted to be held accountable before the court of natural law. Even before Thomas’s death, many of his views were condemned by clerics close to

the emerging monarchies, even as the papacy sought to defend him. The result was full-blown Augustinian Reaction, a reaction that led ultimately to the Reformation. It is important to understand that Joseph Ratzinger spent the early part of his career as a scholar of St. Bonaventure who, though a personal friend of Thomas Aquinas, was very much a part of this reaction.

Except for a very brief period after the Reformation, when it was only on the basis of Thomas that the Church could defend itself effectively against the Reformers, Thomism was largely ignored by the hierarchy, which had effectively been tamed by the great Catholic monarchies (France, Spain, and Austria), who in effect held a veto over papal elections. For the people, however, the Church's decision against Luther and Calvin was a decision for human reason and human goodness against a doctrine of radical depravity, and for a spirituality of meaning and self-cultivation against a spirituality of authority and submission. While most Catholics had heard of neither Augustine nor Thomas, at the popular level being Catholic generally meant being an (implicit) Thomist.

It was only in the nineteenth century, when it became clear that the monarchies on which the Church had relied for support were either dead or dying, that the great visionary Joachim Pecci (Pope Leo XIII) shifted the Church's alliance policy, seeking to build a new base of support among the working classes. As a natural result he also embraced Thomism, the theology of creative purpose and of the creative classes, making it the official theology of the Catholic Church. This was, in many ways, the culmination of a nearly 2,000-year-long sorting out process that separated the theology of creative purpose that became Catholicism from the deformations introduced by Paul and Augustine and so enthusiastically embraced by both Catholic reactionaries (such as Anselm, Bonaventure, and Scotus) and the Reformers.

The result of this change was a flourishing of Social Catholicism, as lay Catholics everywhere took up the struggle for economic justice and world peace. They organized trade unions and peasant leagues; fought side by side with liberals, socialists, and communists against fascism; and sent a whole cadre of priests and other pastoral agents to Latin America and other parts of the Third World to swing the Catholic Church behind the cause of human development and progress. While European social democracy owes a great deal to the secular Left, it is in large part a creation of the Social Catholicism which flowed out of Pecci's embrace of Thomism. This is especially true of the European Union, which was the work first and foremost of Thomist-inspired

Christian Democratic parties, not of free-market liberals or secular socialists.

The Second Vatican Council and its Aftermath

What happened? When the Church looked around in 1960 it saw a Europe at peace for the first time in ages, increasingly prosperous yet committed to social justice, and at least hospitable to the participation of lay Catholics in the public arena. But it also saw a Europe in which church attendance and other measures of traditional religiosity were dropping rapidly. This was the motive behind the Second Vatican Council, which was intended to fine-tune the Church's pastoral strategy lest Europe's healthy embrace of the *saeculum* limit its spiritual horizons. This could have been done within the context of an enlarged and updated Thomism that

engaged in a more integral dialogue (and struggle) with the modern world, and this was clearly the intent of John XXIII. But the theological trends that emerged as dominant in the wake of the council were profoundly Augustinian. The liberationist trend opted for a left-wing Augustinianism reminiscent of the Franciscan Spirituals who met God first and foremost in the poor and ended up valuing poverty itself rather than the cultivation of excellence. At the same time, a new Augustinian Right emerged that regarded Neo-Thomism and Social

Catholicism as too focused on the social apostolate and ineffective in communicating what they saw as the essential message of Christianity: human sinfulness and God's offer of forgiveness.

It is here that both Karol Wojtyla and Joseph Ratzinger must be located, along with others grouped around the journal *Communio*. In between, what emerged as the centrist *Concilium* trend—of which Karl Rahner was probably the most important representative—argued that every human judgment implicitly presupposes the idea of God, and that it is quite possible for people to become “implicit Christians” without specifically either hearing or affirming the Christian gospel. While Rahner understood this as a (Thomistic) affirmation of the ordering of creation to God, the result was that he put a premium on internal, subjective experience without the benefit of philosophical or theological training. This subjectivism was precisely what was being demanded by a broad segment of the increasingly literate Catholic middle classes, but was ultimately destructive of the habits of self-cultivation essential to the Thomistic project.

The result of these developments has been not only to divide the Church, but also to render it impotent. The

*Joseph Ratzinger has,
for example, condemned
modern European culture as
deeply in contradiction with
not only Christianity but all
of humanity's religious
traditions.*

conciliar theology, like other bourgeois Augustinianisms before it, so defers to the private judgments of literate laity drawn from the middle and upper-middle strata of society as to utterly undermine the prophetic office of the Church. The difficulty here is not the lay status of the individuals involved, but rather their class position. The period since the Second World War generally, and the period since 1980 in particular, has witnessed the development of a very large and highly privileged class of “professionals” and managers. Because of their privileged position, they are less likely than earlier intelligentsias to challenge the global hegemony of capital from which they derive significant benefit. Due to the overwhelmingly technical character of their education they are less capable than earlier intelligentsias of actually approaching philosophical and theological questions.

Liberation theology served primarily as a means of swinging poor peasants and new proletarianized workers behind the modern-civilizational movement of socialism. While it persists as a significant current in Latin America and to a lesser extent in Asia and Africa, the crisis of socialism has left it without political direction, unable to offer much in the way of a concrete alternative to capitalist globalization. And so the *Communio* trend has become triumphant.

The Current Situation

The coming months and years are likely to be disorienting for those who approach them without a sense of the history and theology of the Catholic Church. Joseph Ratzinger has, for example, condemned modern European culture as deeply in contradiction with not only Christianity but all of humanity’s religious traditions. He has also called for lifting the condemnation of Martin Luther. He talks about Christian unity while purging the Church of those who dissent from his theology. Liberals in particular will regard these statements and actions as contradictory and imagine a tug of war between a pope who, whatever his past, wants to be pastoral and a curia intent on maintaining its power and privilege. They will be wrong.

Ratzinger’s fondness for Luther and his embrace of the cause of Christian unity are entirely consistent with his attack on modern Europe and on theologians who employ what he calls a “rationalist hermeneutic.” They have common roots in a deeply Augustinian theology that regards God as an arbitrary cosmic sovereign, humanity as radically sinful, and the Christian gospel as first and foremost about divine forgiveness for those who submit—a theology shared by most Protestants, if not by historic Catholicism (or most liberal Protestantism and most Orthodoxy).

What is so bad about such a theology? It is not, I would like to suggest, that it is critical of modernity, but that it fails to challenge modernity adequately. Modernity has so far left humanity with two alternatives: a nihilistic relativism that denies meaning and value (and thus, among other things, leaves the market allocation of resources beyond challenge),

or these theologies of authority and submission, which actually date to the early modern era and which offer a humanity alienated by capitalist modernization refuge in submission to a divine sovereign. This divine sovereign was, first of all, a reflex of the absolute monarchies of the early modern era, and later of the seemingly arbitrary operation of modern forces. Today it is the favored theology of those sectors of capital most afraid of human creativity: those heavily invested in low-wage, low-technology activities, which require strict labor discipline and which shun real competition. It is also the sort of theology that prepares people for fascism, which uses a spirituality of authority and submission as the basis for an authoritarian mass movement.

Joseph Ratzinger has been all but explicit that this is his intent. In the 1980s he was already attacking the “new class” of highly educated professionals that was coming to dominate Europe and had gained so much influence in North America. His argument for “writing off” Europe is a reflection of the fact that the European economy, centered as it is on high-end export products that require a skilled, educated workforce, provides little or no social basis for his theology. No doubt he imagines that he can capture the enormous evangelical upsurge in Africa and in Latin and North America to rebuild a base for a Church he believes has lost Europe. In reality he will be capturing these regions for those sectors of capital which have opted for a low-wage, low-technology strategy and which thus do not need—and indeed are threatened by—a literate and creative workforce. He may also swing them behind a fascist attack on the centers of modern civilization—a civilization which, for all its flaws, is all we have.

A real critique of modernity would look very different from that proposed by Joseph Ratzinger. Instead of demanding submission to a divine sovereign, it would draw attention to the indwelling of the creative purpose that alone explains why there is anything at all and which explains everything as the desire for God. It would not berate modernity for its hubris and over-reaching but rather chide it for underestimating what is really at work in this enormous upsurge of human creativity. It would gently correct its tendency to dominate nature and take control of human society rather than nurturing its best and most creative tendencies. It would, in short, affirm the essential goodness of everything natural and everything human while lifting the darkness of the intellect that prevents us from seeing life’s real meaning and from combating the structural obstacles to the full development of human capacities. It would understand Europe—the Europe that Social Catholicism did so much to help create—not as a failure, but as a work in progress.

The real tragedy of Ratzinger’s election is that it deprives the world of this message, which it desperately needs to hear. It is the Catholic message, and now it is up to those of us “left behind” by Ratzinger’s departure from the Catholic Church to make sure that it is not lost. □

Fundamentalism—Its Appeal to “Them” and Its Fascination for “Us”

Andrew Samuels

Many commentaries on religious fundamentalism and its political agendas make a dubious and simplistic distinction between the “fundamentalists” and “us.” From a psychological perspective, this sharp divide is based only upon what appears on the surface. Hence we recognize that, for whatever reasons, fundamentalism clearly also fascinates “us” when we are confronted by it. “We” who are not fundamentalist are in the clear—only, as I’ll show, we are not.

Old-style liberals, as well as those involved in the new and inspiring spiritual politics, have become fascinated by fundamentalism, especially the Islamic variety. For progressives, nothing could seem and feel more foreign. Our fascination comes from fear, and in a rush to sequester fundamentalism (for example, as “Islamic” or as “inhumane”) so as to feel safe, people who see themselves as liberal or as involved in spiritual politics often end up blindly defending Western societies against the fundamentalist critique. In so doing, liberals frequently forget how much of that critique—of the shallowness, materialism, injustice, tawdriness and institutionalized violence of the West—they share, at least on an emotional basis. Silencing fundamentalists by equating them with terrorists is a short-term tactic to banish the fascination. However, it hasn’t worked, and the fear-invoking political and religious imagery of fundamentalism fills our conscious and unconscious minds. I won’t be defending fundamentalism in this piece, but rather suggesting that it would be innovative and politically transformative to fray what has become a binary of “fundamentalists” and “us.”

The psychological appeal of fundamentalism is that it mines profound human psychological themes and tendencies. There is, therefore, universal human ground for fundamentalism to cultivate. I am not the only one to have observed wryly how many secret fundamentalisms there are in apparently tolerant milieus. In psychoanalytic circles, for example, it is common to hear individual analysts and whole groups referred to as “fundamentalist,” by which is meant

“inflexible” or “intolerant.” Of course, I am not, and my group of friends is not, fundamentalist like the other lot....

Why do fundamentalists so fascinate their critics? It has to be more than just their explosions, cruel punishments, and obsessive organizing. In order to identify fundamentalism’s fascination for others, as well as its appeal to adherents, I’ve picked out four key themes: sexuality, sacrifice, morality, and aggression. Could the fascination of fundamentalism rest on the way in which, when it comes to these subjects, fundamentalists are like us—only more extreme? Or, if not exactly like us, then like what we could be?

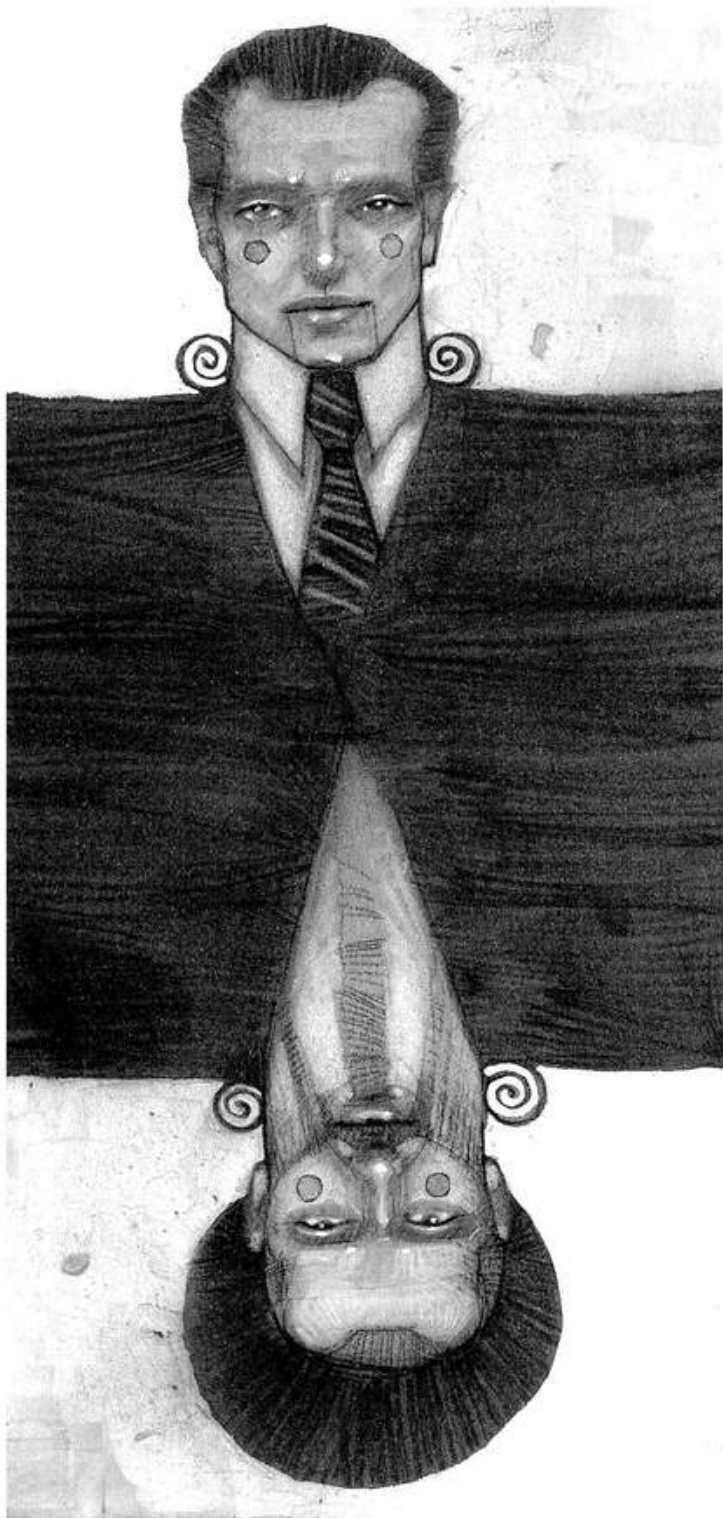
Fundamentalism and fundamentalists represent an out-of-reach and idealized version of ourselves: a contemporary mirroring Other of a particularly awkward and problematic kind. What if liberals were to find that fundamentalism had taken over the radical banner (for example, radical Muslim protest of U.S.-dominated global capitalism)? What if the new spiritually-inflected political activists and thinkers were to find that fundamentalism spotted the need for new kinds of transformative politics long before they did?

Sexuality

Behind the gender certitudes of fundamentalism lie immense anxieties over sexuality. Fundamentalism settles these anxieties with a literalizing clarity because it offers a particularly reassuring engagement with sexuality. From a fundamentalist perspective, traditional sexual roles go unquestioned (in terms of who does what to whom and in what circumstances), with conception being the only permitted goal. There is little space for the free flow of desire or play, with its attendant fantasies.

This clarity about sexuality is what enables fundamentalist discourses to structure the intimate relations between women and men in a way that is usually, though not always, unchallenged. But, despite its trite moralizing and cruel one-sidedness, the fundamentalist framework for sex sometimes sounds a distant but compelling echo of the search for meaning and purpose that attends human sexuality generally—even, or particularly, in the post-pill era. Whether as part of an ongoing relationship or outside of it, love-making happens in a narrative context that grants it emotional cohesion. Such stories are not always of marriage and commitment; some highlight lust and discharge.

Andrew Samuels (andrew.samuels@virgin.net) is a psychotherapist, university professor, writer, and activist based in London. He is the co-founder of Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility and Jews for Justice for Palestinians, and author of Politics on the Couch.



The Necessity of Sacrifice

Sacrifice of oneself for another, or something other—such as a cause, community, nation, or religion—is a widespread psychological, historical, and anthropological theme. We say, “no pain, no gain.” Sacrifice leads to renewal (for example, of the earth or soil), to love and relatedness, and to the survival and flowering of the community. Sacrifice lies at the heart of Abrahamic religious symbolism (think of Abraham and Isaac and the ram). It is, of course, a far older religious phenomenon than that. And sacrifice is a central element in fundamentalist discourse.

Let’s take a brief look at the depth psychology of sacrifice. In Jungian theory, ego-consciousness is understood as ultimately being too atomistic, rationalistic, and arrogantly wedded to logic for the subject’s individuation. The ego has to be, as it were, “sacrificed” for movement in the self to take place. In my own work, I’ve extrapolated this Jungian insight to suggest that much the same could go on in the social realm. For example, citizens have to sacrifice the dubious regressive pleasures of passive and infantile dependence on heroic male leaders so as to realize their own potential for collaborative politics under sibling leadership. The American people were unable to make this sacrifice when they voted for Bush, and the British electorate stopped short of dismissing Blair.

I have found in workshops and in the responses to my radio broadcasts on the BBC that women are more aware than men of the tension between the seduction of safety under a strong male leader and the exciting possibilities of carrying out political projects in a collaborative way. Women have known for generations that some kind of sibling leadership in which authority is shared can be extremely effective. The history of political feminism offers numerous accounts of political enterprises created and carried out by women working together in a form of sibling leadership—such as the successful demonstrations of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires against the Argentinian Junta that had “disappeared” their children and grandchildren, or actions taken by present-day eco-feminist activists to protect Indian forests.

Morality

Cognitive science, psychoanalysis, ethology, and genetics are moving into an uneasy agreement that humans are not born amoral. There seems to be something like a skeletal, ineluctable moral sensibility in humans, made flesh by human and social relationality. Obviously, the details and particulars of moral codes and behaviors have varied widely over time and geographically. In its outspoken espousal of codified public and private moralities, fundamentalism does not in fact have an uphill struggle to be heard. Just as with sexuality, there is a marked resonance already there.

Of course, it is often a very harsh and rigid morality that fundamentalisms of the religious variety promote—an

But without such a story, sex within a relationship will go “off,” and sex outside of a relationship will be less intense. For the body is much more than the site of the instincts or drives—it has its own truths and falsehoods, limitations and wider pastures.

"original morality." This ethical disposition is devoid of the possibility of debate and discussion, of forgiveness of self and other, of extenuating circumstances, or of atonement and reparation. *There are no exceptions to the rule.* Self-congratulatory elitism is the outcome, even when the discourse is one of humility and the avoidance of pride. A fundamentalist worldview is inflexibly literal, with no room for symbol or metaphor—which is why dramatic punishment lies at the core of this kind of morality.

What is missing is the other side of this process: a "moral imagination" in which forgiveness, atonement, and reparation are positively valued. For moral imagination to flourish, *exceptions are the rule!* It means that we listen to the particularities of any case, trying in a compassionate and imaginative way to balance the influence of the individual's needs and limitations with the collective standards of the community. The desirability of lying from time to time (social lies, white lies), is a simple example of this approach to morality.

Yet, were moral process only to consist of moral imagination, it would be too slippery and unreliable. So, just as moral processes based only on the cruel, codified pomposities of original morality are insulting to human creativity, moral processes based only on imagination would be far too tricky.

To reflect these different aspects of morality in a credible, workable, and full way, there needs to be a dialectical interplay between the fundamental, ineluctable, rigid original morality and a more generous, tolerant moral imagination. This is not an easy balance to strike: a mix between standards or rules and something that responds to the urgencies of a difficult situation. It is a question that is central in lived experience: How to get a balance between the certitude of original morality and the flexibility of moral imagination? Fundamentalists have gotten very good at the former with often horrid results. Perhaps the majority of easy-going Westerners have become too good at the latter.

Aggression

Most liberal-minded people discuss fundamentalism in terms of its aggression, which is a convenient projection of the shadow of the intellectual! They see fundamentalism as aggressive towards other ways of knowing and being, of worshipping and relating. This seems a bit obvious and self-congratulatory, as if Western societies were nothing but open-minded and welcoming to the stranger. I am not sure that a vision of fundamentalism as aggressive to the outside is the whole picture. I want to review the same ground from a rather different angle.

In its avoidance of difference and diversity, in its turning its back on tolerance, fundamentalism is actually *terrified of aggression*. In fact, fundamentalism seeks to manage aggression out of existence.

Let me develop this a bit more. Tolerance of, and a vital relationship to, *difference* involve inevitable degrees of conflict and aggression. Tolerance will imply aggression, because

there will always be misunderstandings, disappointments, and struggles for power and resources. Now, if there is no philosophy of tolerance and no vital relation to difference, there will, on a very important level, be no consequent conflict and aggression. Read this way, fundamentalism can be understood as an anti-aggressive discourse, though certainly not one that we should praise simply for that reason, given that it is fear of ordinary, healthy-enough aggression that is the problem for fundamentalism.

It's worse, actually. We should not praise fundamentalism for seeking to manage aggression because, if you can't face aggression, then you have to steer clear of anything to do with tolerance, difference, and diversity. Thus, fundamentalism helps a person to avoid the aggression of encountering something different. But isn't that a terrible loss for that person? Aren't they then deprived of the benefits of experiencing identity and pluralism? A superficially easier but less-rich life is guaranteed when the problems of tolerance are bypassed or frozen. If you search out the etymological roots of the word "tolerance" in Latin, it comes from the verb meaning "to bear," and that in turn comes from the Greek verb meaning "to suffer." Tolerance is hard and painful work.

This basic program for tolerance is derived from Islam. I have been on a steep learning curve here, due to the inter-faith and inter-religion work that I am currently doing. I have been involved with a number of inspiring projects. One involves Jewish-Muslim dialogue seeking to elucidate the religious and spiritual roots of the Middle East conflict. Another is called the 60-10 Bus Project: it is 60 years since Auschwitz and 10 years since Bosnia so, filled with Jews and Muslims in equal numbers, a bus will drive to Bosnia via Auschwitz. A TV documentary crew will film what transpires. Yet another project (for which I am a consultant) is an attempt by Christians in Britain to rebuild the war-shattered mosques of Bosnia.

As a Jewish man, I have found engagement with Islam to be a highly emotional experience. In print, I have suggested—to my cost—that Islam has the potential to be more than the shadow of the West; that it may have something to teach us about a one-sided mode of life: materialism, tawdry sex (including trafficking), a lack of spiritual values or integrity in politics. Such thinking may help to deepen and nuance the debate over "the rise of the spiritual or religious Left" that lots of people are talking about in the States and, in rather different language, in Britain.

In Chapter 49, verse 13 of the Koran, we find the *Ta'Aruf* verse. "Ta'Aruf" means "that you might come to know one another": "Oh Mankind, we have created of you male and female, and have made you peoples and tribes, that you might come to know one another." This is a brilliant and inspiring take on difference, on relationality, on the value to the subject of Otherness, and on the religious and psychological importance of "multilateralism" and "inter-culturalism."

We know that men and women, and peoples and tribes, enter into conflict as they fail to resolve their differences. We see an acceptance and valorization of misunderstanding and conflict in the service of encountering difference and diversity and getting to know one another. Ta'Aruf seems to me to be rather different from Judaism's Tower of Babel or Christianity's message of universal salvation through the acceptance of Christ.

Fundamentalism offers fundamentalists a chance to avoid the knock-on effects of an encounter with social, cultural, and political differences. The fundamentalist self is thereby protected from inner and outer experiences of conflict and aggression within the self. Aggressive rhetoric and pronouncements made by fundamentalist leaders are not the same as the ordinary reciprocal aggression engendered by a real and mutually enhancing meeting with someone or something strange and new, as in Ta'Aruf. Such pronouncements construct a perimeter within which aggression does not show itself.

However, before castigating fundamentalism for cleansing itself of the dangers and thrills of aggression, we would do well to reflect upon the fact that secular liberals often demonstrate precisely this tendency when confronted with persons of faith, whether fundamentalist or not. Liberals still maintain that religion is dead, despite worldwide evidence to the contrary. In practice, liberals often do not want to know the Other; many will not resonate with Ta'Aruf.

Fundamentalism is a phenomenon that clearly demonstrates humanity's general ambivalence about difference. This is why fundamentalists are like us, only more so. For those of us who do not see ourselves as fundamentalists, our fears of an encounter with difference, of a Ta'Aruf moment, are being played out for us by others.

What about "Us"?

I said I would not attempt to defend fundamentalism, and I am not only saying that we might learn from what fundamentalist groups and organizations have heard in human hearts. My position is more challenging—politically, personally, and spiritually. I want us to look closely at what "fundamentalism" is doing to "us" and at how we use fundamentalism to deceive and manipulate ourselves. This is not only a message for liberals—many of the matters I have touched on are just as relevant for spiritual politics. Those of us involved in working the field between spirituality and politics—and, as in my case, involving ideas from psychology and psychotherapy as well—should admit that fundamentalism, in all its obstinate, wrong-headed, confused condemnation of modernity, has stumbled right into the foundational problems of contemporary Western spirituality and politics. Indeed, contemporary religious and political fundamentalism could be regarded as the most outstandingly successful attempt to link spirituality and religion that we have yet seen.

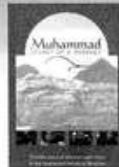
For "us," the new tension is between liberal and political problems. An engagement with fundamentalism illuminates this tension. On the one hand, liberal fascination with fundamentalism cannot simply be chalked up to political concerns. Liberals are confused—for they see much of their critique of capitalism reflected back to them in a way that they cannot comprehend or utilize. On the other hand, for those of us working out the new spiritual politics, we need to see fundamentalism as a cautionary tale, as a related enterprise of an earlier generation that has gone tragically wrong. Let's try to avoid a critique of secular modernism that slips into sermonizing and then degenerates into strict cult-like behavior dominated by authoritarian leadership. Liberals and spiritual politicians alike need to own the fact that "fundamentalists are us." □



HARTLEY FILM FOUNDATION
WISDOM ACROSS THE AGES

SEEING IS BELIEVING

THE HARTLEY FILM FOUNDATION OFFERS THE BEST DOCUMENTARIES AND AUDIO MEDITATIONS ON WORLD RELIGIONS, SPIRITUALITY, ETHICS AND WELL-BEING FOR INSPIRATION AND EDUCATION.



TO SHOP OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT US AT: WWW.HARTLEYFOUNDATION.ORG OR CALL US AT: 800-937-1819
RECEIVE 10% OFF BY TYPING IN: "TIK" WHEN ASKED FOR A DISCOUNT CODE ONLINE OR BY PHONE.

Hamas Pacifists and Settler Islamophiles: Defining Nonviolence in the Holy Land

Aaron J. Tapper

When we think of nonviolent struggles of the past century, we tend to reflect on Mohandas Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We honor these figures precisely because they were exceptional: radical nonviolent extremists who changed the world through their faith-based insistence on absolute pacifism.

Yet, must religious leaders identify with absolute pacifism in order to promote nonviolence? In Israel and Palestine, few seem ready to turn their swords into ploughshares. Historical pain and suffering in both Israeli and Palestinian histories make such a path difficult. In the Jewish tradition, for example, many look to Martin Buber, an outright peacenik who argued for Israel to embrace Palestinians and create a bi-national state. Yet, in a famous exchange between Buber and Gandhi, the eminent author and advocate of the I-Thou relationship asserted that nonviolence was not an absolute. The Germans, he told the Mahatma, could only be defeated using force. Some situations call for the use of force, the use of self-defense.

If one accepts that nonviolence can be stretched to include the right to self-defense, once-rigid boundaries begin to liquefy. Can a Hamas founder be an advocate of nonviolence? What about a Jewish Israeli living in the West Bank? When one journeys to the Holy Land with an open mind, it is virtually impossible to compartmentalize people and their ideas. Just as the conflict is much more complicated than that of Jew vs. Palestinian, the positions of religious leaders cannot always be reduced to that of pacifist or militarist: nonviolence is not a black and white phenomenon.

Absolute Nonviolence in Judaism and Islam

Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom believes in absolute pacifism. Born in America, Milgrom moved to Israel in the 1970s

and served in the Israeli Defense Forces. After the 1982 Lebanon War, however, Milgrom began engaging in nonviolent activism on a regular basis, eventually withdrawing from his IDF reserve duty entirely. He argues that the biblical commandment *lo tirtzach*, commonly translated in Jewish circles as “thou shall not murder,” should instead be translated as “thou shall not kill.”

In fact, Milgrom claims that Judaism does not sanction the killing of another person at all, even in situations of self-defense. “The rabbis of the Talmud did all they could to prohibit the killing of a human being. Our [current] discourse is justifying the use of force. What was once a marginal tradition in the Talmud has become mainstream.” Is there even any proof, he rhetorically asked me, that the Talmudic rabbis ever put someone to death?

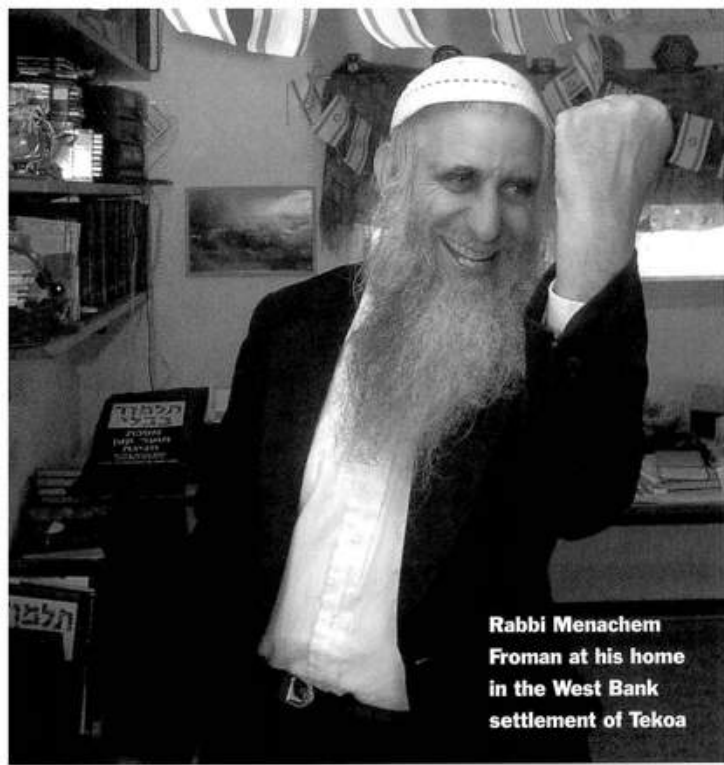
Truth be told, however, Milgrom’s views are unique within the world of Jewish theology. As one Orthodox rabbi and well respected *Rosh Yeshivah* (yeshivah director) confided, “Can you cite any traditional Jewish source that understands *lo tirtzach* to mean ‘you should not kill’ rather than ‘murder’? [Milgrom] is the only one.”

As for Islam and absolute nonviolence, contrary to general stereotypes there are more Muslim Palestinian religious leaders who support this idea than there are Jewish Israelis. However, those Muslims who believe in absolute nonviolence appear to come exclusively from a very specific tradition within Islam—the Sufi, or mystical, tradition.

Take, for example, Sheikh Abd Al-Aziz Bukhari, the leader of the Naqshabandi Sufi order in Jerusalem. When I met with Bukhari in his Old City home, his speech sounded Gandhi-esque; he cited mantras such as “violence only creates more violence.” Bukhari told me that if an IDF soldier attacked him he would not fight back for, à la the Christian Bible, “turning the other cheek is not a sign of the weak.” When asked how Palestinians could counter the power of the IDF he responded in saying, “with love, compassion, and understanding.”

Bukhari frequently participates in interfaith dialogue meetings around the world, including recent conferences in Belgium and Scotland in which Jews and Muslims from Israel and Palestine participated. But he is well aware that

Aaron J. Tapper is the Founder and Co-Executive Director of Abraham's Vision, a conflict resolution organization that works to bridge relations between American Jews, American Palestinians, and the broader American Muslim communities. His email address is aaron@abrahamsvision.org.



Rabbi Menachem Froman at his home in the West Bank settlement of Tekoa

dialogue is only an initial stage toward peace. "The meetings are good, but the leaders need to take the messages back to their communities here."

However, just as Milgrom is considered a radical by Jewish theologians, Bukhari's message is not part of the dominant discourse within Islam. Though Bukhari reflects a general position among Sufis in both Israel and Palestine, Islamic leaders with greater followings belittle these teachings. For example, according to Palestine's Supreme Court Justice of *shari'a* (Islamic law), Sheikh Tayseer Al-Tamimi, "Sufis follow a different path in Islam, the spiritual path, not shari'a.... They don't represent most Muslims."

Absolute pacifism has not been the chosen path to peace for more than 99 percent of the religious leaders in Israel and Palestine. A Middle Eastern Gandhi has yet to emerge. However, there are many religious leaders calling for peace, many within the nonviolent context.

A Nonviolent "Settler"?

One of the most famous Orthodox rabbis involved in nonviolent dialogue activities is Menachem Froman, a Jewish Israeli who is the Chief Rabbi of Tekoa, a West Bank town south of Jerusalem. Froman is well known for having met with former Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on numerous occasions, in addition to having traveled to the Gaza Strip to dialogue with the late Sheikh Ahmed Yassin of Hamas. Currently, he is trying to organize a group of Israeli rabbis and Palestinian sheikhs to meet and discuss how to work out a religious agreement concerning Jerusalem, an issue he considers to be the "heart of the conflict."

Froman is clearly an anomaly—a rabbi of Ashkenazi descent who drops Arabic phrases into his speech with seeming regularity. When I met with him in his Tekoa home, he used the phrase "insha'allah" a handful of times, an

Arabic phrase that means "God willing." Whether called Adonai or Allah, Froman believes there is only one God.

But Froman is also a "settler," a Jewish Israeli living on the "other" or non-Israel side of the Green Line, the pre-1967 border that once separated Israel from the Jordanian-controlled West Bank. As such, Froman is viewed by many Palestinians as part of the problem, a cause of violence. For the Mufti of Palestine and Jerusalem, Ikrima Sabri, it is irrelevant that Froman is extraordinarily active in bridging relations between Jews and Palestinians, because he is living on "Palestinian land." Only when Froman "moves to Israel," or agrees to become a Palestinian citizen under the authority of an independent Palestinian state, says Sabri, will he be ready to speak with the rabbi.

Froman typifies the phenomenon of religious nonviolence in Israel and Palestine. Though many religious leaders promote theologies of nonviolence—via activities such as interfaith dialogue, nonviolent demonstrations, prayers in favor of coexistence—they can be perceived as promoting violence based on the plot of land they call home.

Nonviolent Founders of Hamas?

Sheikh Imad Al-Falouji is a paradox of another kind. A former Palestinian Authority Minister of Information, Al-Falouji lives in the squalid Jabbaliya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip. When I interviewed Al-Falouji in Gaza City, he proudly told me that he was one of the founders of Hamas's Izz Al-Din Al-Qassam Brigade, the wing of Hamas responsible for suicide-bombings and other violent acts. Though he was involved in their work for nine years, he said that he officially parted ways with Hamas in January 1996 over differences in ideology.

One of the reasons Al-Falouji left Hamas was because he holds that targeting civilians in Israel is not justified according to shari'a. "I am against bus bombings and bombings in the markets. We [as Muslims] can only kill those who are trying to kill us." Al-Falouji argues that he has never changed his position on this matter. Rather, he said, Hamas's stance is what shifted in 1996, transforming isolated acts of suicide bombing into a regular phenomenon.

When asked whether or not he thinks shari'a validates the killing of Israeli soldiers, Al-Falouji told me that it is permissible to kill soldiers in Israel or Palestine because the IDF, as a military organization, aims to inflict violence on the Palestinian people through specific killings as well as general military occupation. In his view, killing soldiers is an act of self-defense, not an act of self-initiated violence. Further, he claims that it is warranted to kill Jewish Israeli civilians living in Gaza because they are living on "stolen land." This position, he said, is supported by International Law. "The position of the United Nations supports me.... People have the basic right to defend themselves or their own property."

For most Israelis, Al-Falouji's embrace of violence against settlers puts him squarely in the militarist camp, just

another "Jew-hating Islamist extremist who wants to drive Israelis into the sea." But Al-Falouji is also the founder of Dayanot, an interfaith dialogue organization aimed at bridging relations between Muslims, Jews, and Christians. In fact, he spends much of his time working for Dayanot, trying to bring understanding to these warring peoples. He sees himself as a believer in nonviolence who sanctions violence only in situations of self-defense, when protecting his people's lives and land.

I asked Al-Falouji why he got involved in what seems to be an organization that would support nonviolence and peace. He replied that he believes there are major differences between the state of Israel and Judaism. "Israel is not a Jewish state," he said. "The life of a Jew is holy, as is the life of a Muslim or Christian.... I constantly tell my Jewish friends that Israel does not represent the Jews." Israel is a nation-state, he continued, not a religion. "The Jews are not my enemies. The Occupation is."

A belief in a nonviolence that includes room for self-defense is echoed by other religious leaders who were once associated with Hamas. Sheikh Tallal Sidr founded the Hebron chapter of Hamas and in their early years was one of the five highest Hamas leaders in the West Bank. This all changed, however, when he was deported to Southern Lebanon in 1991 along with hundreds of others the Israeli government deemed to be "militants." It was in exile that Sidr realized nonviolence was the way towards "Allah's justice," for "the path of killing [here] has no end." Sidr told me that once he gave a talk at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem with Deputy Minister Rabbi Michael Melchior, and a "settler from the audience asked me if I support the killing of settlers. I told him that anyone who kills a woman or a child or a civilian is a criminal."

When I asked Sidr whether he believed in a Gandhian notion of nonviolence, such as absolute pacifism—if he would wrap his arms around his body if attacked by an Israeli soldier in his own home and refrain from acting out in any way—he said, "There is a difference between defending oneself and attacking another. It says in the Quran 'don't be an aggressor' and this means against anyone—women, children, civilians, or soldiers. But if someone attacks you, you are obligated to fight [to defend yourself]." He added, the Quran permits self defense only when accompanied by specific constraints. A Muslim can only inflict harm on an attacker "as much as needed," he said.

In 2002 Sidr was one of a select group of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian religious leaders who participated in the Alexandria conference, at which time he was awarded the Coventry Prize of Peace and Reconciliation by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In January 2005 he was one of the main speakers at the World Conference of Imams and Rabbis, which took place in Brussels. Though not an absolute pacifist, former Hamas leader Sheikh Tallal Sidr is clearly a promoter of nonviolence.

Nonviolence in Israel and Palestine?

By thinking of nonviolence only in Gandhian terms, we miss the important role played by throngs of religious leaders who currently advocate for a nonviolent peace within their communities. Should a Rabbi Froman, who spends a majority of his time seeking coexistence with Muslim Palestinians, be blacklisted from the nonviolent camp because of where he lives? And what about Sheikh Al-Falouji? Should he be removed as well because of his definition of self defense? Even if one disagrees with his notion of "self defense," isn't it also crucial to delineate between his words and his actions? Doesn't he spend much of his time involved in fostering peaceful relations between Muslims, Jews, and Christians?

The debate over what constitutes nonviolence is much deeper than a mere academic exercise. As the IDF now turns to removing Israelis from the Gush Katif settlement block of the Gaza Strip, what is deemed violent and nonviolent behavior will have life-and-death consequences. Whether Gaza Israelis choose to defy the IDF with guns or not will affect how the IDF reacts to their protests, which in turn will either enflame or quell these Jew vs. Jew skirmishes, potentially causing ripples around the region.

The same holds true for the Palestinian community. As Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas continues to rein in Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants, attempting to move his people toward internationally recognized statehood, the choice his government makes about whether to engage with these figures through dialogue or through warfare will either strengthen or divide Palestinian society, a distinction with important implications for the long-term situation.

Being able to recognize and reward any steps toward nonviolent peace, however tentative, will be critical in the next few years. And, as with all conflicts, popular opinion is as fundamental as anything else. Israelis and Palestinians—Jews, Muslims, and Christians—must reorient their understandings to accept the *fact* that nonviolence is not an absolute. It is both an ideology and a practice that casts a wide net. Froman, Al-Falouji, and others in this camp are not simple theologians; they have sophisticated ideas. They cannot be marginalized or written off due to where they live or with whom they affiliate. The masses in both Israel and Palestine, and those diasporans living beyond these borders, must embrace nonviolence when it is present, and it is present *all the time*. The increased perception of this presence of nonviolence will help us move these communities toward peace.

Most Israelis and Palestinians long for peace. This is the view of those who I listened to during this past year. Over and over I heard the words, "*insha'allah*," "*b'ezrat Hashem*" (Arabic and Hebrew for "may it be God's will") that Yerushalayim, Al Quds, Jerusalem, live up to its name and truly become the City of Peace, bringing holiness to this troubled Holy Land. □

Shattering the Idol of Spiritual Patriarchy: Towards a Gender-Fair Notion of Prayer in Islam

Omid Safi



The imperative to undertake critical, independent reasoning within the framework of Islamic thought (*ijtihad*) has been one of the hallmarks of Islamic intellectual creativity throughout history. As recent scholarship has shown, the gates of *ijtihad* have always been open. Progressive Muslims insist that they remain open today.

Theological and political demands for the perpetual renewal (*tajdid*) of Islam remind us of the need to consistently assert the timeless teachings of tradition in a manner that speaks to the contemporary world. Part of the challenge before us is how to articulate the core values of justice and compassion that are at the heart of the Islam in a way that confronts the problems we face today both as Muslims and as human beings.

Over the centuries, there have been various guidelines

Omid Safi is an associate professor of Islamic studies at Colgate University, where he specializes in Islamic mysticism, contemporary Islamic thought, and medieval Islamic history. He is the Chair for the Study of Islam at the American Academy of Religion and founder of the Progressive Muslim Union.

suggested by different scholars for *ijtihad*. These rules have consistently held that the process must be rigorous, systematic, and conducted with integrity. Among the usual qualifications for someone to conduct systematic *ijtihad* have been a knowledge of Arabic, command of the Qur'an, knowledge of *hadith* (statements from the Prophet Muhammad), a grounding in Islamic law, and expertise in matters of socio-historical knowledge. In many ways, the questions that we are raising, including the issue of women leading mixed-gender prayers fall under the rubric of *ijtihad*. At the same time, it is important to begin the conversation with a wider discussion involving many voices in the Muslim community.

During the first 500 years of Islamic thought, there were multiple centers of authority that offered different interpretations of the tradition. These included, but were not limited to, religious scholars (*'ulama*) whose expertise focused on matters of Islamic law and jurisprudence, and Sufis, whose expertise was the spiritual path. The operating procedure in Islamic discourse has historically been one of disputation and consensus, whereby different individuals and schools of thought offered perspectives on various issues. By and large, a spectrum of

responses indicating a plurality of perspectives and interpretations was acknowledged by the various participants. While today many are quick to identify practices as “Islamic” or “un-Islamic,” medieval Muslim jurists would rank practices as ranging from required, recommended, neutral, disapproved and, finally, prohibited.

Yet the historical condition of the world, including Muslim countries, is radically different today. The traditional religious spaces that fostered the development of new theological knowledge have fallen on hard times. In medieval times, one could expect the most rigorous (male) intellectuals in an Islamic society to be involved with madrasa life. With the advent of colonialism, many of the madrasa institutions were undermined by colonial powers. Since the end of the colonial era, many madrasas have not kept pace with the evolving requirements of broader modern educational needs beyond religious instruction, limiting their appeal among the best and the brightest. Today, some madrasas continue to train rigorous scholars, while far too many are a shell of their former glory, not breaking any new ground.

Even more problematic is the historical fact that the madrasa system, as it has existed historically in Islamic societies, has been an all-male space. While we have had individual women who have been learned in the matters of Qur’an and hadith, the madrasa door as such was only open to men for most of Islamic history. The logic of gender-based exclusion is clear here: to engage in *ijtihad*, one had to have qualifications. The best way to earn qualifications was to become a master of Islamic law through the madrasa system. To be at a madrasa, one had to be male. Thus, historically speaking, *ijtihad* has been limited to men. This fact has to be addressed openly. As Muslims, we have a responsibility to transcend this historical limitation today.

This exclusion of women from authoritative interpretations of religion can no longer be maintained. It is morally and socially unacceptable to support a system whereby half of all the human beings that God Almighty has created are prevented from engaging in religious thought and leadership. If we understand our God as the Just (*al-‘Adil*) and the Compassionate (*al-Rahman*), it is morally repugnant and irrational to believe that God would have designated half of human creation as automatically subservient to the other half. And it is with regard to this issue that we arrive at the subject of prayer.

No one disputes that women are spiritually qualified to lead prayers. All jurists would recognize that women may lead other women in prayers. (And men can lead men in prayer.) So women have the spiritual qualification for *imama*, (leading prayers) even by the most traditional consensus of Islamic law. The question is this: Who is qualified to lead prayer for a mixed-gender congregation? There have been some debates on this point in Islamic legal thought. There is the early example of Umm Waraqa being appointed by the Prophet to lead her household in prayer, as reported in the compilations of Abu Dawud, al-Daraqutni, al-Bayhaqi, al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi,

in the *Tabaqat* of Ibn Sa’d, and in other sources. Based in part on these reports, Imams al-Muzani, al-Tabari, Abu Thawr, and Dawud al-Dhahiri allowed for females to lead men in prayer. And yet, the majority of Muslim jurists in both the past and the present have reached the conclusion that even if the congregation consists of a thousand women and one man, only a man may lead the prayer.

Let’s examine the presupposition of this position. As demonstrated above, it cannot be based on the spiritual worth of women as imams. If the one man in this example were removed, then the female imam would pose no challenge to the consensus of the jurists. The underlying issue, then, is clearly not the spiritual qualification of the imam. It is something much more fundamental and basic: it is rather the concept of the spiritual authority of men over women.

We do not deny that a majority of scholars in the past have “given” spiritual authority for women to men. And yet we today object to this “dispensation,” since women were not—and in far too many conversations still are not—part of this “decision-making process.” What we are refusing is the presupposition that God has handed exclusive spiritual authority over women to men. In our reading, a just and loving God has created all of humanity with full possession of human dignity, and in a relationship of basic equality, both towards the Divine and amongst themselves in human society.

To use Islamic language, all of humanity has been born with a primordially pure nature (*fitrah*), because all human beings have had the spirit of God breathed into them. As the Qur’an records God saying, *wa nafakhtu fihi min rubi* [15:29]. The idea that men have automatic spiritual authority over women is completely inconsistent with this fundamental Islamic (*tawhidi*) conception of the relationship between God and human creation, and between people amongst themselves. The distinctions in our spiritual rank in Islam should not be derived from gender, but rather from our piety and God-consciousness (*taqwa*).

So how do we think through this very serious and urgent problem in a systematic and holistic fashion? The great scholar Khaled Abou El Fadl has offered us some very important tools. He calls for developing a “conscientious pause” when we are presented with a text that challenges everything else that we know to be true about God—in this case the notion of a good, just, and compassionate God. It behooves us to first develop this conscientious pause and seriously ask ourselves whether as Muslims we really believe that God has created women to be deficient in intellect and incapable of broad spiritual authority, such that a community that follows a woman is bound to go astray.

These ideas can be traced back to certain hadiths, unsound yet commonly hurled around and attributed to the Prophet, that violate what we know of him and his treatment of those around him, as well as everything that we know to be true about God in our own being. We are certain of this, based not only on personal knowledge but also on a holistic

reading of the Qur'an where God creates everything good and beautiful, in a state of purity, not deformity. So, when challenged by misogynistic statements, it is good to pause conscientiously and then pose the question that so many Muslims around the world are asking: Can the presuppositions about gender that have informed these rulings still be regarded as sound?

We are not the first Muslims to be asking these questions. In fact, the reform movements of thinkers such as 'Abd al-Karim Soroush and others in Iran are asking precisely such important questions about "presuppositions" with respect to *ijtihad*. In that sense, we view our task in the United States not as breaking with or abandoning the tradition, but rather as joining a global Islamic conversation about re-imagining Islam along a holistic and just paradigm that seeks to realize a *tawhidi* principle on earth.

We have to scrutinize the presupposition of both medieval and modern interpretations of Islamic law about gender to see whether or not they assume that all women must spiritually submit to all men. If that is the presupposition, then everything else that we know about both God and humanity tells us to first develop a conscientious pause and then reject that presupposition. We reject it on a ground no less sublime than that of the Qur'an, where God tells us that all human beings were created from a single male and a single female, that we are to learn from one another, and that the only form of nobility and privilege in the sight of God is that of our God-consciousness (*taqwa*) (*inna akramakum 'inda Allah atqakum*) [49:13].

There are many human beings around the world who arrive at the notion that all human beings, male and female, gain full possession of their dignity and humanity through reason and ethics. We assert that believers also arrive at the same recognition of, and commitment to, equality through our reading of the Qur'an and our experience of God. All of these approaches are ones that we are called to do in the Qur'an, where the Divine has instructed us to look for "signs" (*ayat*) in the Holy Qur'an, in the wider cosmos of human society and nature, and significantly, inside our own souls (*sanurihim ayatina fi 'l-afaq wa fi anfusihim*) [41:53].

Our aim in this process of *ijtihad* is to open up the debate to the whole of Muslim society, female and male. Our question is that of the presupposition: Do we believe that God has created women in the fullness of physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dignity, or not? Do we believe deep in our hearts that women are fully human, entitled to their humanity as a precious creation of God, or not? Are women not also the bearers of the Trust (*amana*) that we are told in the Qur'an is of such cosmic significance that the Heavens and the Earth could not bear it, and so all of humanity took upon itself? If our nobility in the sight of God is not due to race, gender, or national origin but rather to our piety and God-consciousness, then let us pray behind imams who are God-conscious and pious, be they male or female, irrespective of racial and ethnic background.

There are so many women for whom the process of being confined to drab, segregated, and inadequate corners of the mosque is a vivid reminder of the sense of not belonging, not being fully accepted, valued, or cherished in a mosque or Islamic center.

These spaces serve as a physical representation of the role of women as a secondary, barely relevant part of many contemporary Muslim societies and gatherings. Indeed, even those who are committed to a strict policy of gender segregation owe it to their own conscience to make sure that the space for women has the same square footage, same lighting, same ventilation, same carpet, and same facilities as the spaces reserved for men. We know that in far too many mosques this condition is not currently being met.

Likewise, the argument that no woman can lead a man in prayer reinforces the patriarchal assumption of men's spiritual power over women. It pushes too many women away from the faith rather than drawing them toward God by openly saying to them: you can never be as central to the core practices of Islam as men are; you can not assume the same position of ritual leadership, no matter what your level of knowledge, practice, or piety.

Moreover, this prohibition deprives the Muslim community of the potential leadership of countless brilliant and spiritually inspired women. We hold that the community of believers will function best in a spirit of unity and inclusion, and by judging ourselves according to standards of piety, religious learning, and devotion to God rather than on gender, race, or other spiritually irrelevant divisions.

We deserve to live our lives in accordance with the *shari'a*, but it is and must be the purpose of *shari'a* to provide us the opportunity to live lives of dignity and grace. Let us recall the root meaning of the word *shari'a*, which is not a hermetically sealed list of do's and don'ts, but rather a *path*. The *shari'a* is, and should be, a path that leads us all back towards the Divine. To be on a path always implies a sense of movement, dynamism, and transformation. Such difficult and rigorous conversations are a way of honoring and ensuring the vitality and dynamism of the *shari'a*, not of abandoning it.

We want to live prayerful lives spent with the remembrance of God in every breath. *Shari'a* must facilitate, not complicate, that goal. We ask only that the judgments of scholars be consistent with the core values of Islam, so that we can promote a just and truly God-conscious society. What we oppose is the absurd proposition that the same God who is al-Rahman and al-Rahim has made half of humanity spiritually deficient and subordinate by definition. That is not the God we know from the Qur'an.

The problem is not the Qur'an, it is not God. It is patriarchy, a profound human error that must be addressed, resisted, and corrected. Let us strive to create a society in which prayer, that most intimate of human acts toward God, can be a reflection of God's own mercy toward us, drawing us closer on the basis not of our race or gender, but of our piety and mindfulness of the Divine. □

Sages for Sale

Susan Linn

For several years, I have been actively involved in a growing movement organized around the principle that children have the right to grow up—and parents have the right to raise them—without being undermined by commercial interests. In my book, *Consuming Kids*, I look at the impact of corporate marketing from the perspective of the entirety of a child's development, laying out chapter-by-chapter its pervasive and overwhelmingly negative effect on childhood.

One would think that after spending so much time immersed in writing about the commercialization of childhood I would be unshockable. I'm not. Even though I've spent years monitoring a business that routinely exploits children, I still believe that some things—like the Talmud for instance—will be kept sacred. I'm wrong.

For 2,000 years, Hillel the Elder's profound teaching, "If I am not for myself who will be for me? If I am only for myself what am I? If not now when?" has been associated with a call for social action and responsibility. It captures the essence of the human struggle to maintain a balance between self-interest and the interests of the community and suggests that the struggle itself is essential to being human. To only think of ourselves transforms us from sentient beings into objects—from "who" to "what."

Primo Levi titled his novel about resistance to the Holocaust, *If Not Now, When?* Civil Rights leaders invoked the phrase to call for an end to segregation. Czech Students used it in 1989 to foment the Velvet Revolution. Today, Frito Lay is using it to sell Black Pepper Jack Doritos.

"If Not Now, When?" (or INNW in text message jargon) is the slogan for a hip new integrated campaign using cell phones, TV, radio, billboards, and the Internet to sell kids Doritos. According to the Frito Lay website, INNW.com, the line means, "Livin' life in the now. Don't procrastinate. Don't hesitate. And bring a bag of Doritos with you."

I find it more than troubling that for millions of children, the phrase tying Judaism—to say nothing of the state of being human—to social action will forever mean Doritos. If you think I'm exaggerating, think about your own relationship to Rossini's *William Tell Overture*. If you're of a certain age, I

suspect that you can't hear it without visions of the Lone Ranger.

To understand why it's important to preserve and fight for commercial-free space in children's lives, it's important to understand the extent to which corporate interests—through advertising and marketing—have taken over modern childhood. One reason for this is the proliferation of electronic media. On average, children spend almost forty hours per week after school engaged with media, most of which is commercially driven. Even TV and movie characters that have something positive to offer have been ruined for children by branding. Harry Potter sells coke; Elmo sells just about everything; and SpongeBob Squarepants has been Kraft's best-selling macaroni and cheese.

The time children spend in schools is increasingly branded as well. In 2000 the Federal Government identified marketing in schools as a growth industry, with Coke and Pepsi leading the way. This means that many children are targets for marketing all day, every day. At the same time, marketing is known to be a factor in a myriad of childhood ills: obesity, youth violence, eating disorders, precocious and irresponsible sexuality, family stress, and the erosion of creative play.

For people concerned about children's spiritual, social, and moral development, it's important to remember that marketing sells values along with products. For instance, a series of commercials for McDonald's begins by showing children engaged in pro-social activities such as listening to classical music, visiting a museum, or doing homework. They are bored out of their minds until, suddenly, Ronald McDonald appears and transports them to McDonald's, where the music gets lively, the colors get brighter, the children are joyous and where, presumably, they live happily ever after—before dying of an obesity-related disease such as Type II Diabetes. The message in these commercials is not just, "McDonald's makes kids happy." It's also that classical music, homework, and museums are boring. And in the museum ad, where an elderly docent is portrayed as strict and grouchy, there's the extra message that old people are mean.

The primary value sold by marketers is that products will make us happy. Yet those who buy into that philosophy are actually less happy than their peers. Things don't make us happy, and the belief that they do has been found to be harmful to children. Studies show that children with more materialistic values are less happy, have lower self-esteem, and report more symptoms of anxiety. These studies similarly report that children who possess such values are less

*Susan Linn is a psychologist at the Judge Baker Children's Center, a founder of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood (www.commercialfreechildhood.org), and the author of *Consuming Kids: The Hostile Takeover of Childhood* (New Press, 2004).*



sumption. We discard the things that don't make us happy in search of the thing that will. The result is a spiritual/psychological void that can render life meaningless.

It's a void that marketers are all too happy to fill. Branding media, clothing, and toys is not enough for an inherently predatory industry that thrives on discontent, insecurities, and vulnerabilities. As marketing expert Andrew Tuck said on *Forbes.com*, "We try to understand what drives people's anxieties and aspirations—that's what influences their buying habits."

Having successfully transformed popular culture and its icons into commercial culture, the Industry is going after the very fabric of children's existence in an attempt to brand their spiritual, social, and ethical lives. An article in the marketing publication *Brand Strategy*, headlined "Brands: The New Religion," begins solemnly, "Identity and belonging are key issues for humanity today." The next paragraph observes that "What used to be trusted, reliable, and consistent sources of support and direction (education, government, religion, and royalty) are now objects of a great degree of cynicism and rejection." So far, so good. But then comes the following. "Could brands take over the role that religions and philosophical movements used to own?" I

generous and allocate less money to charity when they imagine getting lots of money. Nor are materialistic values good for the environment. It's not just the packaging or the consumption of resources that's a problem. Children who are more materialistic report engaging in fewer positive environmental behaviors like recycling. Self-esteem is lower, and psychosomatic complaints are higher. Materialistic values seem to be correlated, at least among middle-class or upper-class families, with more stressful parent/child relationships.

Meanwhile, exactly because it's false, a population embracing the tenet that things will make them happy is a gold mine for corporations and the ad execs who shill for them. Relying on consumption for happiness leads only to more con-

certainly hope not.

The article concludes that religion and brands are converging. The former needs to demonstrate its relevance to contemporary values, and the future of the latter relies on "their ability to go deeper into the emotional/spiritual needs of their customers." The author assigned various religions to brands (Judaism and Islam, by the way were lumped together as embodied in a campaign for the Czech car Skoda.)

Articles like this one may sound like a joke, but all too often they herald very real trends. Apple Computer, whose marketing strategy was identified as Buddhist, is now advertising iPods with the slogan, "Life is random." More important, the author's construct that if fed the right propaganda,

Continued on page 66

My Idol, My Dell

Eileen Pollack

I was raised as an Orthodox Jew, slipped into a wishy-washy liberal-intellectual allegiance to Reform, and now I have taken to worshipping an idol. On sleepless, dread-filled nights, I consult the blank-faced computer beside my bed for solace and advice in much the same way I once consulted God.

My worship of this idol began in the early Nineties when I moved from Boston to Ann Arbor so my husband could accept a job. The marriage was already rocky, but we had a young child, and I wasn't yet ready to call the marriage quits. I knew no one in Ann Arbor. Long distance phone-calls were still expensive, but my lecturer's position at the university entitled me to a free email account. Lonely and sad, I would dial up my connection and, after a series of chirps and whirrs, be magically reconnected to my friends. "EMAIL IS MY LIFE" proclaimed the logo from the server, and I guiltily agreed.

The marriage ended anyway. I moved to my own apartment and began carrying on an affair with a man in another town. Email provided our only way to stay in touch. *Please*, I would pray as the computer booted up, *let there be a message*. I typed in my password. The modem clicked and whirled. Then: *Thank you*, if there was.

After the affair was over and I was living on my own, the loneliness felt intolerable. It was always worst at night, which was when I finally gave in to my friends' insistence and subscribed to an Internet dating service. When I was single in my twenties I would never have placed an ad in a personals column. But the Internet had made such services safer and hip. You could browse photos of potential lovers, read their little bios, post your own ad and receive messages from men who were attracted to the self you projected on the screen. I knew that the computer did nothing but provide a conduit through which ordinary human beings could pick and choose their dates. Yet the magnitude of users it connected and the abstract quality of the space through which the messages flowed left me with the sense that the computer had far more power to make a match than an ad in a magazine.

I began to ascribe to my computer the power to bring me love. There was that moment of expectation before I flicked on the machine: Had the computer found my soul mate?

The computer became the provider of all my needs. I used it for work, shopping, even to select my dog. If I had been in the market to adopt a baby, I would have used my PC to find one and bring him home.

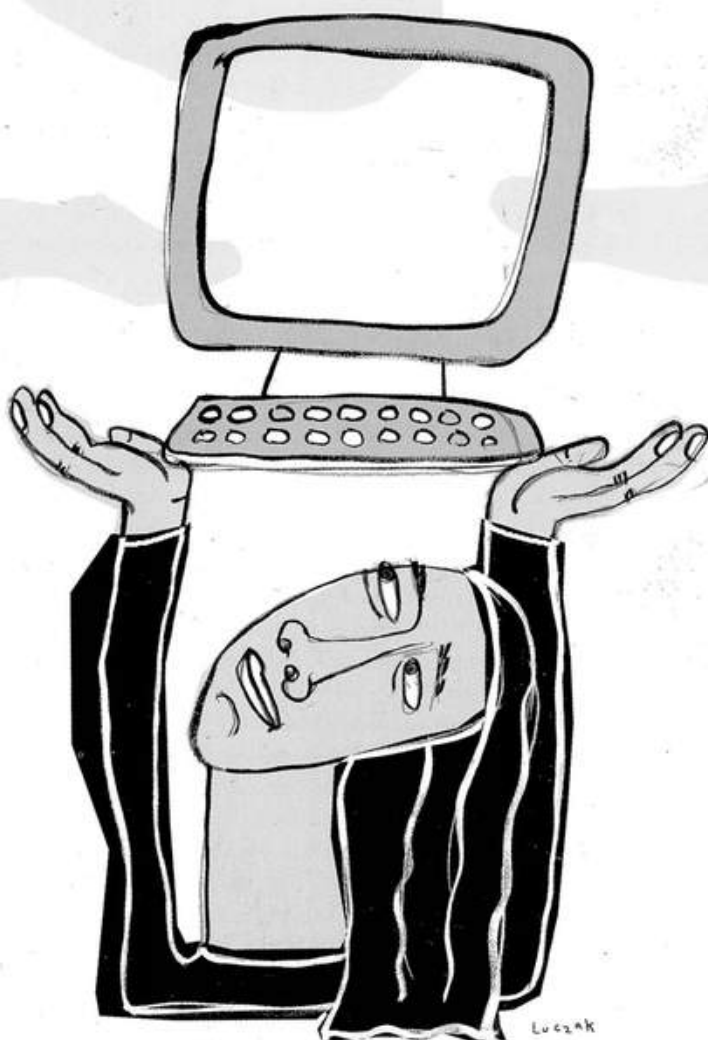
In fact, I already had a child, and he often sat beside me as I played computer solitaire. I liked to play for money, half expecting that when I won, coins would come clattering from the slot for floppies. But if my losses grew too great, my son begged me to stop. He was only eight or nine, and he suspected that the computer might somehow access my account and take out what I owed. We switched to playing hearts, but he didn't believe the game was fair. The more games we lost, the angrier he became. "We can never win!" he said. "The computer can see the other hands, and we can only see our own."

I tried to explain that the computer was a dumb machine; it couldn't look at the hidden hands, process the information, and, based on that knowledge, cheat. But my son (who was otherwise adept at distinguishing among various levels of reality) couldn't accept my explanation. "How can it deal the cards and not know what's in them?" The longer I went on trying to convince my son that the computer had only a rote capacity to carry out the programs hardwired in its circuits by the workers at the factory, the less I convinced myself.

I am one of the least superstitious people I know. My undergraduate degree was in physics. I tend to put my faith in Western science. Yet I consult an astrology site online with disconcerting regularity. Unlike the daily horoscopes printed in the paper, the predictions on the Web seem to be beamed from another dimension by a superior Being who has at his disposal every fact about my life. If the computer can predict the weather in Tunisia and the best route to take from Ann Arbor to Topeka, if it can tell me who invented pantyhose and the year the Titanic sank, if it can find a former boyfriend and show me how poorly he has aged, if it can calculate—in an instant—the day of the week on which my birthday will fall in 2056, why can't it combine an infinite multiplicity of factors in some unfathomably complex equation and predict the coming week?

I am not so much upset by what computers can do now or will do in the future as I am disturbed by my own propensity to grant computers so many powers I know they don't have. A victim of arthritis, I am constantly wracked by pain, which causes me to search the Internet for cures. Right now, my best hope involves an operation in which the surgeon

Eileen Pollack is the author of Paradise, New York and The Rabbi in The Attic. She teaches in the MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Michigan.



slits my throat, hacks out a portion of my spine, replaces it with a section of spine from a cadaver, bolts the graft in place and trusts that the cadaver spine fuses to my own. Unwilling to undergo this Frankensteinian solution, I searched the Internet for alternatives and found a Web site for a clinic in Pittsburgh that offers a minimally invasive operation that appears to achieve the same results. Published on the site are before-and-after photos of diseased and healthy spines. In a flurry of optimism I called a friend, described the before-and-after photos, and asked him what he thought this doctor in Pittsburgh knew that my own surgeon didn't.

"Photoshop," he said.

Of course he was joking. But I couldn't give up the fantasy that the computer could fix my back. Why couldn't I take a copy of the CD containing my MRI to the surgeon in Pittsburgh, where he could insert it in his computer, perform his miracles with Photoshop and send me home with a healthy

spine? For that matter, why couldn't I upload the MRI, send it by email and save myself the trip?

Maybe I am alone in my delusions. Maybe I am the only person who fires up her PC first thing in the morning with such giddy anticipation or who flicks on the switch in the middle of the night searching for ... what? Fame? Salvation? Love? Maybe I've developed this intimacy with my computer only because it sits beside my bed, a shiny black totem with a Picasso-like array of enigmatic eyes and mouths, arms crossed complacently across its chest (or maybe that's its belly), a glowing green dot in its navel like a jewel.

But I suspect I'm not alone. The Torah is nothing if it isn't a warning against the human propensity to worship idols. If the Israelites, who had witnessed so many miracles, including the revelation at Sinai, needed only forty days to bow to a golden calf they had fashioned from their jewelry, how much more likely are we to invest miraculous powers in a truly mysterious and potent object fashioned from electrons by technological wizards in ritualistically pure and hidden caves?

The first lesson I learned in Hebrew School was the story of Abram and the idols. According to the midrash, Abram's father, Terah, left the boy in charge of his shop one day. A customer came in, and Abram chided the man by asking how a grown-up could worship a statue his father had carved the day before. The implication seems to be that the man ought to be worshipping the infinite and eternal Creator of Us All. Yet God is never mentioned. Instead, Abram stresses the customer's age. *You are fifty years old, much older than the idol. Why not trust yourself?* The evil in worshipping an idol is that we project the authority for our

decisions onto a man-made object and delude ourselves into believing the decisions are commands.

In another reading of the midrash, Abram takes advantage of his father's absence to smash all the idols but one. When Terah comes back he's furious. "Who did this?" he bellows. Abram points to the only idol left. "The chief god there," he says. "Nonsense!" his father shouts. "An idol can't move, let alone slay his rivals." "If an idol can't do anything," Abram smugly gloats (the son not quite honoring his father, a commandment that hadn't yet been written), "why do you adore it as you do?"

Computers are no more murderous than idols. Yet decades before most of us had touched a mainframe, let alone owned our own PCs, we attributed such homicidal motives to HAL, the computer that runs amok in the movie 2001. *They have no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no mouth to speak*, Abram told Terah. How much more tempting to ascribe supernatural powers to an idol that can see (if only

MY IDOL, MY DELL

with a scanner), recognize the pattern of a voice, and (mechanically) answer back? In some ways, my paranoia is only a fancier version of the science-fiction fear that robots and computers will grow smarter than we are and force us to do their will. But the fear I'm describing has less to do with computers actually controlling our lives than with our eagerness to think they do. For anyone who believes in God, idol worship is a sin because it puts a finite *thing* between the worshipper and God. But even to an atheist, idolatry remains a sin. The idol requires that we give up our own volition and project it on our god. We stop thinking for ourselves. We agree to be less free. We dwell in an illusory world in which supernatural forces control our fate.

As Cynthia Ozick has pointed out, idols require sacrifices. My computer saves me time. But my obsessions with reading email, searching the Web, and playing solitaire rob me of hours I otherwise would spend talking to my son, meeting my friends for coffee, traveling to real places, being outside in the world. As much as I love the ease with which the Internet allows me to locate a fact that would otherwise require several hours in a reference room to find, I miss the feel and smell of the leather chairs and books in the reading room at the University, a world that once made me feel cut off from the outside world but now feels more vividly real than the amorphous, barren cyberspace in which I spend my days. I have allowed my computer to become the primary Being in my life, a Being to whom I turn for most forms of stimulation (considering how many people turn to their computers for sex, it's as if the idol were a pagan god for whom worship and sensual ecstasy are devilishly intertwined). Life felt more frightening and uncontrollable but also grander and more mysterious when I woke in the dread-filled night and asked my questions of God rather than my computer.

For most of his early life, my son loved playing games on his PC. His favorite CDs simulated worlds in which he was an emperor or a king who controlled a vast army, or a sort of minor deity who supervised the evolution of new forms of life or orchestrated a family's fate. As powerless as children feel, I doubt these experiences harmed him. But lately I have noticed he only spends time in front of his computer when he is working on a school assignment. Otherwise, he prefers to exercise his newfound powers to take a bus downtown, buy himself lunch, hang out with his friends, browse in a book store, bike along the river, or get lost in the arboretum. I almost hope I'll come home one day and see that he's taken an axe to my brand-new Dell, smashed the totemic tower and blinded the blank-faced screen. Because that's the only way I will ever be free of the compulsion to check my email, lay out yet another hand of solitaire, check my horoscope or the weather, and ask another question of the all-knowing astrologer inside that box. Although I am also quite sure that I would only go out and—as quickly as I could afford to—buy a new god. □

SAGES FOR SALE

Continued from page 64

people will turn to brands for meaning and higher purpose seems actually to be happening.

Marketers exhort companies to form "relationships" with their clients. The more they can blur the lines between commercial life and personal life, the harder it is for people to distinguish between the two. It's no accident that customers at Toys "R" Us are referred to as "guests." In past summers Toys "R" Us stores held "summer camps" for children at its stores. Advice on sex and sexuality is dispensed on corporate web sites by companies like Alloy, Inc., that market clothing and accessories to teens and pre-teens.

Marketing companies now promote what's called "buzz" or "stealth" marketing. Bypassing media, they enlist ordinary people to tout products, such as new CDs, accessories, or junk food, to their friends—often without letting the friends know that the "spontaneous" conversation about a new candy bar was actually a premeditated sales pitch. According to a recent article in the *New York Times Magazine*, one of the reasons people give for manipulating their friends on behalf of a brand is that the experience gives their lives meaning. They like feeling part of something bigger than themselves—kind of like organized religion, or social/political movements. And now children are increasingly involved in these kinds of stealth marketing campaigns as well.

Other than myself and a couple of bloggers, I know of no public outcry about Frito-Lay's desecration of a central tenet of Jewish ethics. And perhaps that's the most troubling of all. One prominent Jewish educator was puzzled about why I found it to be a problem. His daughter had seen the campaign and thought it was cool that a Jew must work for the ad agency that created it.

It's been hard to help people see the links between child-targeted marketing and life-threatening problems like youth violence and childhood obesity. It's even harder to get people excited about assaults on the more ineffable splendors of life. But it's upsetting that the guardians of children's spiritual lives are not up in arms about the Doritos campaign. The message to be for yourself and only for yourself abounds in the marketplace. We are exhorted to indulge, to be first, to take care of ourselves, and to do it now. Consciousness, another component of Hillel's philosophy, is replaced by blind impulse. In the context of selling Doritos, "If Not Now When" becomes an anthem for immediate gratification rather than a call for community or for social action.

The irony of Hillel's teaching having been hijacked by commercialism is that our collective humanity, as he characterizes it, is threatened when we allow marketers unfettered access to children. Bought and sold as audience share in a commercial culture that is only for itself, our children are in danger of becoming things rather than people.

We need to stop marketing to children. It's not good for them.

If not now, when? □

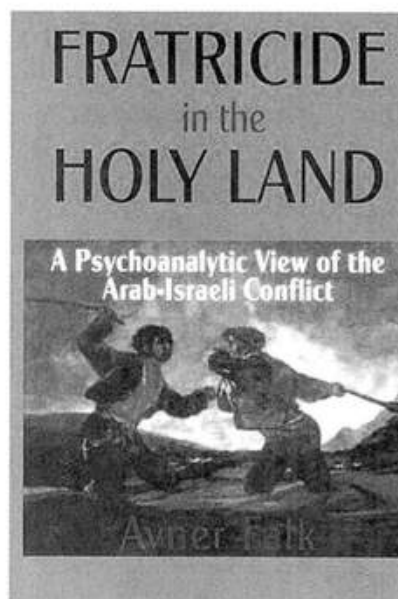
On the Couch with Israel/Palestine

Cynthia Hoffman

- *Fratricide in the Holy Land*, by Avner Falk. University of Wisconsin Press, 2005
- *The Question of Zion*, by Jacqueline Rose. Princeton University Press, 2005

Psychoanalysis still matters. Yet, judging by the relative lack of psychological insight in much of today's literature on Israel/Palestine, one would think the approach had disappeared from vogue. If Israel's Avner Falk and the United Kingdom's Jacqueline Rose have anything to say on the subject, this will not stand. Coming out with not one but two separate volumes that interrogate the Arab/Israeli conflict psychoanalytically, with varying conclusions, these two distinguished scholars succeed in reintroducing a crucial intellectual set of tools with which we may better understand the last hundred years of war between Jews and Arabs.

The title of Falk's book, *Fratricide in the Holy Land*, takes the oft-presupposed idea from the Bible that Arabs and Jews are descended from the half-brothers Ishmael on the one side, and Isaac on the other. For Falk, however, whether this rivalry is biological matters less than the fact that the rivalry exists psychologically for both groups and continues to be played out in the very real struggle in the holy land. The land itself, for Falk, takes on the role of the mother [land] over which the two brothers are fighting. Thus, he would



argue, this psychological reality is "as important," if not more important than, the objective truth of whether the brothers metaphor is in fact real.

While lamenting the paucity of scholarly psychological literature about the Arab-Israeli conflict, Falk argues that it is psychological reality that causes one group's martyr to be another group's terrorist. Quite frankly, aside from the very brief overview of the limited material available (Daniel Sibony [2003], whose Lacanian analysis displaces the religious and territorial conflict in favor of the symbolic one of competing fantasies; and Raphael Patai's *The Arab Mind* are the most prominent), Falk's most interesting work appears in a short chapter entitled "Reality is in the Eye of the Beholder," where he applies Freud's notion of *repetition compulsion* to both

Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs as a partial explanation for the series of conflicts over the years, many of which seem to be identical to each other. If we define repetition compulsion as "doing the same thing again and again and expecting different results," it becomes easy to see how it might apply to, say, the Sinai Campaign in 1956, The Six Day War in 1967, and the Yom Kippur War in 1973, to choose the most obvious examples.

Falk goes on to suggest that it is only because Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat took the time to mourn their losses that they were able to come together and recognize each other's right to existence. He further suggests that as long as this process of mourning can take place, it will continue to be possible that the two parties might be able to reach an agreement in the future. Mourning, in Freud's example, is one way to foreclose the repetition compulsion.

Unfortunately, the majority of Falk's book is taken up with a series of psychoanalytic readings of the major individual parties to the conflict, Ariel Sharon and Yasser Arafat. While Falk quite explicitly states that he hopes his work will help bring about peace, it's difficult to see where an analysis of individual leaders to the conflict can be of assistance, particularly as one of them is no longer alive. So while there is a kind of prurient pleasure to be gained in speculating about Sharon's obesity or Arafat's sexual orientation, it's hard to see the value in these speculations. Ultimately, Falk does not answer the key question he poses: how does psychoanalysis explain fratricide?

Jacqueline Rose's *The Question of Zion* takes a far different approach. Rose's field is literature, not psycholo-

Cynthia Hoffman teaches Jewish Studies in San Francisco and is currently on a leave of absence from rabbinical school. She is also a founding editor of the online magazine *Bad Subjects*.

gy, although she is known as a psychoanalytic literary theorist. Her book, which began its life as a series of seminars given at Princeton University in 2003, grew out of her desire to “understand the force—at once compelling and dangerous—of Israel’s dominant vision of itself as a nation.” Rose’s concerns more closely mirror those of many progressives than Falk’s do: the Israeli government operates in ways she abhors; she believes that the creation of the state of Israel has led to injustice against the Palestinians, and yet she remains unwilling to dismiss Zionism lightly. “Zionism was a vision long before it took on the mantle and often cruel powers of the modern nation-state,” she writes.

Rose opens by interrogating Golda Meir’s claim that Israel has no responsibility for war “because all the wars against Israel have nothing to do with it” and continues by asking why, if Israel really is such a powerful nation in the world, it chooses to present itself as “eternally on the defensive, as though weakness were a weapon, and vulnerability its greatest strength.” Rather than analyze the individual Zionists, however, Rose chooses to examine the movement itself, tracing its roots from seventeenth-century Messianism (Shabtai Tzvi) into nineteenth- and twentieth-century discourses on nationalism and psychoanalysis in the writings of Hannah Arendt, Martin Buber, and Ahad Ha’am, and finally to the politics of the twenty-first century.

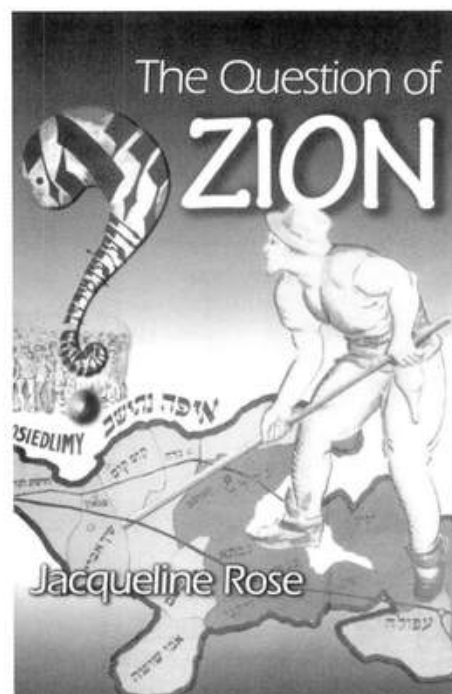
Because Rose presents a critique of Zionism, not of specific Zionists, the psychoanalytic adage “know yourself” feels more comfortably applicable to what she presents, because, unlike Falk’s work, hers isn’t particular (and therefore limited) to any one person’s life experience, but rather explores the group’s sense of itself, the psychopathology of groups notwithstanding.

Rose posits that the creation of the state of Israel paved the way for an [outdated] nationalism to become the new Messianism, as Zionism “like

Messianism seems to require either unconditional rejection or belief, ignoring the history of Zionism as a conflicted movement from the start.” It is the masking of dissent in early Zionist history that Rose attacks most strongly, comparing that kind of silencing with the rhetorical move that aligns all critique of Israel with a critique of Judaism, making it impossible to utter criticism of Israel without the concomitant accusation of anti-Semitism. Finally, when faced with the charge of anti-Semitism, people are quick to say their target isn’t Jews, but Zionism, which leads us right back to the silencing of dissent: there is, apparently, no room for a Zionist critique of any kind.

Further, Rose reminds us that—contrary to the Zionist reflex that criticizing Israel is somehow holding it to a higher standard—Israel and Israelis have invited that higher standard quite explicitly. On the one hand, for example, Israeli Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Zvi Stauber commented that he didn’t object to a double standard, because he wanted there to be a “Jewish difference” from other nations. On the other hand, if Israel is a rule-of-law nation, and the standard is international law or universal rights, it shouldn’t matter when other nations violate the same principles. We are either party to those standards, or we are not. In this light, Rose takes on the security barrier and the International Court of Justice’s decision on its illegality, a decision which Israel is refusing to follow.

It seems to me that Rose asks the right questions: is it possible to talk about the suffering of the Jewish people and the violence of the Israeli state in the same breath? Why is criticism of Israel construed as a denial of the Jewish people’s right to self-defense? Can any state act with impunity on grounds of self-defence? And finally, if part of the messianic view of world history is



that “it is part of the cosmic order of things that the nation must live on a knife’s edge,” as her analysis suggests, is it possible for there to be peace?

Or are we dealing with what Freud calls “magical thinking”? Psychoanalytically, Freud would say that the patient “doesn’t know” he’s deluded. But what is it if, as Chaim Weizmann once said, “it is the Zionists’ good fortune that they are considered mad; if we were normal, we would not consider going to Palestine but stay put like all normal people.” How does magical thinking work if instead of the individual, we’re talking about the nation-state?

According to Lacan, the purpose of psychoanalysis is to expose “mastery” as a delusion. So, then, is the Israeli state a fantasy made real? And if it is, what are our prospects for peace? Such are the open-ended questions that Rose—and by inference Falk—leave us to answer. Given how unorthodox and yet how thoroughly relevant such a mode of interrogating Israel/Palestine is, psychoanalysis not only still matters, but can only serve to help us win the fantasy of peace we so badly need to realize. □

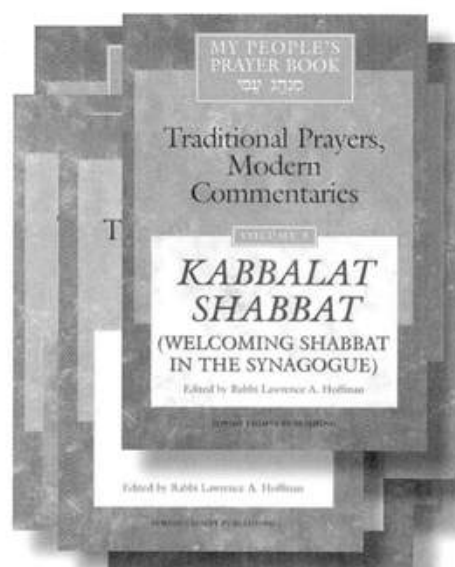
The Changing Ecology of Jewish Religious Life

Jo Ellen Green Kaiser

- *My People's Prayer Book*, vols. 1–8, edited by Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman. Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998–2005.

Judaism loses something as a religion when every prayer service is led by a professional. That is not to say that it isn't inspiring to hear an operatically-trained cantor or to anticipate the well-considered sermon of an esteemed rabbi. A rabbi's main task, however, is not to lead services but to be a teacher who can translate Torah to our everyday lives. While the prayer service can be a time to teach—and should be if it includes reading from Torah—it is also something else, a time to affirm identity, to grapple with our deepest desires, to reach God. And in Judaism, we reach out to God in community. The Jewish prayer service is all about the relation of the individual to the whole and the importance of each to each.

The centerpiece of the Jewish prayer service is the *Amidah*, a collection of eighteen separate prayers of praise, petition, and thanksgiving. The third section of the *Amidah*, the *Kedushah*, or holiness prayer, cannot be recited aloud without a minyan, a community of ten adult Jews (adult men in Orthodoxy). What strikes the synagogue visitor, however, is that in addition to being recited aloud, the *Amidah* is also recited silently—and, indeed, individuals reciting the prayer are encouraged to personalize it by adding



their own petitions, blessings, and thoughts before concluding. It is traditional to wait until each individual has concluded her prayer before resuming the spoken service. Without the group, the individual cannot pray; until each individual concludes his personal prayer, the group does not continue.

The individual's responsibility in a Jewish prayer service is large. Indeed, one aim of a bar/bat mitzvah is to enable the newly adult Jew to lead an entire service. Each adult of the community is theoretically considered able to lead services; nothing in Jewish theology privileges the professional over the layperson in this regard. In fact, in smaller Orthodox shuls and progressive chavurahs, lay people often are invited to lead services. Pulling an individual out of the community as its temporary

leader affirms the important relationship between individual and community—affirms that the community needs every individual and not just its rabbi/teacher.

Most Jews, however, feel sadly unequipped for this kind of participatory role. The service is largely in Hebrew, composed of prayers devised almost 2,000 years ago, in an order that can be little short of baffling. Until now, if you didn't figure it all out by the time you were thirteen, well, good luck!

Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman has changed the very ecology of Jewish religious life with his monumental series, *My People's Prayer Book*. Hoffman aims to make this book "once again open to all Jews," so that we can share "the richness of the Jewish soul" that can be found in the prayerbook's pages. In so doing, Hoffman helps us connect not only to the Jewish soul of the past but to the life of the Jewish community in the present.

Each volume tackles one section of the daily prayer service, with the first six books focusing primarily on the most complex service, the morning *Shacharit*. Hoffman's publisher, Jewish Lights, asserts that the series has concluded at volume eight, but one hopes that Hoffman will reconsider and take up a whole new set for the holiday liturgy.

The volumes in the series are not designed for prayer itself, but to help us prepare for prayer. They are a great way to spend a quiet moment on Shabbat at home or in your shul's library, as

Jo Ellen Green Kaiser is senior editor of *TIKKUN* and consults for the Independent Press Association. You can email her at joellen@tikkun.org.

you can easily dip into any aspect of the liturgy. Each volume contains a template introductory chapter by Hoffman on the liturgy as a whole, followed by one to three essays on the history of the development of the section of the service being covered. These essays are sometimes by Hoffman, sometimes by guest commentators, but across the board are deeply illuminating. For example, in Volume 5, Rabbi Yoel Kahn's discussion of the troublesome talmudic requirement that men should thank God they are not made women reveals that as early as the Renaissance Jewish women had countered with their own positive prayers (including "praised be God who made me a woman"). This kind of scholarly archeology reminds us that Jewish tradition has never been fixed and opens the way for a renewal of the liturgy that respects the past without being burdened by it.

One brilliant stroke among many in this series is Hoffman's decision to pre-

sent each section of the liturgy with commentary in the style of the Talmud. Thus, each Hebrew prayer is offered with its translation in the center of the page, ringed around with at least four commentaries. Each commentator has been asked to discuss the prayer in question from a particular angle—so there are commentaries on *halakhab* (Jewish law), on the prayer's biblical heritage, on its liturgical history, on its literal meaning, and on its theological resonance. In addition, we hear commentators coming from feminist, mystical, and modern perspectives, which allows us to see how these prayers have been thought about alongside a more traditional context.

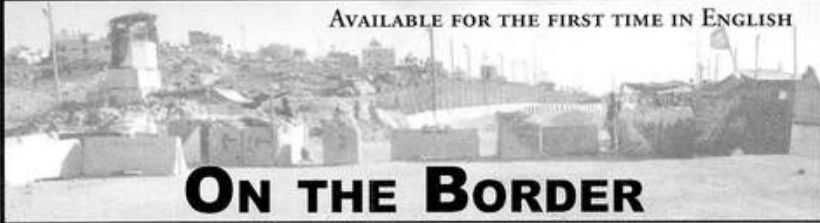
The commentaries ringing each prayer are the heart of the series. Never again will a reader of this series need to wonder why a particular prayer is required, what it means, how it has been understood, or by whom it has been criticized and rethought. In fact, the commentators even teach readers what

movements accompany the prayers (stand up or sit down? Bow or stand straight?) and why they have been implemented. The commentaries empower each reader to enter the conversation and take ownership of the service.

The Amidah is a case in point. Commentary on the opening line alone is ten pages long. Translated here as "Blessed are You, Adonai, our God and our ancestor's God," the line leads some commentators to ask, what happened to "God of our fathers"? Jeff Hoffman, the translator, tell us that the Hebrew word *avoteinu* can mean either "our fathers" or "our ancestors," and chooses the more inclusive version. David Ellenson notes that "ancestors" has become the choice of most modern prayer books. Marcia Falk, however, notes that in context (the prayer continues, "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob") "avoteinu" almost certainly means "fathers" and suggests instead adding "*v'imoteinu*," ("and God of our mothers"). Meanwhile, Marc Brettler, Lawrence Kushner, and Nehemia Polen examine why we would even want to start this most important prayer with an invocation of our ancestors. As these learned scholars jostle together, they create an opening for the reader to choose her own way through the service and its multiple meanings.

By inviting us to join this dialogue, Hoffman's series allows us to truly enter the community of the prayer service. Like the commentators here, we will be able to approach the prayer service with our individual positions and thoughts now expressed through a deeper understanding of the tradition that binds us together. Most importantly, readers of these volumes will come empowered to be leaders of the service as well as followers. To those who imbibe these books, the liturgy will no longer be a confusing jumble but a means to express our unique insight into the nature and power of God. If Hoffman's books were given to every Jewish adult, we'd have a Jewish renewal indeed! □

AVAILABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ENGLISH



ON THE BORDER

MICHEL WARSCHAWSKI
TRANSLATED BY LEVI LAUB



In this award-winning political memoir, one of the most renowned members of the Israeli left meditates on the violence—and vibrancy—of the border cultures from which his voice emerges. *On the Border* offers a philosopher's search for justice and decency—and his hope for the rich exchange that Palestinians and Israelis might someday enjoy. \$17, paper

**"Not only is *On the Border* a page-turner,
it's also essential reading for anyone working
for Middle East peace and justice."**

—Liat Weingart, Co-Director, Jewish Voice for Peace

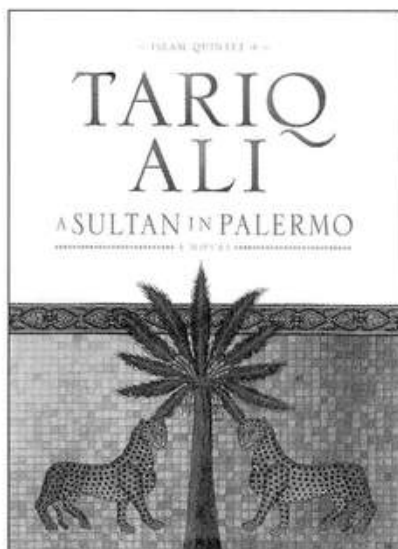
South End Press | www.southendpress.org | Orders: (800) 533-8478

Capsule Reviews

- *A Sultan in Palermo*, by Tariq Ali. Verso, 2005.

Given Tariq Ali's political pedigree, it's tempting to read his latest historical novel, *A Sultan in Palermo*, for insight on the contemporary crisis between Islamic nations and the West. Now the editor of Verso Books, the UK-based filmmaker is best known in the United States as an editor of the *New Left Review* and as the author of the incendiary book *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jibads and Modernity*, which compares Islamic fundamentalism with another fundamentalist impulse: the zealous market-driven ideology that informs American imperialism.

One might expect Ali to write about the power of revolution, the problem of Western domination, and the evils of gross economic disparities between rich and poor. And, indeed, he has chosen a historical moment that cries out for such a critique. The fourth volume in Ali's Islam Quintet is a fictionalized account of the last months of the reign of Roger (Rujari) the Great of Sicily, the Norman ruler whose family had seized control of the island from its Muslim inhabitants some hundred years before. The story is told through the eyes of Muhammad al-Idrisi, a twelfth-century historical figure who was the most celebrated geographer of the middle ages. Tensions between Muslims, Christians, and Jews are running high as Muslim dominance has receded in the face of Christian occupation. Rujari is dying, his heir is seen as too much enamored with Islamic culture (and women and wine) to be a strong leader, and both Norman barons and Christian clergy are eager to consolidate their power at



the expense of Muslims and Jews.

Despite its focus on the subaltern, the novel is neither propagandistic nor a jingoistic call for the Islamic world to rise up against Western imperialists. Rather, *A Sultan in Palermo* explores the struggles that face people living under occupation. Ali asks important questions like: when is rebellion not only justified but wise, and how does one survive without collaborating?

Setting the novel in a medieval court gives Ali fertile ground from which to explore various mechanisms of domination. Surveillance is a key theme, as palace eunuchs listen behind every door; patriarchy is nowhere more obvious than in the harem system that imprisons women, forcing them into secret marriages and affairs; feudalism not only keeps peasants poor, but barbaric Norman excesses demoralize and terrorize the population.

Though the central question Ali's characters grapple with is how to rise up against the Normans, the victories in this novel are not, for the most part, military. Ali's characters are masters at negotiating their complex society—whether as Muslims in a Christian

regime, peasants in a feudal system, or women in a patriarchal world. Their power, though contingent and temporary, comes from solidarity—it is by banding together and considering the common good that Ali's characters are able to effect meaningful, if short-lived, change. In the end, *A Sultan in Palermo* speaks to the power of human ingenuity to find nonviolent means to subvert the hegemonic order. —Liz Winer

- *Just Around the Corner: The Paradox of the Jobless Recovery*, by Stanley Aronowitz. Temple University Press, 2005

Most of us already know the economic buzz words: outsourcing, globalization, automation, computerization, just-in-time, production, flexible specialization. They're a reality in our world—not just terms used by media pundits and reporters, but world-changing economic ideas soft-pedaled by executives in conference

Just Around the Corner

The Paradox of the Jobless Recovery

Stanley Aronowitz

CAPSULE REVIEWS

calls and sweated over in cubicles.

To American workers, outsourcing and globalization can mean the relocation of an entire factory and its jobs from the United States to China, or the opening of a new corporate location in India and its attendant domestic downsizing. As Stanley Aronowitz points out in *Just Around the Corner: The Paradox of the Jobless Recovery*, today's workers are hanging on for dear life, consistently working longer and longer hours without demanding additional compensation beyond simply retaining their jobs.

But that's just one side of the equation. *Just Around the Corner* examines these buzzwords and the government, corporate, and union policies that created them, and explains how they impact all American workers, including both the unemployed and underemployed. After detailing the history leading up to today's economic status quo, Aronowitz makes a convincing argument for why, this time around, an improved economy will not automatically lead to an upswing in job creation. Aronowitz in turn proposes a seismic shift in the way that most Americans view jobs, the economy, social responsibility, and trade agreements with foreign countries.

Aronowitz resurrects what economic conservatives argue is now an outmoded concept for working persons: *entitlement*. Arguing that Americans are entitled to a living wage-based minimal income, affordable housing, full employment, and quality health care, *Just Around the Corner* details how we can secure these rights without leaving the United States deeper in debt than its troubled public sector already is. Not exactly conventional political wisdom for the present moment, but a very heartfelt and necessary rearticulation of a traditional progressive commitment to meeting human needs.

One of the most interesting elements of *Just Around the Corner* is the attention that Aronowitz pays to the ideological processes that have led Americans to accept the post-welfare-



state economic consensus of the past thirty years. Focusing on the ways in which acquiescence has been culturally secured, Aronowitz displays a remarkable sensitivity to the ways in which consent is inculcated by factors other than simply the struggle to survive.

—Jane Credland

- *The Jew and the Other*, by Esther Benbassa and Jean-Christophe Attias. Cornell University Press, 2004

An “improbable modern midrash” is what Esther Benbassa and Jean-Christophe Attias call their slim yet elegant little volume. Moving through the Pentateuch and stopping to explicate select verses, the French scholars offer a kaleidoscopic view of that most vexing of creatures: the Other. The approach is wide-ranging, the voice sweeping. Historical and theological evidence is found everywhere—from Christians and Muslims to Spaniards and Germans, and from Abraham’s pagan ancestors and Moses’s unmistakable foreignness to God’s radical alterity.

But this is no mere laundry list. A deeper philosophical and political argument sustains the book. Many pages, to be sure, are spent on the expected topic: the way Jews have figured as an Other in various times and places. The Middle Ages make an appearance, as do the horrors of the twentieth century. Benbassa and Attias are at their most passionate and persuasive, however, when they turn the tables and examine how Jews themselves have regarded the Other. Their guide in these meditations is the late French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who developed an ethics of the Other in critical response to his teacher Martin Heidegger’s focus on the ontology of being.

Over the last years, the work of Levinas has been recognized as a major contribution to modern Jewish thought. Benbassa and Attias make it their guide to the enduring tension in Judaism between universalism and particularism. With him, they ask why if God created all of humanity, he named the Jews as his chosen people and anointed them with special obligations.

The answer lies in Judaism’s special relationship to non-Jews, from the biblical nations to present-day Palestinians. Jews need these Others in order to fulfill their universalizing mission. This mission centers on an “interhuman” injunction, what Levinas calls the “non-indifference of one to another.” Benbassa and Attias explicate that “one must pass from the human or the universal to Judaism and then, with Judaism as one’s point of departure, make one’s way back toward the other, in a to-and-froing that transcends tolerance and is neither a law nor a social convention, but the very basis of the human.”

The political message in this philosophical stance is clear. At the end of the volume, Benbassa and Attias call once more for Jews’ “sensitivity to the suffering of others,” adding—with a nod to the story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar—that a “mutilated Israel and a Palestine bled white are simultaneously destroying their common future.”

—Matti Bunzl □

Burning the Self in the Community Bonfire: Joseph Cedar's *Campfire*

Shai Ginsburg



The year is 1981. Under the aegis of Menachem Begin's first government and, in particular, of its Minister of Agriculture, Ariel Sharon, the right-wing settlement movement enthusiastically looks forward to prospects of unprecedented construction and growth in Judea and Samaria, the Gaza Strip, and

the Golan Heights. At the same time, the movement finds itself in an escalating conflict with the very same government over the terms of the Israeli-Egyptian peace accord, the proposed Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, and the dismantling of the Jewish settlements there. Moving back and forth between construction sites and protest marches,

the settlers highlight the link between the desire to build a home—personal as well as national—and the struggle over the borders and boundaries of the State of Israel.

In the Jerusalem neighborhood of Bayit Va-Gan, a hub of the national-religious camp, Rachel Gerlik has just ended a year of mourning over her husband, and she and her two teenage daughters, Tami and Esti, struggle to rebuild their home and family and to

Shai Ginsburg is assistant professor of Hebrew and Jess Schwartz Professor of Modern Hebrew Literature at Arizona State University.

redefine their relationships with their friends and their community. Eager to assert her position within her community and fearful of being left alone, Rachel seeks to join the founding group of a new settlement in Samaria to which many of her friends belong. Yet, the acceptance committee, headed by her friend Motke, a prominent figure in the Religious-Nationalist camp, is reluctant to admit her as a full member.

Joseph Cedar's *Campfire* follows the Gerlik women as they are caught between their personal needs on the one hand, and communal values and ideals on the other. While in his earlier film *Time of Favor* (2000), Cedar focused on the political dangers of right-wing religious radicalism, in his new film he puts into relief the personal price paid by those who do not fit the ideals of their Religious-Nationalist community.

Early in *Campfire*, the acceptance committee interviews candidate couples for the new settlement. "Why would you like to join the new settlement?" they are asked. "We feel that this is the need of the hour," they respond, but also, they immediately add, "quality of life for the kids; we couldn't afford that in the city." "It's really important to us to have a house with a lawn," another couple stresses. "And who would you like your neighbors to be?" is the next question. "People like us," they all agree. "People like you," answers Rachel at the end of her interview. The settlers are thus motivated less by their ideological commitment to the ideal of the greater Israel than by the bourgeois dream of moving from their apartments to a house with a lawn and their desire to distance themselves from those who are unlike them.

Who are the people from whom the settlers of *Campfire* would like to dissociate themselves? Most directly, they are women like Rachel. In the absence of a husband and a father, her family is seen as incomplete. Without a husband, she is told, her family cannot participate fully in settlement life: "it is one less man for the duty guard, one less man for the prayer quorum," Motke tells her. As Rachel discovers, her friends' empathy

for her loss does not lead them to include her as an equal member in the community; on the contrary, as a woman and single mother in a religious society, she finds herself marginalized and even excluded. She therefore yields to her friends' pleas and agrees to date men with whom they match her.

The first is Yossi Moraly, a fifty-year-old bus driver who has never married. During one of their conversations, he admits to Rachel that he has never even slept with a woman. As a bachelor, he cannot find his place within his religious community, and he finds himself ever

Campfire follows the Gerlik women as they are caught between their personal needs on the one hand, and communal values and ideals on the other.

more removed from his sisters and friends whose lives revolve around the ideal of the family. The second is the self-centered and pompous Moshe Weinstein, a world-renowned cantor. While Moshe is deemed the appropriate match for Rachel by her friends, she grows closer to the candid Yossi and together they explore the links between romance, marriage, and sex: "Is there any chance of you sleeping with a man you're not married to?" Yossi asks Rachel daringly. Rachel hesitates and then addresses the question back at him. "I've decided that I would," he replies. In the context of a community that sanctifies the tie between sex and marriage and that forbids unmarried men and women to touch each other, Yossi's candor and sincerity transgress the proper boundaries between the sexes. Nevertheless, his kindness and compassion turn his forthrightness into

an assurance that allows them both to develop a mature and honest relationship that does not rely on the approval of the community.

Cedar's most direct examination of the boundaries of home and community, of sexual behavior and romance, and of 'us' and 'them' is through the characters of the two daughters. Esti, a rebellious eighteen-year-old, objects to her mother's plan to move the family to the rocky hills of Judea and Samaria. Accordingly, she informs Rachel that she would rather stay in Jerusalem, live on the street, and support herself as a prostitute than move to the new settlement. Testing the boundaries between what is forbidden and what is allowed, she spends an evening with her soldier boyfriend locked in her room. The following morning, Rachel smashes her bedroom glass door, asserting, "No one locks doors in my house." Privacy within the house—especially insofar as a young woman's sexuality is concerned—is seen as a threat to the religious values upheld by the family and demanded by the community.

The parts of the plot that involve Tami, Rachel's fifteen-year-old daughter, are the most disturbing. A member of the Bnei-Akiva religious youth movement, she falls in love with Rafi, who attends the meetings of the local group with a few of his friends from a neighboring Sephardi slum. Ultimately, these Sephardi youth constitute the gravest threat to the Ashkenazi community of Bayit Va-Gan and to the chastity of its daughters. During a mesmerizing sequence that takes place on Lag Ba'Omer eve, Tami leaves the bonfire of her cohorts to join the one made by Rafi and his friend. While those gathered around the Bnei-Akiva bonfire sing in chorus, "Sanctify your life with the Torah and purify it through labor," Rafi's friends encircle Tami when she approaches and chant, "Tami the whore opened the store; everyone standing in line with a huge hard-on." Tami, however, is fascinated by the explicit sexual talk of Rafi and his friends; she joins their bonfire and so crosses the bound-

ary that defines—for her community as well as for Rafi and his friends—modest behavior for young women. Her transgression, unlike those of her mother and sister, has grave consequences. Though the film remains ambiguous about what exactly transpires at the bonfire, it is clear that she is sexually harassed at best, perhaps even raped.

When Rachel consults with Motke about the incident, he pressures her not to inform the police. “We know who they are,” he tells her, “this isn’t the first time we’ve had trouble with them.” Still, he reassures Rachel in a second conversation, “things will probably be much easier in the settlement.” Motke expresses his resentment—shared by Ashkenazi religious-nationalists and secular-liberals alike—of the Sephardi underclass that started in the late 1970s to make its way to Israel’s center stage. His words reveal that the establishment of the new settlement is motivated in part by a desire to reconstruct the boundaries between the community and

the underclass, boundaries that were slowly disappearing in the urban setting.

Still more troubling is Motke’s insinuation that Tami is responsible for the incident. “You don’t know what happened there,” he tells Rachel, reminding her that Tami willingly joined the other bonfire. In placing the blame on Tami and on the Sephardi kids, Motke conveniently keeps silent about the role of the community in victimizing Tami. In fact, his own son witnesses the attack on Tami, yet neither interrupts it nor calls for help. When she later turns down his advances, the neighborhood is sprayed with “Tami Gerlik is a whore” graffiti. In pressing Rachel to just let the incident “blow over,” Motke reveals the communal unwillingness to pursue the matter and provides the official seal to the communal condemnation of Tami.

At first it seems that the incident will undermine the chances of the whole family’s admittance to the settlement, but in an attempt to buy Rachel’s silence, Motke convinces the founding group of

the new settlement to accept her and her daughters. The settlement thus becomes yet another mechanism of internal oppression, serving to co-opt women into the values of patriarchal society.

Campfire sets its female characters against a hostile male environment (with the exception of Yossi) that seems to be threatened by their independence and sexuality. Motke’s unwillingness to acknowledge the legitimacy of women’s needs reveals the disingenuousness of the elevated rhetoric about communal and family values and the ideal of settlement, for this rhetoric conceals a reality of abuse and violence. Directed against the most vulnerable members of the community, the widow and the orphan, these ideals become the means of malice that threatens to undermine the Gerlik women’s sense of community, home, and security. In the end, Joseph Cedar suggests, the community seeks to secure its reputation and ideals by repressing and denying the violence and transgression in its midst. □

Discover Your Place in the World



Ezra Weinberg '03

Following his graduation from college with a major in conflict transformation, Ezra Weinberg went to Israel to put into practice what he had learned in theory. Recognizing that there was more to learn, Ezra enrolled in SIT's CONTACT (Conflict Transformation Across Cultures) program and the following year went on to earn a Master of Arts in Conflict Transformation. “I got support from the faculty, and was able to be in touch online with peacebuilders around the world—anywhere there was conflict,” Ezra’s post-graduate and internship experiences in Israel convinced him to apply his peacebuilding and conflict transformation skills from a religious perspective. He is currently studying to be a rabbi.

International and Intercultural Masters Degrees

- MA Conflict Transformation
- MA International Education
- MA Social Justice in Intercultural Relations
- MA Sustainable Development
- MS Organizational Management
- MA Intercultural Service, Leadership, and Management



www.sit.edu

(800) 336-1616

admissions@sit.edu

An Interview with Joseph Cedar

Shai Ginsburg: Could you tell me a little bit about yourself?

Joseph Cedar: I was born in the U.S. My parents immigrated to Israel when I was six and settled in Jerusalem in the Bayit Va-Gan neighborhood. I grew up in the Beni-'Akiva [religious] youth movement and attended a rabbinical high school. I served three years in the IDF paratroopers. I did my B.A. at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Theater Studies and Philosophy and then traveled to New York to study Filmmaking. From an early age I was engaged with the "stage." Every group needs someone to produce events: for Purim or Chanuka or the end of the year, you always have to stage something.

SG: There are very few "skullcap-wearer" filmmakers in Israel ...

JC: That's true. I am one of the few; there are not enough "skullcap wearers" who are interested in making movies. Out of some hundred filmmakers, perhaps two succeed in transforming their stories into film. But I think that is accidental rather than something inherent [in the Israeli film industry]. I don't think that the cinema apparatus in Israel prevents religious people from making films. Nor do I think that religious circles attempt to dissuade creators from making films. It's merely a matter of numbers.

SG: Do you think that you, as a religious filmmaker, face any special difficulty in working in a medium that appeals, in a large measure, to a secular audience?

JC: The greatest difficulty is in answering this question, because it assumes that a religious lifestyle has a say not only in art but also in the profession one chooses. At least as far as I am concerned, there is a complete separation between my religious lifestyle and my choice of profession.

SG: Do you think that your lifestyle affects the way you represent subjects and themes in your movies? Are there things you would not deal with or would deal

with in a certain way because of your lifestyle?

JC: There are no subjects that I wouldn't engage with, and I don't think there is something that restrains me. Still, I do find myself attracted to things that I am familiar with from my close environment and, therefore, I focus on "skullcap wearer" characters from the religious sector. I don't think, however, that I tell stories that are unique to the religious sector. The knowledge of my close environment and the intimate familiarity with a certain people fuel my writing; I don't know how to write in any other way. The outcome is that I deal with religious people. I don't think that this is an ideological choice.

SG: On the other hand, the close environment doesn't always like what you do or, at least, is divided about it. Some, indeed, acclaim your films, but others harshly censure them.

JC: That is true. I think that there's something treacherous in dramatic writing. One of the most useful tools I have when I write a scene or develop a story is to look for the flaws, for dirt, for the bad things; this is not because I want to air dirty laundry or to sully someone, but simply because that's where the drama is. Even if I have no agenda of saying something about the religious sector, I do want to bring the story I tell to a climax and to realize its dramatic potential. Since this is what motivates me, I find myself scratching people's blemishes and, if you write about the environment in which you live, this may be treacherous. If I were writing about some remote society, they probably would not have called me a traitor; they might have called me ignorant.

SG: Do you feel that you somehow betray your close environment?

JC: No. I feel that my desire to exhaust a story, to bring it to a dramatic climax is something I cannot escape. I think this is part of the storyteller's role in every society. The storytellers who succeed in

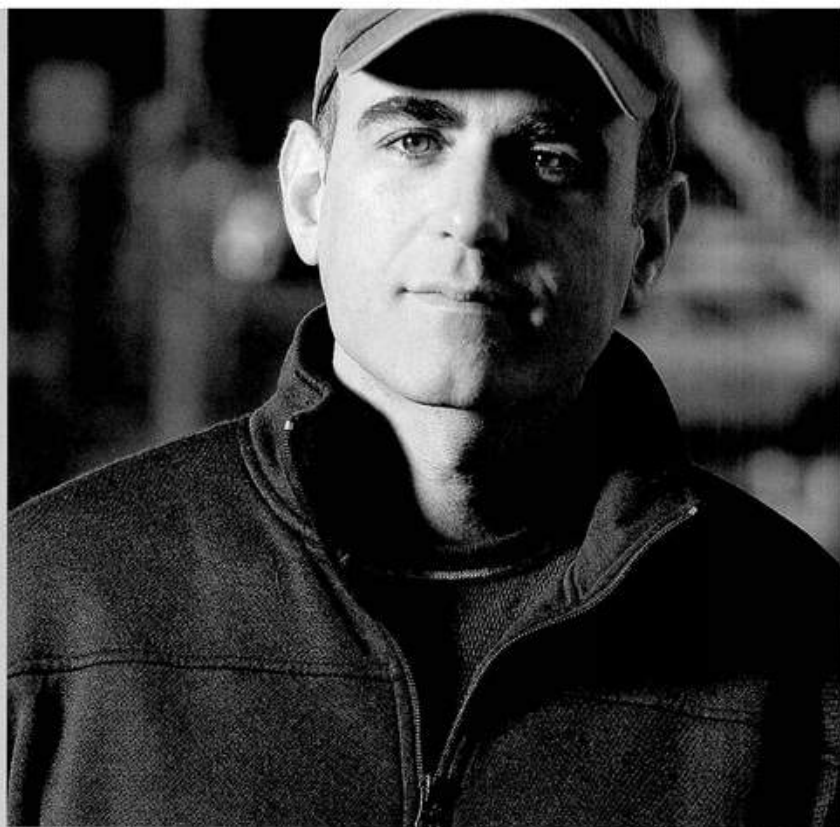
creating interest from an audience are those who are attracted to examining their own boundaries as well as the boundaries of their audience. A society that knows how to accept the criticism of these storytellers is often a strong society; the rejection of the criticism often testifies to the weakness of that society. For me this is not a [political] position but, rather, a fact of life. I don't see how you can tell a "reversed" story. What would have happened had I been telling a story about my group, and all those people who now criticize me had patted me on the shoulder and said "good"?...

Ultimately, the work on a story is inherent to the story itself. You bring the story to a climax because you must, and everything beyond that is almost not your responsibility.

SG: *Time of Favor* and *Campfire* have very different kinds of climaxes. What is the relationship between the two movies?

JC: *Time of Favor* is a first movie. A large part of what's in it wasn't under my control; there are so many things that happened accidentally. The second movie is the outcome of many of the lessons of the first movie. It reflects a style of which I'm more conscious at the present. Still, the two films reflect two sides of the same story. *Time of Favor* focuses on radicals, on characters that the story defines in advance as particularly charismatic or unique, while *Campfire* focuses on ordinary people. Itamar [a supporting character] in the first movie is a person who is dragged, who acts because of social pressure. In the end, his character interested me more than any of the main characters. The real story was of Itamar, not of Menachem, Michal, or Pini [the main characters]. In *Campfire*, all the characters are Itamar. I was trying to tell a story about peer pressure and its victims.

SG: Many of the characters that pay the price of peer pressure in your movies are women—Michal in *Time of Favor* and



the Gerlik women, and Tami in particular, in *Campfire*. What makes women special for you?

JC: The character played by Moshe Ivgy [Yossi] in *Campfire* is also presented as a victim or, at least, as different.

Rachel's story, on the other hand, is more tied to the fact that she's a woman, and it's derived from a true story.

If I have to choose a character from my movies in which I see myself, it would be Tami. I am not certain that I treat her specifically as a woman, but rather as someone with an internal world that is similar to mine. A part of what happens to her is tied to this internal world or to her disconnection from the real world.

In the dance scene, she discovers that she speaks with the body. She has very little dialogue throughout the movie and she has very few complete sentences. The most intimate moment she has in the movie is with her reflection in the mirror. Her sexuality constitutes a language, but a language that hasn't passed the test in front of an audience and, thus far, she speaks in this language only with herself. Once it reaches an audience, it goes out of her control; she doesn't realize how it is interpreted.

SG: In both of your movies the women are very sexual while the men are much more uncertain about it. Is this how you see your society?

JC: No. I don't think that's representative. All of my male characters are perplexed, and I find it convenient to direct such confused characters. I don't really know why.

SG: You studied filmmaking in the U.S. and you work in Israel. Where do you see the influence of Israeli cinema in your work and where is the influence of American cinema?

JC: Despite the fact that there are Israeli movies that I very much like, there isn't much influence of Israeli cinema on my work. My declaration of intent at the beginning of the work on *Time of Favor* was a reaction against the failure of Israeli cinema to reach an audience. My insistence on a very tight plot that continuously progresses is a reaction to my frustration with Israeli films that I've seen, which simply ignored audience's need for a plot. If, then, Israeli cinema has influenced me, it is in what I do *not* want to do rather than what I would do. I do consume American mainstream cinema that appeals to the entertainment needs of the audience, even if the films that have influenced me are not

that mainstream. If I have to point at someone that I appreciate, it would be someone like James L. Brooks, who did *The Simpsons*, *Terms of Endearment*, *As Good as It Gets*, and *Spanglish*. His is a warm cinema, very popular without demeaning its audience.

SG: What is the place of politics in such cinema?

JC: There is hardly any separation between my political life and my private life. When I go on reserve duty, the act of serving in the Territories is political but it also means being away from my family for a month. Everything is connected, and so are the movies. The bite of politics into the family life of the characters of my films is something that I experience all the time. I love the chance to be politically relevant, but I hope that I succeed in doing this indirectly. The political debate in Israel is very good—it is very divergent and many voices are heard in it. Culture can contribute to this debate not if it deals with the main issues as they are, but rather if it sheds light on aspects that don't [otherwise] make it into the public discourse. At least in *Campfire* I feel that I dealt with something relevant but that no one speaks about—something I wish people would—the social aspect of the settlement project, its elitist aspect.

SG: Should we read your social criticism of the settlement project as political criticism?

JC: I don't know. Some of the things in the movie that ultimately are received as criticism are in the movie without my knowledge. I did not think that I [created] Motke as such a ridiculous character, but this was the outcome. I do not withdraw my responsibility for him, but I don't think that what Motke represents is as ridiculous as it seems from the movie, despite the fact that I think Motke is real, is authentic. I thus find it difficult to assume responsibility for all of the criticism in the movie; I think that some of the criticism is to be located in the one who watches the movie, not in the one who created it. □

Islamophilia: The Mid-East Musical Politics of Muslimgauze

Ron Nachmann

For the past twenty-five years, Europe's electronic music community has been ground zero for countless conceptually innovative artists who've used their work to challenge dominant cultural and political paradigms. However, none has done it as creatively and controversially as Muslimgauze. Working out of his parents' basement for the entirety of his seventeen-year career, Muslimgauze produced a highly charged catalogue of recordings, now standing at over 150 releases, that has earned him cult status amongst *outré* music fans worldwide.

The first English-speaking artist to blend abrasive experimental compositional techniques—tape loops, distortion, and Middle Eastern field recordings—with the percussive and melodic idioms of the Muslim world, Muslimgauze forged a new musical vocabulary that expressed the increasing cross-pollination of European and Islamic cultures since the 1960s. Informed by the electronic pop of the post-punk era—ambient, dub, techno, and industrial noise—Muslimgauze used his work as a platform to express a profound fascination with Islam and a heretofore unheard of musical anger at Israel's treatment of the Palestinians.

Because his music was entirely instrumental, Muslimgauze expressed his political opinions in two distinct ways: through interviews and the packaging and



titling of his albums and songs. Certainly, many of his titles bespoke a nuanced vision of the non-Western world—see, for example, album titles like *Lo Fi Indian Abuse* and *Hand of Fatima*, and song titles like “Veiled Sisters” and “Uzbekistani Bizarre and Souk.” But some more notable appellations—*Return of Black September* and *Vote Hezbollah* among many examples—bespeak a resolute sympathy with extremist politics in the Arab and Islamic world.

Packaging like the cover illustration of *Fatah Guerilla* (which featured a por-

trait of Ayatollah Khomeini painted on a rifle butt) and the horrifically titled *Sarin Israel Nes Ziona* (Loosely translated as “Sarin gas kills Zionist Israel,” replete with a closeup photo of a Saddam wristwatch) spoke of Muslimgauze’s vision of Middle Eastern politics. Unsurprisingly, when interviewed, journalists frequently found Muslimgauze mechanically parroting the standard anti-Zionist rhetoric of Nasserite Arab-nationalists. Bitter comments like, “Vile Israel will feel the Palestine anger in full soon, I hope” (a remark from a Q&A published in 1998), are typical throughout the interviews archived on the official Muslimgauze website.

Music editor Ron Nachmann is a journalist, editor, and culture worker living in San Francisco.

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of Muslimgauxe's politics lies in its demographic inconsistency. The man behind the project name Muslimgauxe was a notoriously reclusive non-Muslim, non-Arab native of the industrial town of Manchester, United Kingdom. Bryn Jones launched Muslimgauxe in 1982, inspired by his outrage over the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. His hatred of Israeli foreign policy eventually transformed itself into an intense affinity with Reagan-era rogue states like Iran and Libya, as well as with Muslim guerrilla movements in India and Pakistan. It also fuelled a fervidly constant album-per-month output during a highly incognito seventeen-year career that yielded a mere handful of live shows and virtually no photographs of Jones himself.

But at their root, Jones's intensely partisan sympathies were mediated at best, for he never deigned to visit the Middle East. One can call Jones out as the de facto musico-ideological conduit between Muslim political extremists and the rarefied left-of-center intelligentsia of Europe and the United States. One can also see him as an obsessive crank holed up in his basement with apparently little better to do than churn out a pioneering catalogue of cultural syntheses. Jones's mysterious death in 1999 of a rare blood fungus only added to the Muslimgauxe enigma.

What can we take away from a career like that of Muslimgauxe? It represents the first counter-cultural musical attempt to think through the Arab-Israeli conflict seriously. Though we might judge his knee-jerk anti-Zionism as Orientalist in its appropriation of Arab revolutionary rhetoric (and unnuanced in its critique), the utopian cultural syntheses spelled out by Jones' compositional style suggest an entirely distinct political disposition at work. The challenge in appreciating Muslimgauxe's music lies in understanding its maddening inconsistency, as both naively oppositional and profoundly conciliatory. In this sense, Jones clearly succeeded in reproducing the frustrating logic of Middle Eastern politics.

Capsule Reviews

- Hip Hop Hoodios, *Agua Pa' La Gente*. Jazzheads, 2005

The hip-hop era has seen countless Jews use the genre's toolbox of beats and rhymes to flesh out a proud tradition of progressive political rap. Historically dominated by artists ranging from the Beastie Boys and Blood of Abraham to MC Paul Barman, So-Called, and Remedy, the default demographic has historically landed on the Ashkenazi side. However, given the genre's tendency to cross cultural lines, it was only a matter of time before it would do so within the Jewish community itself. In the case of Hip Hop Hoodios' *Agua Pa' La Gente*, it crosses the border that separates Anglophone from Spanish-speaking American Jews.

The Hoodios ("hoodio" is a twist on "Judeo," the Spanish word for "Jew") are a hip-hop collective led by rappers Josue Noriega and Abraham Velez, featuring musicians from Latin and Jewish acts as disparate as Santana and the Klezmatics. *Agua Pa' La Gente* finds this bicoastal band weaving Latin rhythms and traditional Jewish harmonies into hip-hop with mostly English rhymes peppered with Hebrew and Spanish.

While their tri-lingual approach doesn't itself prevent a few wince-worthy lyrics ("You like our dicks and you like our noses/you see a Jewish guy and you forget where your clothes is"), the Hoodios manage to throw down numerous salient points of Sephardi pride. On "1492," for example, Noriega and Velez utilize a yearning salsa rhythm to recount the Inquisition and the subsequent dispersion of Spanish Jewry, before fading out with a mantra that proclaims "By the way, the god you pray to/Is a brown Jew! Is a brown Jew!" "Kike on the Mike," on the other hand, plays hilariously with a bevy of anti-



Semitic stereotypes over a funk-ridden klezmer beat. The Hoodios even take on the issue of water privatization in the album's title track, "Agua Pa' La Gente," ("Water for the People.")

As concerned as Hoodios are with speaking in the voice of their community, such tracks are clearly indicative of the band's desire to keep the gates to their metaphorical 'hood entirely open. After all, like hip-hop, privatization is a political problem that crosses all community lines—Jewish and otherwise. Here's to this emerging Sephardi voice.

- Random_Inc/Bizz_Circuits, *Walking In Jerusalem* (2004), *Bizz Circuits play Intifada Offspring* (2004). Mille Plateaux Media (Germany)

Under the Random_Inc moniker, German Sebastian Meissner has carved out a niche as an esteemed European experimental electronic sound artist. With his two most recent releases—the Random_Inc remix album *Walking in Jerusalem*, and the showcase of Israeli/Palestinian audio and visual artists, *Bizz Circuits play Intifada Offspring*—Meissner has taken on the ambitious multiple roles of composer, producer, filmmaker, and curator in

MUSIC

order to present an impressive snapshot of the connections between alternative culture and politics in Israel.

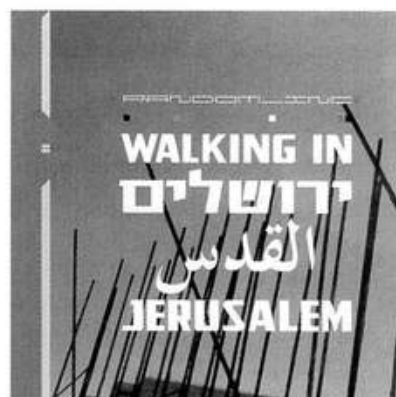
Walking in Jerusalem is a remix of the first Random_Inc full-length, *Jerusalem: Tales from Outside the Framework of Orthodoxy* (2003). The original album featured a symbolic ten-minute track of silence that divided in half another twenty-seven tracks of Meissner's digital blend of field recordings of traditional Jewish and Arab musicians that he made while wandering in the segmented city. For *Walking*, Meissner handed those tracks to electronic producers like Dub Taylor and the Rip-Off Artist to create a rich collection of moods ranging from the percussive mournfulness of "Meets Electric Birds in Mamillah" to the charged political atmospherics of "Meets Ultra-Red in Deir Yassin (Daya Yasin)."

In that same spirit, *Bizz Circuits play Intifada Offspring* finds Meissner presenting, according to his liner notes, "artists from Palestine and Israel and other geographic regions who have ded-



icated their work to the artistic deconstruction of the so-called 'Middle-East conflict.'" In this way, Meissner largely plays the curator/DJ role, sequencing alternative, hip hop, and electronic music alongside spoken word by musicians, poets and activists from the region, and sampled bits of pirate radio.

As a refreshing complement, *Intifada Offspring* also features a DVD of short films and videos by Israeli and Palestinian artists like Ran Slavin, Elyasaf



Kowner, Ran Aizenshtat, and Ahuva Ozeri. Most of these pieces deal with violence in the region, and all of them take uniquely abstract approaches, ranging from quick-cut video collages of everyday scenes in Jerusalem to poignant, mantra-like film loops of shoot-out scenes from television. Meissner's multimedia approach reflects alternative Israel/Palestine's firm footing in a global digital culture that could see us through the present troubles of the region. □

Books by Tikkun Authors

SPIRIT MATTERS

By Michael Lerner

The foundational text of the TIKKUN philosophy: The critically-acclaimed call for stronger spiritual values that outlines what a New Bottom Line would look like in every aspect of American society. Hampton Roads Publishing ■ \$19

HEALING ISRAEL/PALESTINE

By Michael Lerner

A bold, balanced, and concise history of Zionism for progressive Jews who want to find a way to be both pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian, with a clear blueprint for a final peace settlement. North Atlantic Books ■ \$14

AROUSAL

By Michael J. Bader

A psychoanalyst, Bader presents a new theory of sexuality that both explains our most intimate fantasies and shows how the social world becomes embedded in our unconscious minds. St. Martin's Griffin ■ \$17

THE BANK TELLER

By Peter Gabel

When human connectedness and our aspirations for love and recognition disappear, we need TIKKUN Associate Editor's groundbreaking vision of a community-centered, loving and transformed world. Acada Books/New College of California Press ■ \$27

THE ANTI-CAPITALISM READER

By Joel Schalit

The first North American collection on the past, present, and future of anti-capitalism. Featuring interviews with Antonio Negri and Thomas Frank, with essays by members of the *Bad Subjects* collective. Akashic Books ■ \$19

Order online from
tikkun.org

or call (510) 644-1200

All prices include shipping.

Just say **NO** to the Religious Right.

Help us build an interfaith **NETWORK OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVES**
(including spiritual but NOT religious secular progressives).

Join the Network and/or Come to:



the conference on spiritual activism

FOUNDING CONFERENCES: **July 20-23, 2005, Berkeley, CA**
Feb. 10-13, 2006, Washington, D.C.

OUR GOALS

1. Challenge the misuse of God by the Right to justify militarism, dismantling of social justice and ecological programs, and assaults on the rights of women, gays and lesbians;
2. Challenge the anti-spiritual biases in some parts of "the Left"; and
3. Support a New Bottom Line of kindness, generosity, ecological sensitivity, and awe and wonder at the grandeur of the universe to replace the dominant ethos of selfishness and materialism. For progressive people of all faiths, and spiritually attuned secular people as well.

Some of the Conference Speakers include:

JIM WALLIS, best-selling author of *God's Politics* •
RABBI MICHAEL LERNER, editor, *Tikkun Magazine* •
ARUN GANDHI, grandson of the Mahatma •
JOHN SHELBY SPONG, Episcopal bishop •
SYLVIA BOORSTEIN, Buddhist teacher •
DAVID KORTEN, author, *When Corporations Rule the World* •
WELTON GADDY, National Chair, the Interfaith Alliance •
CARL POPE, National Chair of the Sierra Club •
Congresspeople **JIM MORAN** and **LYNN WOOLSEY** •
VAN JONES, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights •
REBECCA SOLNIT • **HYIM** • **DAVID ROVICS** • **AHRAR AHMAD** • **JOAN BOYSENKO** • **MATTHEW FOX** •
THANDEKA • **CAROL FLINDERS** • **RIANE EISLER** •
REV. DEBRA HAFFNER • **MICHAEL NAGLER** • **ROBERT INCHAUSTI** • **SHAIKH KABIR HELMINSKI** •
JOHN COBB • and many more.

It is pure IDOLATRY to use God and religion to justify militarism, assaults on the judiciary, dismantling of environmental protections, undermining social security, demeaning of homosexuals, or attempts to privilege the needs of the rich over the poor. A Network of Spiritual Progressives will be the prophetic voice of all of us who know that the world we want requires peace, nonviolence, ecological sanity, and social justice, but also love, inner peace and spiritual balance. Build a social movement equally attentive to inner life and to economic/political transformation, overcome the Left's religio-phobia and tone-deafness to spiritual issues, and you have a viable path to tikkun (individual and social healing and transformation).

Can't come to the conference?
Join the Network!
Finally, spiritual/
religious and
progressive
consciousness
working together to
stop the Right.

**Join the Network of Spiritual Progressives and/or Register for either Conference
at www.tikkun.org. Or call 510 528 6250, or email joe@tikkun.org.**

The Spiritual Activism conference is co-sponsored by Peace and Conflict Studies at U.C. Berkeley, TIKKUN, Pacific School of Religion, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, New Dimensions World Broadcasting, St. John's Presbyterian Church, Pace E Bene, Beyt Tikkun Synagogue, University Religious Council, and many more.

The Network of Spiritual Progressives is a project of The TIKKUN COMMUNITY (read our Core Vision at www.tikkun.org).

TIKKUN
COMMUNITY

SPONSORS DO NOT NECESSARILY AGREE WITH THE GOALS OF THE NETWORK OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVES BUT SUPPORT THE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE APPROPRIATE FOCI FOR SPIRITUAL ACTIVISM.