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

TIKKUN

Current Debate: *The Good Old Days? Claude Fischer vs. Christopher Lasch*
Poetry: *Allen Ginsberg*
Film: *Phillip Lopate on Last Temptation*

A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY NOV./DEC. 1988 $5.00



Special Feature:

ENDING THE COLD WAR?

Joanne Landy
Todd Gitlin
James Chace
Sam Kassow

Beruriah
Rachel Adler

Addiction
Michael Bader

Fiction
A.B. Yehoshua

Revising Zionist History
Benny Morris

On Writing
Annie Dillard

Growing Up Reform
David Mamet

PLUS

Marian Neudel on Being Only Human in Politics; Jonathan Wilson on Philip Roth; Ruth Rosen on Feminist Politics; Donniel Hartman on Intimacy with God; Aaron Back & Gordon Fellman on the Israeli Left; Maurice Isserman on Michael Harrington; David Plotke on the Left's Prospects.

Storyteller: Bubbe in Alaska

In spruce roots, a wilderness of water fills small places
like forest steam sliding up beams of dawn light. For years
she has known this to be true: that paths more intricate
than any map wind beneath bark, form the balance
between keeping water in and allowing more to enter.
She likens this to her own life; the delicate webs
leading from Jew to Jew touch roots below humus,
glisten in cold years as seracs—and the knife
on Masada. Yet above ground, trees sway and turn,
catch wind like ravens soaring from upper boughs.
Story wolves watch the last light glaze the last trees;
caribou heading south cross the river for days, shift stone
after stone with their hooves. The children listen
and sound her words like chert in the river
while winter opens wilderness to the noise of mountains
nestled like lynx in the snow. Few creatures stay for darkness
coming smooth as light to this land, even fewer come
as strangers. Here, plants and animals live by wisdom
wild in their bodies. One by one the children notice
how wax melts under a single flame, casts a glow
small enough to be one voice singing thousands of years.
She knows the children will eventually use their own hands:
new moons thickening on their fingers, work broad as the tundra
spread before their palms. But for now in the root
of their lives, her stories define the cutting edge
where lichens hold still as stone in the winter
then glow like brachot through the spring break-up. Silence
becomes a misused term. All but the youngest understand
how darkness loves a tree's furrows—where sap is closer,
webs thicker. For this is the beginning of what we cannot see,
she says. Shadows will lose their form as swiftly
as the numbers on her arm blur into a band of ink.

—Beth Lynn Kaplan

TIKKUN

A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY — VOLUME 3 NUMBER 6

2 Letters
7 Publisher's Page
8 Editorials: Looking Beyond the Elections; Why the Pledge to the Flag?; The Beginning of the Holocaust: Fifty Years after Kristallnacht

Articles

13 Looking for Addictions in All the Wrong Places — *Michael J. Bader*
17 Being "Only Human" vs. Being a Mensch — *Marian Henriquez Neudel*
19 Israel: The New Historiography — *Benny Morris*
24 The Writing Life — *Annie Dillard*
28 The Virgin in the Brothel: The Legend of Beruriah — *Rachel Adler*
33 Peace Soon? — *Aaron Back and Gordon Fellman*
37 A Plain Brown Wrapper — *David Mamet*
39 Judaism: Creating a Faithless People? — *Donniel Hartman*
41 Philip Roth's Disease — *Jonathan Wilson*

Special Feature: The Cold War

45 Can Summits Replace the Peace Movement? — *Joanne Landy*
50 After the Thaw — *Todd Gitlin*
53 Liquidating the Cold War — *James Chace*
55 Can We Count on *Perestroika?* — *Samuel D. Kassow*
59 Joanne Landy Responds

Fiction

61 Five Seasons — *A. B. Yehoshua*

Poetry

66 I Went to the Movie of Life — *Allen Ginsberg*

Current Debate

69 The Good Old Days? — *Claude S. Fischer and Christopher Lasch*

Reviews

74 *The Last Temptation of Christ* — *Phillip Lopate*
78 *On Account of Sex* by Cynthia Harrison — *Ruth Rosen*
82 *The Long-Distance Runner* by Michael Harrington — *Maurice Isserman*
84 *The Radical Renewal* by Norman Birnbaum; *Making History* by Richard Flacks — *David Plotke*
88 *The Crucifixion of the Jews* by Franklin H. Littel — *Monroe A. Sher*
90 Recent Books on Arab Fundamentalism — *Robert Wistrich*
93 All They Are Saying — *Milton Mankoff*

Cover art: "A History Lesson" by Sanford Roth. Acrylic on canvas. Reproduced courtesy of Circle Gallery, San Francisco, © 1988 Sanford Roth.
The drawings in this issue are by Anthony Dubovsky.

TIKKUN

Editor:
Michael Lerner
Publisher:
Nan Fink
Associate Editor:
Peter Gabel
Assistant Editor:
Josh Henkin
Editorial Assistants:
Andrea Siegel, Amy Wachspress
Copy Chief:
Danielle Lanier-Shelley
Contributing Editors:
E. M. Broner, Todd Gitlin, Christopher Lasch, Ruth Messinger, Steve Wasserman, Milton Viorst, Eli Zaretsky
Book Editor:
Michael Kazin
Associate Book Editor:
Milton Mankoff
Fiction Editors:
Rosellen Brown, Marvin Hoffman
Poetry Editor:
Marge Piercy
Literary Editors:
Phillip Lopate, Francine Prose
Assistant to the Publisher:
Wolf Schweiger
Israel Office:
Aaron Back, Beth Sandweiss
Editorial Consultants:
David Gewanter, Josh Weiner
Interns:
Peter Ephross, Peter Gordon, Noga Wizansky

Editorial Board

Martha Ackelsberg, Rachel Adler, Rabbi Leslie Alexander, Gar Alperovitz, Michael Bader, Michael Berenbaum, David Biale, Rachel Biale, Norman Birnbaum, Heather Booth, Abraham Brumberg, Jay Cantor, David Cohen, Gerald Cromer, Dorothy Dinnerstein, Rabbi Elliot Dorff, Peter Edelman, Leslie Epstein, Sidra Ezrahi, Gordon Fellman, John Felstiner, Rabbi Gordon Freeman, Maurice Friedman, Rabbi Laura Geller, Herbert Gold, David Gordis, Rabbi Arthur Green, Colin Greer, Morton Halperin, Rabbi David Hartman, Richard Healey, Robert Heilbroner, Rabbi Burt Jacobson, Marc Kaminsky, Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, Rabbi Reuven Kimelman, Rabbi Daniel Landes, Hillel Levine, Daniel Matt, Rabbi Marshall Meyer, Jo Milgrom, Raquel Newman, Ilana Pardes, Martin Peretz, Yoram Peri, Robert Pinsky, Judith Plaskow, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Aviezer Ravitsky, Lillian Rubin, John Ruskay, Rabbi David Saperstein, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Howard Schwartz, Rabbi Chaim Seidler-Feller, Rabbi Gerald Serotta, T. Drorah Setel, Gershon Shaked, Stanley Sheinbaum, Carol Ruth Silver, Ira Silverman, Uri Simon, Daniel Thursz, David Twersky, Al Vorspan, Arthur Waskow, Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, Rabbi Arnold Wolf, Seth Wolitz, A. B. Yehoshua, Idith Zertal, Steve Zipperstein

Letters

Tikkun reserves the right to select, edit, and shorten all submissions to the Letters section.

South Africa

To the Editor:

Steven Mufson's article, "South African Jews," published in your Jan./Feb. 1988 edition, consists of blatant lies, half-truths, and quotes out of context. Your readers cannot come to any conclusion other than that South African Jews by and large are selfish materialists with many of them supporting a "racialist government." I must leave it to the discretion of the elected representatives of South African Jewry, i.e., the Jewish Board of Deputies, to submit their views on this article should they choose to do so. I shall confine myself to commenting on the portion of the article that attacks me personally and also on the late Louis Rabinowitz, former Chief Rabbi of Johannesburg, simply because he is dead and therefore in no position to comment. I shall start with the latter.

I had the privilege of knowing Louis Rabinowitz for many years and we were in constant touch during the period I was chairman of the Israeli Committee of the South African Foundation. When we decided in 1978 to hold the Bar Mitzvah of our eldest son at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, Louis, at that time deputy mayor of the Holy City, was one of the rabbis who officiated. I can state categorically that the late Chief Rabbi Rabinowitz was strongly pro-South African, a friend of this country who made a valuable contribution to the work of our committee.

I think I should record at the outset that when I was first informed about the article I could not actually remember ever having met Mufson. Thanks to the ability of my secretary, we were able to discover that he came to see me in October 1986! I find it rather strange that an interview of this nature was published fifteen months later. I find it even stranger that *Tikkun* (which is, I understand, a highly respected publication) published such an article without even attempting to verify personal allegations made. Again, I find it most strange that you quoted a Jew as saying "I am a little like Hitler" although the author of the article conceded that this Jew volunteered for service with the Royal Air Force during the war and served in the Israeli Defense Forces.

And now my specific comments on the allegations made by Mr. Mufson.

1. I reject the insinuation made as to why "Peer left the Promised Land" and the reason for moving to South Africa. In this context I refer to the sentence "lured also by a standard of living without parallel anywhere else in the world." My reasons for leaving Israel are of a very personal nature and certainly not of interest to the public. The fact is that prior to leaving Israel I had been, for six years, a member of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, the chief

Tikkun (ISSN 0887-9982) is published bimonthly by The Institute for Labor and Mental Health, a nonprofit corporation.
Editorial offices: 5100 Leona St., Oakland, CA 94619; (415) 482-0805.

Copyright © 1988 by The Institute for Labor and Mental Health. All rights reserved. Opinions expressed in *Tikkun* are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Editorial Board or those of the people listed on the masthead. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a SASE, or they will not be returned.

Subscriptions can be placed by calling 1-800-825-0061. $30 for 6 issues, $60 for 12 issues, $90 for 18 issues. Add $7 per year for all foreign subscriptions (including Canada and Latin America). Please pay for all orders in U.S. currency. Institutional subscriptions: $40 for 6 issues. Single copy or back issue $5. Vol. II, No. 1 not available. (Only two issues published in Vol. I and five in Vol. II.)
All subscription problems should be sent to our subscription service: *Tikkun*, P.O. Box 6406, Syracuse, NY 13217. Please allow 6–8 weeks for any subscription transactions, including receiving your first issue, solving subscription problems or changing your address. You may get a bill or a renewal notice after you've already paid or renewed. Please disregard. Bills and payments cross in the mail.
Articles appearing in *Tikkun* have been indexed in *Political Science Abstract*, *Index to Jewish Periodicals*, *Religion Index One: Periodicals* (*RIO*), and book reviews appearing in *Tikkun* have been indexed in *Index to Book Reviews in Religion* (*IBBR*). 16 mm and 35 mm microfilm, 105 microfiche and article copies are available through UMI, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

executive of Securities and Investments Ltd.—a subsidiary of Bank Leumi Le-Israel. We owned a villa in Herzlia Pituach, employed a servant, and enjoyed a high standard of living. When we came to South Africa inevitably this high standard of living could not be maintained in the first few years.

2. It would take too much space to comment on the attitude of the National party during World War II and doing so could easily be misinterpreted. The fact is that many Afrikaners did engage in antigovernment actions—but not for the love of Hitler, but because of hatred of the British. A similar situation prevailed at the time in Palestine when 22,000 Jews volunteered to serve with the British forces—not for the love of the British but because of the hatred of Hitler. As mentioned, I was one of the 22,000. Thousands of others, e.g., the Irgun and the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (Avraham Stern) took a different view, not because of love for Hitler but because of hatred of the British.

3. The text of the membership card of the National party of the Transvaal. Mufson's story is a typical example of lies and half-truths. I showed him this card for one reason only and that was to explain that the National party has been trying to involve white ethnic groups irrespective of their religion. I confirmed that the National party decided to withdraw this membership card *three years prior to the interview held with me.*

4. Here I refer to the most serious of the offensive allegations. I did say to Mufson that I am a very proud Jew, that I am a proud South African, and that I can be considered a racialist if that means that people are not equal and if it means that there are those who are superior to others. I certainly believe that Jewish history has proved that even under the most adverse circumstances we have excelled in many, many fields, out of all proportion to our small numbers. I stated that, "unlike little Hitler," i.e., not "I am a little like Hitler," who perceived his Aryan nation to be superior and therefore decided to destroy "inferiors," we as Jews have always used our talents, as well as our financial and intellectual powers, to uplift and upgrade the so-called inferiors. Furthermore, I stated that Jews have always been at the forefront of the struggle for social/political change but unfortunately their sacrifices were not recognized or rewarded. This, in my humble opinion, will also apply to American Jews who seem to be desperate to gain support of American blacks even at the expense of friendly nations like South Africa and its Jewish community. From my own point of view I am gratified that more and more South African Jews recognize the true situation and support a government engaged in a reform process rather than support terrorist organizations like the African National Congress, an organization closely affiliated with the PLO. Incidentally, my son, whose Bar Mitzvah was held in Jerusalem, is now doing his national service and has been commissioned as a full lieutenant and is performing his duties side by side with not only his Afrikaans colleagues, but also with other white and *black* South Africans.

Disinformation has become a very powerful and destructive weapon and in my opinion Mufson's article is a typical example. I do believe that *Tikkun* and your readers deserve more ethical journalism.

Shlomo Peer
Johannesburg, South Africa

To the Editor:

The progressive camp must recognize that it is possible to oppose South African apartheid without apologizing for the anti-Semitic utterances of some South African black activists. Steven Mufson ("South African Jews," Jan./Feb. 1988), unfortunately, seems to believe that critics of apartheid must defend everything said or done by the black opposition. "Archbishop Desmond Tutu has incurred the wrath of South African Jews," Mufson informs us. "Tutu's transgression was to wonder why Jews who had suffered so much discrimination and oppression didn't identify with South African blacks."

The fact is that Tutu's "transgression"—as Mufson sarcastically calls it—is far more complex than that. Tutu has a long and sorry record of making statements which can only be construed as hostile to Jews and Judaism. Speaking at the Jewish Theological Seminary in November 1984, Tutu accused Jews of displaying "an arrogance—the arrogance of power because Jews are a powerful lobby in this land and all

Common Decency

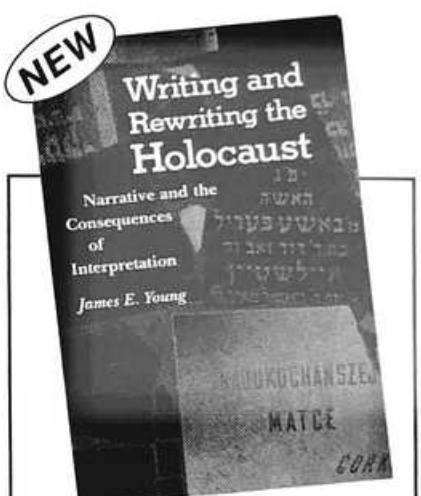
Domestic Policies After Reagan

Alvin L. Schorr
with a chapter by James P. Comer

Planner, educator, and activist Alvin Schorr presents an incisive critique of America's social policies under the Reagan administration and offers clear, reasonable, and workable proposals for improving policies in income distribution, housing, health, and education.

"After Reagan, in a political climate more receptive to sensible social policy, liberals will badly need clearly articulated goals and technically sound devices to achieve them. . . . Here is **a realistic social agenda."** —Robert Lekachman $9.95 **paperback**

Yale University Press
Dept. 896, 92A Yale Station,
New Haven, CT 06520 (203) 432-0940



At the heart of this work is the assumption that we cannot know the Holocaust—or any other historical epoch—outside of the ways it is passed down to us in its many texts. Rather than concentrating solely on the literary depiction of bloody horror, Young asks precisely how historical memory and understanding are created in Holocaust diaries, memoirs, fiction, poetry, drama, video testimony, and even in its memorials. **$27.50**

At bookstores, or order from
INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS
10th & Morton Sts., Bloomington, IN 47404
812-335-6804

kinds of people woo their support" (as reported in the *JTA Bulletin*, Nov. 29, 1984). Tutu has complained about what he calls "the Jewish monopoly of the Holocaust" (*Jerusalem Post*, July 26, 1985). In an interview with the *South African Zionist Record* (also on July 26, 1985), Tutu defended the Zionism-is-racism libel. In a speech in Hartford, Connecticut in 1984, Tutu compared the features of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem to the apartheid system, prompting the Jewish Community Relations Council of Hartford to denounce the speech as being "anti-Semitic in spirit."

Anti-Semitism must be recognized as such—whether its source is black or white, right-wing or left-wing, supporter of apartheid or critic.

Gershon Levhov
Jerusalem, Israel

To the Editor:

In his article attempting to portray South African Jews today as a politically monolithic community, Steven Mufson sets the scene by referring to two well-known Jewish supporters of the National party—Dr. Shlomo Peer and Mr. Issie Pinshaw. However, a different scene could have been set by making reference to a speech in April last year by Dr. Frans Auerbach, a member of the National Executive Council of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, when he addressed the annual Remembrance Day ceremony in memory of the six million Jews exterminated by the Nazis. He suggested to the almost three thousand people who were present that South African Jews should "commit ourselves to a specific community initiative to promote the academic study of prejudice and its reduction, as well as combating it in our private and public lives. In this way we can contribute to rekindling the spirit of hope amid all the hatred and injustice, cruelty and strife that surround us." A writer choosing such an introduction could have presented a verbal picture of a caring sensitive community.

Mufson could similarly have referred to another influential voice in the Jewish community, that of Mr. Harry Schwarz, Progressive Federal party member of Parliament. In a recent debate in Parliament on the subject of privatizing government assets he expressed the hope that these would be used in the development of black communities.

However, Mr. Mufson chose an introduction to imply that for the sake of expediency and material advantage the South African Jewish community is en masse embracing the policy of a party based on racial discrimination.

Referring exclusively to Dr. Auerbach and Mr. Schwarz would be to suggest that South African Jews as a whole care deeply about the plight of those subjected to racially discriminating practices and policies. That would be as much a biased interpretation as Mr. Mufson's. The fact is there are Jews who oppose the policies of the National party and there are those who support them. Proportionate numbers cannot be accurately determined. It is significant to point out in this regard that Progressive Federal party members of Parliament have invariably been elected in constituencies where there are large numbers of Jewish voters. Apropos of this Mr. Mufson himself refers to Helen Suzman, the veteran PFP parliamentarian, as saying that a disproportionate number of Jews still backed the Progressive Federal party. However, she added a commonsense opinion that she saw no reason to expect Jews to be different from other whites. But there are those like Dr. Auerbach who passionately wish Jews to reject political policies which are in any way connected with racial discrimination.

Aside from Mr. Mufson's derogatory attitude towards South African Jews as connoted by the tone of his article, he also cites examples of occurrences which are either sweeping generalizations or devoid of truth. For example his statement, "The Jewish Board of Deputies, governing body of South African Jewry ... telephoned Rabbi Franklin and ordered him to return to South Africa. The Board pressured him to quit ... his position as Rabbi to the Green and Sea Point Hebrew Congregation," falls into the latter category. Another is his assertion that, "the Jewish establishment takes a dim view" of Jews for Justice in Cape Town. By "establishment" Mufson presumably means the South African Jewish Board of Deputies. There is no evidence to support that contention. Jews for Justice in Cape Town, and its sister organization Jews for Social Justice in Johannesburg, are both affiliated with the South African Jewish Board of Deputies.

It was insensitive for Mr. Mufson to have written the kind of article he did, as he must know that the South African Jewish community is a tiny minority exercising no political influence whatever. He also took no cognizance of the complexity of South African society, which is at a difficult stage in its history, hovering between the momentum of ever-increasing black political pressure and a burgeoning white vehement right-wing backlash, threatening the dominance of the National party within the white political arena.

Gerald Leissner
Executive Director,
South African Jewish Board
of Deputies

Steven Mufson responds:

Shlomo Peer's letter only confirms what I find troubling about South African Jewry and Mr. Peer in particular. Mr. Peer claims to be "a very proud Jew," but it isn't clear to me what makes him so proud. He cites the ability of Jews to excel "in many, many fields, out of all proportion to our small numbers." But he seems indifferent to the notion of Jewish ethics in political life.

He makes the paternalistic assertion that Jews are trying "to uplift and upgrade the so-called inferiors." Perhaps blacks want to lift themselves up. If so, they are hindered by the party Mr. Peer supports, which has delivered inferior education to blacks and passed laws that limit free enterprise for blacks. For years, certain trades were barred to them and urban business districts were off limits to them. Even after extensive reforms, South African legislation still restricts black ownership of private property. It still restricts blacks' freedom of movement, labor, association, and speech. The same week Mr. Peer sent his letter, the South African government banned seventeen legal organizations opposed to the government and restricted the freedom of speech of more than a dozen people.

Blacks have reacted with frustration and often with violence. Mr. Peer's attitudes toward that violence are contradictory. The Stern gang members were "fighters for freedom," but the African National Congress is a "terrorist organization." In his eyes, the freedom of Jews in Israel somehow justifies actions that the freedom of blacks doesn't warrant.

Regarding the facts and quotes of our interview: On the one hand, Peer asserts that he didn't remember our meeting until he checked his diary, and, on the other hand, he says he remembers exactly what transpired. My notes of what he said are unambiguous.

•He indeed said that he moved to South Africa in 1962 after he married a Jewish South African woman and after the poor performance of the late Moshe Dayan's splinter party in the Israeli elections. But when asked why he and his wife didn't settle in Israel where they met, he said South Africa had "the quality of life I wanted."

•The National party's decision to drop the language on its membership card three years ago is duly noted in the article, though Mr. Peer joined the party's Transvaal executive before that.

•Have I confused Nazi sympathy with anti-British fervor? Undoubtedly hatred for the British helped motivate Afrikaners who refused to join the Allied Forces in World War II. But many Afrikaners, especially those who joined a group called the Ossewabrandwag (OB), felt great affinity for Hitler. Kowie Marais, an Ossewabrandwag member, said "we thought he might rejuvenate western civilization, might put some pep into it, against the communist-socialist trends that were creeping in from the east. We thought it was the dawn of a new era" (*The White Tribe of Africa*, David Harrison, MacMillan, Johannesburg, 1981). Piet Meyer, the first information officer of the OB, admired Hitler's National Socialism, which he observed as a student in Germany in the early 1930s (ibid.). Koot Vorster, whose younger brother later became prime minister of South Africa, said in a September 1940 speech that "Hitler gave the Germans a calling. He gave them a fanaticism which causes them to stand back for no one. We must follow his example because only by such holy fanaticism can the Afrikaner nation achieve its calling" (ibid.) The top aide to Prime Minister Jan Christiaan Smuts wrote in a March 1944 intelligence report that the leaders of the Ossewabrandwag "had been in close contact with the Nazis and had copied their methods wholesale" (Ibid.). While many Afrikaners disapproved of the Ossewabrandwag's extremism, the State President Pieter W. Botha was a member of the organization for about a year. His predecessor, Prime Minister John Vorster, was an unrepentant member who served out the war years in jail.

•My notes also are clear about Mr. Peer's own remark that "I am a little like Hitler." Indeed my incredulity at that remark prompted him to elaborate and discuss the disproportionate number of Nobel prizes won by Jews. "I believe in the superiority of one people over others," he added. The only qualification Mr. Peer offered was that the merit of the Nobel award "went down in my estimation when it was awarded to [Bishop Desmond] Tutu," whom he called "a demagogue of the first order."

Archbishop Desmond Tutu has been critical of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians and of its ties with the South African government, but accusations that he is anti-Semitic, such as the one written by Gershon Levhov, seem to rely on misquoted statements or statements taken out of context. At a meeting in Capetown, Tutu himself answered these charges before a crowd of more than six hundred Jews who went away satisfied with his replies. "Anyone who's actually met Tutu would be surprised if there's any hatred at all in the man," said a Jewish lawyer who had attended the meeting. Tutu also met with The Jewish Board of Deputies in Capetown, and afterwards the board issued a statement of support for the archbishop.

I welcome Mr. Leissner's letter. When I was writing this article I made more than two dozen unsuccessful attempts to obtain comment from his predecessor at the Jewish Board of Deputies. Mr. Leissner's version of the stance taken by the Board of Deputies toward Jews for Justice and Jews for Social Justice is at odds with the versions offered by members of those groups, however. And earlier this year Rabbi Franklin felt compelled to resign from his congregation and leave South Africa, at least in part because of pressure from his congregants.

Mr. Leissner points out (as does my article) that there are many Jews who have made important contributions to combating prejudice. But it remains my impression overall that South African Jewry is adrift, frightened, and turning inward on its own narrowly perceived interests, failing to live up to the high ethical standards Jews set for themselves.

Jewish American History

To the Editor:

In the course of reading my friend Melvyn Dubofsky's illuminating review essay devoted primarily to the career of fellow labor historian, Herbert Gutman (*Tikkun*, May/June 1988), my eye was drawn to Dubofsky's parenthetical references to the consequences for me of my anomalous decision nearly four decades ago to do a Jewish doctoral dissertation, to the "neglect" of my book, *The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870–1914*, and to the "conflictual relationship with [my] mentor," the distinguished historian Oscar Handlin.

Allow me to correct these misapprehensions, first, by pointing out that *The Promised City* is dedicated to Handlin, to whose rare gifts, unremitting support, and "quiet fostering of the intellectual and personal integrity and independence of his students" I have paid tribute. Second, in 1963, the "neglected" book was nominated for a Pulitzer prize by the Harvard University Press, which reprinted it in a third new paperback edition recently, and

A BASIC TRAINING IN JEWISH SPIRITUALITY
Four Working Weekends in Northern California with Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi

sponsored by The San Francisco Jewish Community Center



Fri - Sun • NOV 11-13, 1988 Use of Body
Fri - Mon* • JAN 13-16, 1989 Davvenology
Fri - Sun • MAR 24-26, 1989 The Mind
Fri - Sun • JUNE 2-4, 1989 Divinity in Ourselves

Reb Zalman recommends participation in all four weekends, although registration for individual weekends is possible.

Fee for 4-part series (includes room & board) $850
Fee for individual weekend $225
*Fee for 3 day weekend 1/13-1/16 $275

Contact: JASON GABER
SFJCC, 3200 California Street • SF • CA 94118
(415) 346-6040

the book received the first non-fiction award of the Jewish Book Council of America. (That year, I. B. Singer received the first fiction award, incidentally bringing me into touch with a then little-known Yiddish writer who gingerly responded to my queries about Abraham Cahan, the legendary editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward,* whose life I had just begun to research.) Third, as to my role as a historian—it may have had drawbacks but it has had far greater rewards. It is true that in the 1950s and into the early 1960s, interest in the ethnic and other dimensions of American life on the part of historians was minimal; the term ethnicity virtually unknown; and the incentives to examine and teach what the past might have to tell about the pluralistic, the ethnic, the comparative, the extra-American, the feminist, and the Jewish dimension of the American experience were limited indeed. It ought also to be remembered that the archival, institutional, and bibliographical tools and resources for the study of these aspects of the past were still meager.

In the transition years between the older and the newer American history—the history of the anonymous that was fueled by the social upheaval of the late 1960s with which Gutman was so intimately associated (I less so)—I was determined to fulfill my own compelling and intricate long-term agenda as a historian of ethnic and Jewish America. First as a member of the history department at UCLA between 1962 and 1964 and subsequently at San Francisco State, I found myself living out the immigration story in a new form, like so many millions of other migrants newly come to the Pacific in California's second golden age. After having saturated myself in the New York of the great Jewish migration and beyond, I suddenly found that I could both deepen and advance my teaching and scholarship by drawing on intellectual capital that not only had become academically viable but that had acquired an unprecedented public value and relevance, as ethnic and urban turmoil exploded into public and academic consciousness and as the expansive golden era in higher education opened up undreamed possibilities. The accompanying tumultuous social and political events in the Bay Area, however, proved pronouncedly prevenient of the battles that were to follow in all the great cities and university centers of the country. That proved more disconcerting for me than for Gutman, perhaps, and others. The resounding crash in higher education that soon followed and that was to derail the careers of thousands of promising new Ph.D.'s; the fragmentation of the curriculum that stripped history of its place and weight in school and university, even as it acquired a certain methodological brilliance, spurred me to hold fast, to keep family, work, and head intact and to bank on a reassertion of the need for balance between old and new.

For the record, a word is in order with regard to Gutman's curious perception, as relayed by Dubofsky, of Oscar Handlin as a "Jew in the gentile world" who neglected his "own people." Nothing could be further from the facts. In addition to Handlin's classic *Boston's Immigrants,* which directly influenced my own conception of *The Promised City,* and his celebrated *The Uprooted,* which Dubofsky cites, and many other works which he does not, Handlin published a popular book, two important monographs, and at least a half dozen articles, all in American Jewish history, veritably opening up the field between 1949 and 1955. Furthermore, in *The American People in the Twentieth Century* (1954), he for the first time portrayed a pluralistic and ethnic America in which Jews were becoming an integral part. As John Higham, Maldwyn Jones, and others have pointed out, in all his work, Handlin, unlike Gutman, has been acutely cognizant of the tension between individual and communal needs that course all through American history; this tension also appears through Abraham Cahan's great novel, *The Rise of David Levinsky,* to which Dubofsky alludes in his pointed critique of Gutman for his skewed view of the past and his romanticization of the working class. Dubofsky might also have made more of Gutman's neglect of the ethnic dimension, so intrinsic for an understanding of labor. For in his published work he remains virtually oblivious to the superb scholarship in ethnic and immigration history of the past quarter century, particularly of the overwhelmingly non-English-speaking members of the nation's industrial and labor force. Perhaps, if Gutman had been granted a longer life, he might have turned to that literature and incorporated the ethnic dimension into his work and given attention as well to the vital role of Jews in the world of labor. Hopefully, his successors will take up these many loose ends.

Moses Rischin
History Department
San Francisco State University
San Francisco, California

Melvyn Dubofsky responds:

As Moses Rischin says, my observations about him and Oscar Handlin were parenthetical to my larger purpose, a critical evaluation of the scholarship of Herbert Gutman. If, through carelessness or accident, I seemed to slight the contributions of Rischin and Handlin to history in the contemporary United States, I apologize. For me, Rischin's *Promised City* remains a classic in the field of immigration and ethnic history, and Handlin's *The Uprooted* regularly graces my reading lists for undergraduate courses. Moreover, as one who himself wrote a dissertation on a subject (New York workers in the early twentieth century) that comprises a large part of the story of the Jewish experience in America, I experienced firsthand two realities that Rischin stresses: 1) the absence only a generation ago of materials and tools with which to study the immigrant experience; and 2) the important contribution Oscar Handlin has made to the history of Jewish people in the United States. The only point that I wished to make in my parenthetical comment was how much the character of history in the United States has changed over the last generation. Had Rischin published a book in the last ten years as good as his first one, he undoubtedly would have been showered with honors and glowing reviews by the guild of American historians rather than just the Jewish Book Council. And as far as Oscar Handlin is concerned, I simply felt it germane to observe that among members of the historical guild he is known far better for his scholarship on non-Jewish subjects than for his many publications on American Jewish history. Moreover, although Rischin, Gutman, and I all entered a profession that was overwhelmingly "gentile," we three were young enough to "rise" at a time

(Continued on p. 94)

Publisher's Page

Nan Fink

I'm envious of writers who have the satisfaction of seeing what they write in print within a short time. We at *Tikkun* have to live with a gap of almost a month before people read what we write. It takes two weeks for the magazine to be printed and an additional week or two for our readers to receive the magazine in the mail.

The time lag is especially frustrating for us when events are moving fast. For example, in early October final copy for this November/December 1988 issue goes to the printer. Subscribers won't see the issue until early November, and it stays on the newsstands through December. However, in the meanwhile, the elections in the U.S. and in Israel take place, and the PLO conference is held.

Since we are not blessed with crystal ball capabilities, we cannot comment in October on what is yet to come. Yet it seems strange to ignore such important events. Our compromise is to discuss some of the underlying issues that emerged during the election campaigns (see editorial on p. 8, "Looking beyond the Elections"), knowing that these issues are relevant no matter who wins the American and Israeli elections.

Our life at *Tikkun* has increasingly organized itself into two-month chunks. During the month before the magazine is printed, we work hard at the nuts and bolts of producing the issue. The final days are extremely hectic, leaving us more drained than we expect.

The second month is very different. Part of our energy goes into reading the approximately five hundred manuscripts that we receive here during the two-month cycle. Much of what we read is interesting and well-written, and we wish we had the space to publish more of it. With such a volume of manuscripts it sometimes takes months before a final decision is reached and authors are informed.

We also use some of this time to focus on magazine-related concerns. For example, in the month before we produced our May/June 1988 issue, which focused on "Israel at Forty," we organized a mailing of several hundred thousand copies of a statement about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, and we spoke to many groups about the situation.

Other times our second month activities are less obviously tied to the content of the special focus of the upcoming issue. With this current issue, we weren't working on projects related to the cold war. Yet it was much on our minds, especially as we watched the shifts in the Soviet power structure occur.

We've been concerned for a long time about the trillions of dollars of the world's resources that have been wasted on the seemingly endless arms buildup. It is exciting to see, finally, a thaw in the tensions between the two superpowers.

We think that the peace and antinuclear movements have played an important role in creating the current climate of openness. This has not been acknowledged to any extent by either the politicians or by the media. They promote the idea that the changes are occuring because there has been a shift in the "objective situation." This results in a mystification of the peace process, so that people do not catch on that they can actually influence the course of events by their collective action.

This lack of acknowledgment of the power of people working together to influence the status quo can also be seen in areas other than the cold war. For example, much of the media portrayal of the 1960s activists during the twentieth anniversary of 1968 has been insipid. The activists are seen as sweet but fundamentally naive and misguided idealists. Those of us who were activists then (or who have since been involved in struggling for change) know that our efforts made an enormous difference and that the struggle was extremely empowering.

During this month we were busy organizing the *Tikkun* conference, which will take place in New York City in December. Whatever the election results in the U.S. and in Israel, it's good to know that some of us will be getting together to analyze the current situation, develop strategies, and in the process get to know each other. I hope I'll get to meet you there.

Paul Cowan's death this fall was a loss for all of us. Paul was a major inspiration to people in the Jewish renewal movement. We will miss his curiosity and his keen mind. □

Editorials

Michael Lerner

Looking Beyond the Elections

Don't worry, we haven't lost our sense of perspective. We may identify with the Jewish prophetic tradition, but we don't pretend to be able to predict election outcomes. Nevertheless, even though this editorial is being written before the elections in both Israel and the U.S., we think there are some issues that must be discussed, regardless of who wins.

It's hard not to be struck by the similar problems faced by the liberal forces in both Israel and the U.S. In both countries the liberals and progressives seem committed to repeating the same mistakes over and over again. Sometimes these mistakes cost them electoral victory. But even when they win, the way that they present themselves in their campaigns limits what they can accomplish once they take office. Let's see how this has been played out in 1988.

Fearing that the two countries' respective electorates had moved to the right, both Dukakis and Peres avoided articulating a clear alternative vision that would have challenged right-wing assumptions. Peres had five years to educate the Israeli public about the need for an accommodation with the Palestinians; instead, he spent much of that time denouncing the PLO, supporting Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin's military repression of the Palestinians, and trying to convince the Israeli population to support a "Jordanian option" that even his allies doubted could work. In the U.S., instead of raising the possibility of ending the cold war and redirecting our massive military spending to domestic problems, Dukakis accepted the basic cold war assumptions, and then tried to argue that he would be just as "strong" on defense as the conservatives. And instead of articulating a view of the "common good" that would offer an alternative moral framework to the self-interest politics of the Reagan years, Dukakis restricted himself during most of the campaign to talking about a few concrete economic programs that would benefit the economically disadvantaged.

Supposedly Peres and Dukakis were simply being realistic by playing to their constituencies' preexisting conservatism. In fact, the political realities of both countries were much more fluid, open, and searching. Polls in the U.S. reported by Daniel Yankelovich and Richard Smoke in the Fall 1988 issue of *Foreign Affairs* showed that the American public was remarkably willing to consider ways to de-escalate the cold war. Similarly, although Israeli polls showed a growth of support for Likud in the summer of 1988, they also indicated that a significant percentage of Likud voters would be willing to consider negotiations with the PLO if that could lead to peace. What Peres and Dukakis failed to understand is that by accepting right-wing assumptions and then trying to show that by those standards they were "responsible" and "tough," they were simply giving further credibility to a worldview that undermined their own appeal to the voters.

Liberal and progressive candidates can avoid this trap only by explicitly rejecting right-wing assumptions and providing an alternative way to look at the world. Granted, in the aftermath of the Watergate scandals a nonideological Jimmy Carter was able to win the presidency in 1976. But because Carter failed to articulate a coherent worldview, he was a sitting duck for conservative columnists and politicians. Scared to defend an ideological politics, watching the polls for advice on what ideas would sell, and trying to show that he was just as "tough" as his right-wing critics, Carter began to endorse some of the same conservative ideas that would eventually contribute to a swing to the right.

Unless, if elected as president, Dukakis is willing to challenge conservative assumptions about the cold war, the domestic economy, and the underlying philosophy of liberalism, he may unwittingly repeat the disastrous Carter years. Like Carter, he could win approval for particular social programs, but without an alternative intellectual framework, he may end up justifying his programs in right-wing terms—terms that will ultimately be used to discredit his administration and undo his advances. Of course, the differences between the two candidates are significant enough that people would be foolish not to vote. Still, unless Dukakis abandons his "competence, not ideology" stance, all the good that he does may eventually come to naught, and he might actually pave the way for another Reagan-style conservative—as Peres paved the way for Shamir.

What is necessary is a spirited defense of liberalism. *Tikkun* has frequently criticized some of the problems inherent in the liberal tradition, yet we believe that it is important, if we are ever to move beyond liberalism toward a society based on a more communitarian and compassionate set of values, that liberals defend themselves when they are attacked from the right. Indeed, individual rights deserve deep respect. And although we argue that our conception of rights needs to be expanded so that we are not subject to the economic and political coercion built into the institutions of a competitive market society, we nevertheless feel ourselves part of the liberal tradition of individual rights. In fact, it is because of our deep commitment to this liberal tradition of rights that we find ourselves criticizing Israel's policies on the West Bank.

If, as the polls reveal, the term "liberal" resonates negatively in America today, it is not because of its association with rights. Rather, there are some other reasons—good ones—for the term's notoriety.

The word "liberal" has become synonymous with being wishy-washy and willing to compromise one's principles—a holdover in popular usage from the 1960s when Democrats in Congress voted huge appropriations for the war in Vietnam while simultaneously questioning its morality and wisdom. In the first presidential debate in late September, Dukakis appeared to be "liberal" in this sense of the term when he backed away from defending the ACLU or the values that it upholds.

Then, there are the policy problems that liberals must face. This society's fundamental economic problems (and accompanying social ills) will not be solved until we have full employment, as well as full participation of working people in shaping both their work environment and the fundamental dimensions of the economy. Liberals have never been willing to bite this bullet and instead have tried to ameliorate the worst consequences of our current economic system by providing benefits for those who are suffering. The resulting spending programs hurt middle-income people—many of whom grow resentful as the price tag for programs that aren't really working has steadily increased. Many of these

Why the *Tikkun* Conference ?

Among the delegates at the Democratic convention this past summer the illusion persisted that most American Jews are conservative. Members of the media who say they agree with *Tikkun*'s progressive positions on most issues continue to turn to the establishment Jewish organizations for quotes on "Jewish issues"—thereby reinforcing this popular misconception about where American Jews stand.

The *Tikkun* conference is an attempt to alter this popular misconception. The ads and direct mail campaign for the conference will help bring the message to millions of people who do not yet read *Tikkun* and who do not understand how out of touch the "official Jewish leadership" is with the views of most American Jews. The conference fees are partly being used to pay for these ads.

The conference is not a mass rally—we are hoping to attract a few hundred thoughtful intellectuals, artists, teachers, social change activists, students, and idealists. Our conference will probably be the first gathering of liberal and progressive thinkers after the dust has settled from the elections in Israel and the U.S.—so there will surely be a great deal of intense and exciting debate as we analyze the current political and social realities and discuss strategies for the coming years.

Yet the conference is significant for another reason: It will mark the first time in several decades that liberal and progressive Jewish intellectuals are assembling *as Jews,* claiming their right to the Jewish tradition, and refusing to allow right-wingers and small-minded organizational bureaucrats to be the public voices of the Jewish people. As such, the conference aims to celebrate and call public attention to the emergence of a movement for Jewish renewal and the reconstitution of the liberal and progressive voices of American Jewish intellectuals.

The *Tikkun* conference will not be dominated by long, academic papers. We will deal not only with issues like political strategies for the nineties, rethinking Zionism, blacks and Jews, the cold war, and the rise and fall of the neoconservatives, but also with more complex theoretical issues like modernism and postmodernism, the nature of cultural creativity, the relationship between theology and social change, and internalized oppression and anti-Semitism on the left. Speakers will appear on panels structured to promote vigorous debate that is accessible to all.

Tikkun is proud to sponsor this historic event. We have asked the speakers to make themselves available throughout the conference for discussion, and we also hope to meet and learn from our readers who attend the conference. In truth, the informal opportunities to meet people with similar interests are what should make the conference worthwhile. Drawing from our diverse readership, we plan to bring together people who will find one another quite exciting.

Note: if you can't afford the conference registration fee but really want to come, write and tell us the circumstances and what you *can* afford. There are some partial scholarships available.

people might be convinced to make sacrifices for programs that actually end poverty, homelessness, and hunger. But if all that is offered is a series of benefits for the oppressed, while the fundamental problems persist or get worse, then why continue to throw money into a seemingly bottomless pit?

Dukakis needed to explain the limitations of the liberal approach of the past and articulate an ideologically coherent alternative to conservative explanations for liberal policy failures. If, by the time you read this, he has been elected even without projecting such a coherent defense of liberalism, he will still need to do so, or he will face serious limitations in what he can accomplish as president. If he surrounds himself with advisers and cabinet members who wish to avoid dealing with these thorny ideological issues and instead hide behind a facade of technocratic neutrality and competence, he will find it very hard to escape the traps that he has built into his own presidency. Of course, when you read this you may be wishing that you were facing these kinds of problems instead of a Bush presidency; but, if so, understand that it was Dukakis's failure to deal with these issues that made a Bush presidency possible.

The left in both countries continues to ignore the basic emotional, ethical, and spiritual issues fundamental to politics.

Furthermore, in both Israel and the U.S. the problems faced by the liberal and progressive forces go far beyond the way liberal opportunism can backfire. The deeper problem is this: The left in both countries continues to ignore the basic emotional, ethical, and spiritual issues fundamental to politics. Stuck in the politics of the New Deal, Democrats continue to believe that the deepest need of the American public is for a new highway or some other social benefit. Of course it's true that Americans want more and cheaper housing, more extensive health care coverage, a cleaner environment, higher wages, and an end to homelessness and poverty. Yet what remains striking is the way people will vote against their own economic interests in order to identify with a politics that can provide meaning, purpose, and ethical focus in their lives.

Several months ago *Tikkun* urged Dukakis to talk about a vision of the common good that would move Americans away from the politics of narrow self-interest that dominated in Reagan's America. If, by now, Dukakis has won the election, a primary reason for his victory is that the American people so much wanted a new moral direction that they allowed themselves to hope that underlying Dukakis's clearly visible human decency was an alternative moral vision that he could bring to the office—even though he was unable to articulate it in the campaign. And if he has *not* won, it's because he didn't articulate that kind of alternative clearly enough and soon enough.

A similar dynamic plagues Israel's Labor party—a sense that it stands for the narrow, selfish, and narcissistic culture of Tel Aviv coffeehouses and (despite the party's socialist origins) the every-person-for-him-or-herself ethics of the capitalist marketplace. One reason for the popularity of Gush Emunim and the Israeli right is that they have an ethic of self-sacrifice and are willing to take risks on behalf of their higher ideals. This commitment appeals to Israelis, who thirst for meaning and purpose. The same thirst for meaning is the reason that many Sephardic Jews cling to traditional religious forms and feel alienated from an Israeli left that can barely hide its contempt for traditional Judaism.

It's always easiest for the liberals, the left, and various detached intellectuals to blame their defeats on the stupidity, ignorance, or immorality of the people ("They are just in a conservative mood" or "They just hate Arabs") while crediting victories to their own political brilliance. *Au contraire:* The objective conditions in both the U.S. and Israel created remarkable opportunities for the liberal and progressive forces in both countries to challenge the way conservatives present themselves. If they failed to aggressively pursue these opportunities, is it fair to blame their electoral difficulties on "the people"?

If liberal and progressive forces lose in both countries, it will be depressing enough; but it would be a tragedy if, instead of using this opportunity for the fundamental rethinking that we are calling for, liberals and progressives blame the voters or blame the times. On the other hand, if they win, although the temptation will be great to applaud the "pragmatism" that allowed for this victory, it's time to recognize that in the future we could face much greater danger if this commitment to a nonideological politics prevents the development of a coherent alternative worldview that the Dukakis administration could use to challenge the right.

Why the Pledge to the Flag?

It's a long way from George Bush's rantings about the importance of the Pledge of Allegiance to Israeli philosopher Yishayahu Leibowitz's remark that a flag should be looked at as nothing more than "a *shmatteh* [dirty rag] on a pole." It's reasonable to ask why more Americans share Bush's view than Liebowitz's—why they cling so tenaciously to a patriotism that seems devoid of content.

There are, of course, good reasons to be proud of the United States of America. Whatever the ambiguous motives that led the framers of this republic to adopt our Bill of Rights and Constitution, the fact remains that the United States articulates a concern for individual rights that is an example for the rest of the world. Granted, we frequently distort and violate these ideals, and it is no secret that we live in a class society where a small percentage of the population has disproportionate wealth, which it uses to limit the degree to which the rest of the population can organize itself and shape public policy. Nevertheless, the institutionalization of democracy makes it possible, in certain instances, for people to join together to overcome these barriers, pooling their energies and resources and having an important impact on policy.

Unfortunately, those most moved by patriotic appeals do not seem to be patriotic because of the United States' commitment to individual rights. Many of them seem untroubled by U.S. support for regimes that are gross violators of human rights, and these people are usually not at the forefront of battles to preserve or extend these rights in the United States itself. Indeed, the fact that conservatives called Dukakis "unpatriotic" for identifying with the ACLU—the leading champion of individual rights and freedoms—is a striking testimony to the disjunction between right-wing patriotism and the real values that make America great.

It's tempting, therefore, to write off this whole group—not just the hard-core right-wingers but the many Americans who respond to the appeal of patriotism—as people who are merely attracted by the power of the U.S. military or who need to subordinate themselves to some constituted authority. Yet, in dismissing them, liberals and progressives ignore the legitimate needs that underlie the seeming stupidity of worshipping a rag on a stick.

The fundamental political reality ignored by the left is this: Human beings need to live lives that are based on mutual connection, solidarity, intellectual and aesthetic creativity, and ethical purpose; and the frustration of these needs is at the root of the various perversions that plague contemporary America. So, for example, rampant alcohol and drug abuse become prominent among a population desperately seeking to escape from a daily reality that it finds intolerable. Instead of facing the deep spiritual crisis to which this phenomenon attests and thereby being forced to ask what kinds of changes in society must be made, many Americans deceive themselves into thinking that drug abuse can be stopped by greater use of force—with threats of jail or even the death penalty. The more "enlightened" thinkers talk about education and treatment—as though they thought that more information about the possible dangers of drug or alcohol abuse would be sufficient to convince those who use them to stop. It's too threatening for any of these thinkers to face the crisis in meaning and purpose that plagues Americans and that makes many of them willing to pay any price, take any risk, in pursuit of an altered consciousness.

Two caveats. First, just as there are some good reasons to be patriotic, though they aren't the reasons most people *are,* so too not all drug use or alcohol consumption is indicative of deep spiritual deficiencies. Altered states of consciousness can have a place in the lives of reasonable and healthy people. But the fact that alcohol and drugs are so frequently abused is a reflection of the deep yearnings and hungers in the people that use these substances. Our fundamental point is that you can't combat drug and alcohol abuse without understanding the meaning these behaviors have to the people involved—and in this society those meanings are frequently connected to deadening the pains of daily life.

Some of the forms of behavior that people adopt in order to deaden their pain may be valuable in and of themselves, but they get distorted when the participants' underlying motivation is escape. So, for example, many people use competitive sports, fitness campaigns, dieting, religion, politics (including left-wing politics), frenetic social lives, or participation in clubs and community groups—all activities that may have intrinsic merit—in escapist ways because they wish to bury the frustrations and anxieties they experience all day long.

Caveats aside, one important way that people deal with this spiritual vacuum is by identifying with right-wing patriotism. The imagery of the flag, the vision of "one nation under God," provides an imaginary alternative to the loneliness and meaninglessness of daily life in alienated societies (whether they are capitalist, as in our case, or pretend to have achieved socialism, as in the case of the Soviet Union). Temporarily reassured by their participation in this larger community—the nation—that "everything is OK," people are allowed to fantasize that they have the experience of connectedness to others that they are systematically denied in the rest of their lives.

To sustain this fantasy, people create an illusory America—symbolized by the flag—that is good and all pure, untainted by the ambiguity and selfishness that pervade our daily lives. All problems are displaced on some "other," some corrupting influence from the outside. Belief in the evil of the Russians may eventually be replaced by belief in the evil of the Japanese, the Koreans, or other foreign competitors—but the need to rally against *some* evil "other" will persist as long as we refuse to address Americans' unfulfilled emotional, ethical, and spiritual needs.

Many Americans are probably dimly aware that their passionate attraction to patriotism, Fundamentalist

religions, and other systems that divide the world between a "good us" and a "bad them" may be connected in some way to their daily unhappiness. Yet they are unlikely to explore this connection for one powerful reason: their deep and persisting belief that they live in a society in which rewards are distributed according to merit. Therefore, they are convinced that they deserve their painful personal lives—that they made their own beds and now they have to sleep in them. Indeed, it is not only the lack of meaning and ethical purpose, but also the burden of self-blaming that leads many people to drugs, alcohol, and other substitute gratifications.

If we understand the passion for flag-waving and pledging allegiance as motivated, at least in part, by a widely shared pathology based on the systematic denial of legitimate needs, we will begin to respond to this passion more appropriately. Instead of ridiculing or dismissing flag-wavers as demented or perverted, we will see them as manifesting pain that calls for healing. Instead of responding with panic and insisting on our own right not to be bamboozled by them (a civil libertarian response that has always been valid on its own terms but also woefully inadequate for changing the society), we should find ways to speak to the legitimacy of their underlying needs and begin a nationwide dialogue on what kinds of social changes are necessary for America to meet those needs.

The Beginning of the Holocaust: Fifty Years after Kristallnacht

On November 9 and November 10, 1988, we will commemorate Kristallnacht—"the Night of the Broken Glass" in Nazi Germany when 177 synagogues were destroyed, 91 Jews murdered, and 30,000 Jews arrested. *Tikkun's* March 1989 issue will focus on some of the most controversial aspects of how to think about the Holocaust today; here we want merely to address one issue.

Many liberals and progressives do not include Jews among their list of "oppressed peoples," even though somewhere in their consciousness they know that in the last fifty years one out of every three Jews alive in 1938 was murdered. The reason is that, in accord with a vulgar Marxism that still seems to influence some people on the left, oppression must be economic to be real. And since Jews are doing well economically (leaving aside, as these people often do, the very large number of middle income or poor Jews who by no means are "doing so well"), Jews, they argue, can't really be included in a list with blacks, Chicanos, and other oppressed minorities.

This way of thinking completely misunderstands the reality of modern anti-Semitism. Jews were *also* "doing well" in Germany. Many had achieved economic success and political influence. Yet beneath the surface, fantasies about the existence of an all-pervasive "Jewish power" persisted. Some of these fantasies are now being heard among the Russian right-wing nationalists in the Soviet Union and among some black nationalist groups in the United States. That these fantasies could become central to a mass movement seemed incredible to German leftists in the 1920s—in part because the left never took anti-Semitism seriously enough to purge its own racist feelings toward Jews. Jews themselves were central to this process—always playing down the importance of Jewish oppression in the hopes that in so doing they could prove their own legitimacy as internationalists who had overcome the narrow chauvinism they identified with Jewish particularism.

By the time Kristallnacht shattered German Jewry's fantasy that "it couldn't happen here," it was too late to stop the social movement that had come to power on the basis of its anti-Semitism. But it is not too late today for anyone who claims to stand for human liberation to understand the special kind of oppression facing Jews and to combat all forms of anti-Semitism, particularly those variants that continue to flourish on the left. *Tikkun* has been in the forefront of the forces criticizing the policies of the State of Israel. We totally reject the approach of those who misuse the memory of the Holocaust to justify every oppressive or militaristic policy that the Israeli right wing devises. At the same time, however, we insist that the liberal and progressive forces need to think more deeply about anti-Semitism, learn about the subtle dynamics of this particular kind of racism, and make no compromises with those who are insensitive to the long and continuing history of Jewish oppression. □

Looking for Addictions in All the Wrong Places

Michael J. Bader

Popular psychology is becoming increasingly addicted to addictions. Robin Norwood's *Women Who Love Too Much* (WWL2M), which has sold over three million copies and spawned numerous imitators (e.g., *Men Who Hate Women and the Women Who Love Them* and *How to Stop Looking For Someone Perfect and Find Someone to Love*), is an important example of this trend. Women who choose unhealthy partners and then can't seem to leave them are "relationship addicts," according to Norwood, and should be understood and treated according to the same theories used to understand and treat any other addict. Similarly, the increasing public focus on the so-called Adult Child of Alcoholics (ACA) is another attempt to relocate certain psychological problems within the addiction model. In this case, the difficulties of the ACA are said to result from an adaptation to the addictions of a family member. According to Janet Woititz, author of *Adult Children of Alcoholics,* growing up with an alcoholic creates a unique constellation of personality traits and problems that must be treated in a special way—through a program similar to one recommended for an alcoholic.

The model of behavior and treatment that both of these books articulate has clearly struck a chord among large numbers of American laypeople and among many professionals. The National Association of Children of Alcoholics has grown over the last five years from a formal membership of twenty-one to seven thousand. Since the early 1980s, the number of groups of Al-Anon-affiliated children of alcoholics meeting regularly has increased from fourteen to eleven hundred. From Donahue to Oprah, *Newsweek* to the *New York Times*, the media have picked up on the ideas of "codependency" and "relationship addiction" and have helped to make them household terms. Suzanne Somers wrote a best-seller about her experiences as an ACA, and Glenn Close became a nightmarish icon of the eighties as a woman "addicted" to Michael Douglas in 1987's top-grossing film, *Fatal Attraction.*

Michael J. Bader is the director of the graduate psychology program at New College of California and a psychotherapist in private practice. He is also a member of Tikkun's *editorial board.*

I do not intend to question the claim that the therapeutic approaches advocated by this model—particularly the self-help "recovery" groups—have helped many people. Nevertheless, I wish to examine the psychological and social sources of the popularity of this approach, as well as its limitations. In truth, the addiction model, when applied to psychological and interpersonal problems and traits, contains unexamined assumptions and meanings that block attempts to understand these problems from both social *and* psychological perspectives. At the same time that the model strikes a chord in people, it renders attempts at deeper self-knowledge or critical analysis impossible.

The family system that generates the pathological behavior, the relationship addiction, and the masochism of the WWL2M or the ACA is depicted by this literature in a surprisingly uniform fashion. Its salient features may be summarized as follows:

1. Dysfunctional families are those in which the parents don't provide the child with love, nurturance, and respect. These parents are not healthy enough to be good role models for the child, nor can they fulfill their roles as caregivers or as happy marital partners. They are psychologically disabled, usually by addictions of some kind or by other forms of mental illness, and they make unpredictable and narcissistic use of the child, who consequently feels neglected or abused. The parents deny various aspects of reality: Most important, they deny their own addiction, and they invalidate the child's accurate perceptions about that addiction.

2. The child becomes the caregiver in the family, either because s/he is identified as such by the parents or because the parents are just too disabled to be able to care for themselves or others. The child mothers the mother and/or the father and comes to accept guilt and responsibility for the family's problems.

3. The child mistakes being needed for being loved. Moreover, since s/he can never quite solve the family's problems, her or his underlying feelings of being unloved and worthless only intensify. The child then redoubles the efforts to secure love by giving "until it hurts," which escalates the entire process.

4. The child's attempts to "cure" the parents through self-sacrifice, though never successful, are continually elicited by the parents' inappropriate dependence on

the child and by the child's underlying need for affirmation. The child gets "hooked" into a no-win situation.

5. These patterns continue into adulthood. People repeat what they experienced as children because it is "familiar," or because, now that they are adults, they want to make it come out right. In other words, repetition is often an attempt at mastery.

6. Specifically, this repetition means that people raised in this kind of family system choose partners and relationships in which their own needs are subordinated to the needs of others, in which they again play the role of the overly responsible caretaker or parent.

7. In repeating their childhood dramas, people once again mistake being needed for being loved and desperately try to change their defective partners into the men or women of their childhood dreams. These attempts, of course, are of no avail and only deepen these people's depression and self-hatred. Their adult relationships, therefore, are exactly like addictions—they use them to escape from depression, but these relationships simply aggravate the original symptoms.

8. These adults are inordinately hard on themselves, self-punitive, and often driven, because they believe that their misery and self-sacrifice will be rewarded with love and approval and will make up for the faults and deficiencies of their loved ones.

9. Many of these adults become alcoholics or substance abusers because of a combination of heredity, imitation, and/or an intense need for relief from anxiety and depression. They then begin this process anew when they start their own families.

These are the portraits of family life and the resulting psychological conflicts that fill the pages of this literature. Readers repeatedly identify with various parts of these characterizations and consequently adopt the underlying explanatory addiction/disease model as well.

Their conclusion is not warranted, however. The process by which a child responds to a depressed or addicted parent—by becoming a caretaker, for instance—is complex and multidimensional. One outcome might be the kind of masochism that Norwood and Woititz focus on, but other adaptations are equally frequent. The child might defensively retreat from any kind of dependency at all, thereby making future relationships difficult. For example, a woman might develop a disdain for men that masks her underlying disappointment and choose men who justify her low opinion of the opposite sex. She might become depressed like her parent(s) and withdraw from the romantic arena altogether. If the family environment is disturbed enough, she might even become psychotic.

Furthermore, since the dysfunctional family is described in these books in such general terms, it is likely that even people with relatively healthy, nonaddictive relationships could relate to some of this picture. Who hasn't felt constrained by loyalty to or guilt about one's family? And yet many of us *don't* have romantic lives dominated by pathological addictions. How are we to account for this fact?

Placing responsibility on the social order can at certain moments be as pathological as falsely blaming oneself for what is really a social problem.

The point is that a number of different interpretations of, and "solutions" to, the problems presented by this dysfunctional family portrait are completely ignored. The literature's narrow approach leads the reader to conclude falsely that s/he has an "addiction," which therefore should be treated as recommended. Rather than engaging in further analysis, the reader has a kind of "aha!" experience that involves locating him- or herself within this formal addiction framework. Yet shouldn't one attempt to understand and treat a psychotic Glenn Close differently from a neurotic, guilt-ridden woman who masochistically hangs on to men who are using her?

The treatment process referred to in this literature is often called "recovery" in order to keep it within the addiction framework. The goal is "abstinence," and the backbone of any treatment program is some kind of support group, the purpose of which is to allow the addict to share common problems, decrease isolation, increase insight about different aspects of the disease, and begin to stop the compulsive behavior "one day at a time." The addict attempts to correct each compulsive trait, using the group or a therapist as support, until the new, healthier behavior or thought patterns take hold and become firmly implanted. So, for instance, Norwood's relationship addicts are advised to put their own well-being, desires, and needs *first* and not last in a relationship; to recognize their intrinsic self-worth; and to "learn" to tolerate other people's anger and disapproval. Woititz suggests that her ACA readers correct their inability to have fun by changing their behavior, by planning "fun" time in their daily schedule, and by getting in touch with the child in themselves.

Furthermore, both authors emphasize the importance of group support for these changes and minimize the role of individual insight. The group provides a com-

pletely accepting atmosphere in which to share experiences with others who (one assumes) have lived in similar family systems and have similar problems. The assumption is that insofar as individual or depth psychotherapy may be helpful, the therapist must be specially trained in working with addicts and their codependents and must work in conjunction with some kind of group program. In any case, the parallel to physical addictions is explicit: The goal is to stop addictive behavior, and the method is to break through the denial, identify the problem, and abstain from the behavior.

I have found from my experience as a psychotherapist that the idea that children in dysfunctional families parented their parents and *continue* to do so as adults with their defective partners—at the cost of their own gratification—is what resonates most clearly with the average reader. The experience of being self-destructively attached to an unsatisfying partner is apparently a common problem in our culture, and this literature purports to explain and provide a way to correct it. The permission or even injunction to "take care of yourself first" can feel liberating to someone crippled by guilt and by the need to deny one's needs in order to protect or take care of others. To be supported in one's self-assertion by a group can be even more freeing. And the disease model itself is liberating, since it is based on the premise that the ACA or relationship addict is not at fault. The reader or client is a victim of a dysfunctional family over which s/he has no control. After all, the parents have a disease, so the children naturally and automatically pick "it" up.

Many people report that their lives improve greatly as a result of being part of these groups. Unfortunately, however, the fact that a treatment can relieve suffering is no guarantee that the analysis of the disorder is correct or that the method of treatment is even the "best" approach to that suffering. Astrology might relieve Nancy Reagan's anxiety about her husband's safety, but that doesn't imply that world events are influenced by the heavens or that a better solution might not lie in the real world of politics.

Since the addiction model places the blame on the "dysfunctional family"—an abstraction, really, without actual human culprits—or on parents crippled by a disease over which they have no control, it is unable to make sense of the deeper social or psychological causes of familial dysfunction. Moreover, this model is only partially accurate—correct in some of its descriptions, but lacking in any analysis of the complex social, historical, and psychological influences that shape the families in question and that account for their "dys-

New from HUMAN SCIENCES PRESS

Friedman, Maurice, Ph.D.
A DIALOGUE WITH HASIDIC TALES
Hallowing the Everyday
Professor Maurice Friedman here shares his forty years of dialogue with the tales of the Hasidim, the popular communal Jewish mystics of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Eastern Europe, and the insights he has gleaned in 25 years of conducting "basic encounter discussion groups".
An Insight Book
1988 168 pp. (approx.)
0-89885-407-5 hard $24.95

BACK to PRESS

Friedman, Maurice, Ph.D.
MARTIN BUBER AND THE ETERNAL
191 pp.
0-89885-284-6 hard $24.95

Weizman, Savine G., Ph.D. and Kamm, Phyllis
ABOUT MOURNING
Support and Guidance for the Bereaved
Foreword by Phyllis Silverman, Ph.D.
240 pp.
0-89885-136-X hard $29.95
0-89885-309-5 soft $16.95

Goldberg, Rabbi Jacob
PASTORAL BEREAVEMENT COUNSELING
The rationale, dynamics and developmental course of a system of structured counseling for mourners during the post-funeral period are explained. How and why the program developed; its unique features; the design and structure that help make it clinically effective.
1988 184 pp. (approx.)
0-89885-419-9 hard $26.95

JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY AND JUDAISM
Editor: Bulka, Reuven P., Ph.D.
Quarterly Vol. 13, 1989 ISSN 0700-9801
JPJU-D personal $37.00
JPJU-F institutions $96.00

Zeligs, Dorothy F., Ed.D.
PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE BIBLE
A Study in Depth of Seven Leaders
1988 374 pp.
0-89885-389-3 hard $39.95

Angel, Rabbi Marc, Ph.D.
THE ORPHANED ADULT
Confronting the Death of a Parent
Foreword by Maurice Lamm
Winner of the 1988 National Jewish Book Award
"Angel's text is considerably more lofty, more reflective, more cerebral than the recent spate of books on death and mourning".
Kirkus Review
An Insight Book
1987 162 pp.
0-89885-334-6 hard $19.95

JOURNAL OF AGING AND JUDAISM
Editor: Olitzky, Rabbi Kerry M., D.H.L.
Quarterly Vol. 3, 1988-89 ISSN 0888-4868
JAJU-D personal $32.00
JAJU-F institutions $79.00

Olitzky, Rabbi Kerry M., D.H.L., editor
INTERFAITH MINISTRY TO THE AGED
A Survey of Models
A specical Issue of the *Journal of Aging and Judism*
1988 55 pp.
0-89885-432-6 soft $10.95

HUMAN SCIENCES PRESS, INC.
72 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011-8004 (212) 243-6000

Orders 1-800-44-HUMAN
(have credit card information ready)

function." It fails to address questions of deeper social cause or meaning because addiction is a self-contained concept that requires no further analysis. One has a disease, and the goal is to cure it. One is considered to be addicted to a sadistic person because one's family was dysfunctional, or one's mother was depressed or an alcoholic. No further explanation of a mother's depression or alcoholism is required. The social theorist is blocked from examining society, the psychotherapist from examining the intrapsychic life of the patient, and the patient from doing both.

But the social theorist knows, for instance, that parents'—particularly mothers' —narcissistic use of their children has complex social and historical roots. Psychoanalytically oriented social theorists have suggested, for example, that changes in post-World War II America—changes that isolated women in nuclear families, cut them off from kinship networks and productive work roles, and celebrated their primary responsibility as child-rearers—framed and facilitated maternal overinvestment in children. Lives that were emptied of *social* meaning became filled with a preoccupation with mothering. As kinship networks and household size shrank, the importance of the primary mother-child bond was increasingly sanctified in professional journals as well as in popular culture. The exclusion of women from the work force and their isolation in insulated nuclear families were justified on the grounds that such exclusion and isolation were the fulfillment of women's true nature and of their roles as the sole guarantors of their babies' proper development. The quiet lives of desperation described by Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* were in part the consequence of the fifties' celebration of female domesticity. The undercurrents of dissatisfaction, frustration, and self-blaming are eloquently described by one woman whom Friedan interviewed:

> I ask myself why I'm so dissatisfied. I've got my health, fine children, a lovely new home, enough money. My husband has a real future as an electronics engineer. He doesn't have any of these feelings.... I can't sit down and read a book alone. If the children are napping and I have one hour to myself I just walk through the house waiting for them to wake up.

This woman is a prototype for the mothers of women who love too much and the alcoholic mothers of the ACA.

Similar changes in social life, including the rise of bureaucratic forms of the modern corporation, deeply affected the lives of fathers and the gender asymmetries and antagonisms in these men's marital relationships. The fifties' "Organization Man's" anxieties concerning bureaucratic work, his declining authority in the family, and the social and media images of threatened masculinity were stimulated and reinforced by these historical changes. The idealized vision of male authority, captured by Robert Young in "Father Knows Best," was undermined by and in tension with images of the anxious and emasculated male, as seen in such figures as Dagwood Bumstead and Ralph Kramden. Anxieties about being judged on the basis of one's personality rather than skill on the job—a vulnerability captured then by David Riesman in *The Lonely Crowd* and more recently by Richard Sennett in *The Fall of Public Man*—were reinforced by a subtle undermining of paternal authority in the home and in child rearing. Many different social and psychological responses to these anxieties have been described (see, for example, Barbara Ehrenreich's analysis of the Playboy Philosophy in *The Hearts of Men*). The fathers of WWL2M and ACAs often retreated into depression, work, or alcoholism, and some of them became abusive in a variety of ways. While the particular form of response depended primarily on the idiosyncratic psychology of the father, the underlying pressures were often the same.

I am not attempting to propose a social or historical theory that accounts completely for relationship addictions. Rather, I am sketching the kinds of social and historical pressures that have shaped the dysfunctional family. This complex interaction cannot be analyzed under the addiction model, since under the addiction model the social world is ignored, much as a doctor may ignore the pathogenic primacy of the environment when s/he is trying to heal a patient. Ignoring these factors is not only narrow-minded clinically, but also scientifically incorrect—as research into the relationships between stress, the immune system, and transmission of disease demonstrates. And, even more than viruses, psychological traits are intrinsically psychosocial. A child who represses her or his own needs for nurturance in order to care narcissistically for an alcoholic parent is attempting to heal a social and psychological injury. That child does not acquire a disease. S/he participates in a relationship designed to restore the illusion of parental care and love, and s/he attempts to cope with the parent's disability—a disability that has broad social and economic, as well as psychological, dimensions. In order to understand fully how so many children have become "parentified," one has to examine the social conditions that facilitate this perversion of the parent-child relationship. The children described by Woititz and Norwood, by attempting to "fix" their "addicted" parents, are actually attempting to "fix" people who have deformed themselves and been deformed in relation to a sick social world.

(Continued on p. 95)

Being "Only Human" vs. Being a Mensch

Marian Henriquez Neudel

The Problem

Ever since I first started working with conscientious objectors during the Vietnam War, I have been made acutely aware of the fact that we live in a culture that is fundamentally hostile to the efforts of ordinary people to formulate and live by a standard of morality. The people I was working with were the most decent young men imaginable, but they were frequently unable to express their most basic and crucial beliefs without liberal helpings of the raunchiest profanity. Crippled by doubt and embarrassment, they lacked the vocabulary and concepts necessary to make the most important decisions of their lives. They had been raised believing there was something wrong—not only unmasculine but actually unsavory—about trying to formulate a moral code and live by it.

We worry a lot these days about religion and the right; some of us are doing some hopeful thinking about religion and the left. But it is the ideology of the "extreme center"—what ordinary decent Americans operate on most of the time—that cripples us and burns us out, individually and collectively, by making us embarrassed and ashamed of our best impulses and efforts, as well as hypercritical of ourselves and others for our respective shortcomings. ("Us" in this context means, among others, people in movements for social change, people in the "helping professions"—nursing, social work, legal aid, elementary school teaching, community organizing—and people who spend their time taking care of other people—small children, aging parents, or disabled spouses.) The theological underpinnings of the ideology of the "extreme center" constitute a kind of pop-Protestantism. They are not, in their entirety, the received doctrine of any existing church that I know of, but probably the majority of churchgoing Americans think these ideas are their church's official beliefs. They pervade our culture and affect all of us, regardless of our political and religious orientations.

I. Original Sinfulness: People can't be good, and usually can't do much good; "I'm only human" is not a boast.

Corollary 1: Anybody who aspires to a moral code loftier than that of Al Capone is a phony and a hypocrite, and not to be trusted.

Corollary 2: If one does have an insuperable urge to do good, one should at least have the decency to do it in secret, while being as open as possible about one's vices, since confession is good for the soul.

Corollary 3: A whole vocabulary of opprobrious terms has arisen to describe the aspirant to virtue—more about that later.

II. Individualism: To the extent that people can accomplish anything worthwhile, they can do it only as individuals.

Corollary 1: Collectivities can be very powerful forces for evil but can never be forces for good—even when that is their avowed purpose.

Corollary 2: In fact, a collectivity organized for the purpose of doing something good can be the most dangerous kind of tool for evil.

Corollary 3: On a world-historical scale we are doomed to do evil collectively, wholesale, and good individually, retail.

III. Intentionality: The moral value of an action is determined not by its effects, but by the state of mind of the individual who is performing it.

Corollary 1: It is worse to do the right thing for the wrong reason than not to do it at all.

Corollary 2: Doing the wrong thing for the right reason may even be highly praiseworthy.

Corollary 3: The only way to protect people from the temptation to do virtuous acts for the sake of extrinsic rewards is to remove from the social system all extrinsic rewards—material, social, psychological, whatever—for virtue, and perhaps even to build in some punishments for virtue and some rewards for viciousness.

IV. The Double Bind

A. Anybody who does socially beneficial acts for external rewards is a whore and a mercenary.

Marian Henriquez Neudel is a practicing attorney, teacher, and writer, and is currently employed at the Cook County Juvenile Court defending abused and neglected minors.

B. On the other hand, anybody who does anything, good or evil, for inadequate or no compensation is incompetent or a fool.

V. The Double Standard

A. Anybody who opposes one evil but not all evils is less trustworthy than an outright exponent of one or more evils.

B. There is more joy in heaven over a single George Wallace, to whom the power of prayer belatedly reveals the power of the black vote, than over ninety-nine Albert Schweitzers who spend their lives caring for the sick in Africa but have occasional racist thoughts.

C. A schmuck who occasionally acts like a mensch will get better publicity than a mensch who occasionally acts like a schmuck.

D. Which explains how Republicans keep winning elections.

A Proposed Solution—A Jewish Ethic of Liberation

Following are some philosophical principles for building and maintaining a community in which moral behavior is not only possible but encouraged; they work equally well in the communities in which we carry out our daily business and in the communities of movements for social change.

I. People are capable of doing good, both individually and collectively.

II. Effects matter more than intentions.

Corollary: It is easier to change consciousness by changing behavior than to change behavior by changing consciousness.

III. Therefore we should rig our social system with external rewards for socially beneficial acts. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads the grain."

IV. It is better to do something decent, however inadequate, than nothing at all. People who do something should be praised and rewarded more than people who do nothing, and if at all possible they should not be picked on, at least not until the people who do nothing have been properly admonished. As a practical matter, if one tells somebody who is doing something decent that what s/he is doing is inadequate, s/he won't do more—s/he'll say "to hell with it" and stop doing anything at all.

(Example: Many years ago I spent a lot of time studying the life and writings of Gandhi. After a while I became thoroughly turned off by the way he treated his wife, and I essentially wrote him off as a sexist pig. Somewhat later, it occurred to me that, pig or not, Gandhi had formulated some remarkable ideas and had done some remarkable things. Instead of dismissing him as inadequate, I chose to admire him for the good that he did. Eventually I decided to try, the next time I met a sexist man, to ask myself, "Could this guy be a closet Gandhi?")

V. Don't wipe out hypocrisy—improve the quality of it.

(Example: If my boss refrains from calling me "honey" and patting me on the fanny, if he pays me adequately and treats me fairly, but only because he doesn't want me to find out what a sexist he really is—that's *fine* with me. The more praiseworthy the mask he feels obliged to wear, the better my working life will be.)

Furthermore, an environment in which we do good only in secret, while arsonists, adulterers, and ax murderers are encouraged to "let it all hang out," makes it all too easy for us to justify following in their footsteps because "everybody does it." Instead, we ought to encourage those who do evil not to be proud of their conduct—to hide it, to be hypocritical. Even if the total number of arsons, ax murders, and so on cannot be significantly reduced, some well-applied hypocrisy may at least alleviate their influence on the social environment.

VI. Practicalities

A. We have made impressive strides in cleaning up the sexist and racist locutions in our everyday language. Now it's time to work on the words and phrases that are oppressive to do-gooders—beginning, of course, with "do-gooder" itself. Once more it is time to challenge people who use oppressive words and to weed out our own vocabularies.

Watch for:	*Especially when used to mean:*
Do-gooder Bleeding Heart Hypocrite/Phony	Anyone who aspires to be good but is not yet perfect
Righteous	Self-righteous
Well-intentioned	Ineffectual
Ideals	That which cannot be made real
Liberal Establishment	Any two or more people to the left of Louis XIV who have ever been introduced to each other
Rhetoric	Any political locution whose subjects and verbs come out even (see also *glib*)

(Continued on p. 98)

The New Historiography: Israel Confronts Its Past

Benny Morris

On July 11, 1948, the Yiftah Brigade's Third Battalion, as part of what was called Operation Dani, occupied the center of the Arab town of Lydda. There was no formal surrender, but the night passed quietly. Just before noon the following day, two or three armored cars belonging to the Arab Legion, the British-led and trained Transjordanian army, drove into town. A firefight ensued, and the scout cars withdrew. But a number of armed townspeople, perhaps believing that the shooting heralded a major Arab counterattack, began sniping from windows and rooftops at their Israeli occupiers. The Third Battalion—about four hundred nervous Israeli soldiers in the middle of an Arab town of tens of thousands—fiercely put down what various chroniclers subsequently called a "rebellion," by firing in the streets, into houses, and at the concentrations of POWs in the mosque courtyards. Israeli military records refer to "more than 250" Arabs killed in the town that afternoon. By contrast, Israeli casualties in both the firefight with the Arab Legion scout cars and the suppression of the sniping were between two and four dead (the records vary), and twelve wounded. Israeli historians called the affair a "rebellion" in order to justify the subsequent slaughter; Arab chroniclers, such as Aref al-Aref, did likewise in order to highlight Palestinian resolve and resistance in the face of Zionist encroachment.

Operation Dani took place roughly midway through the first Israeli-Arab war—the War of Independence, in official Israeli parlance. The Arab states' invasion on May 15 of the fledgling state had been halted weeks before; the newly organized and freshly equipped Israel Defense Forces (IDF) were on the offensive on all fronts—as was to remain true for the remainder of the war.

On July 12, before the shooting in Lydda had completely died down, Lt. Col. Yitzhak Rabin, officer in command of operations for Operation Dani, issued the following order: "1. The inhabitants of Lydda must be expelled quickly without attention to age. They should be directed towards Beit Nabala. Yiftah [Brigade HQ] must determine the method and inform [Operation] Dani HQ and Eighth Brigade HQ. 2. Implement immediately." A similar order was issued at the same time to the Kiryati Brigade concerning the inhabitants of the neighboring Arab town of Ramle.

On July 12 and July 13, the Yiftah and Kiryati brigades carried out their orders, expelling the fifty to sixty thousand inhabitants of the two towns, which lie about ten miles southeast of Tel Aviv. Throughout the war, the two towns had interdicted Jewish traffic on the main Tel Aviv–Jerusalem road, and the Yishuv's leaders regarded Lydda and Ramle as a perpetual threat to Tel Aviv itself. About noon on July 13, Operation Dani HQ informed IDF General Staff/Operations: "Lydda police fort has been captured. [The troops] are busy expelling the inhabitants [*oskim be'geirush ha'toshavim*]." Lydda's inhabitants were forced to walk eastward to the Arab Legion lines, and many of Ramle's inhabitants were ferried in trucks or buses. Clogging the roads (and the legion's possible routes of advance westward), the tens of thousands of refugees marched, gradually shedding possessions along the way. Arab chroniclers, such as Sheikh Muhammad Nimr al-Khatib, claimed that hundreds of children died in the march, from dehydration and disease. One Israeli witness at the time described the spoor: The refugee column "to begin with [jettisoned] utensils and furniture and, in the end, bodies of men, women and children. . . ." Many of the refugees came to rest near Ramallah and set up tent encampments (which later became the refugee camps supported by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency [UNRWA], and the hotbeds of today's Palestinian rebellion which current Defense Minister Rabin is trying to suppress).

Israeli historians in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s were less than honest in their treatment of the Lydda-Ramle episode. The IDF's official *Toldot Milhemet Ha'komemiut* (History of the War of Independence), written by the General Staff/History Branch and published in 1959, stated, "The Arabs [of Lydda], who had violated the

Benny Morris works for the Jerusalem Post, *is a former senior associate of St. Antony's College, Oxford, and is the author of* The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-49 *(Cambridge University Press, 1988).*

terms of the surrender and feared [Israeli] retribution, were happy at the possibility given them of evacuating the town and proceeding eastwards, to Legion territory: Lydda emptied of its Arab inhabitants."

A decade later, the former head of the IDF History Branch, Lt. Col. Netanel Lorch, wrote in 1968 in *The Edge of the Sword,* the second revised edition of his history of the war, that "the residents, who had violated surrender terms and feared retribution, declared they would leave and asked [for] safe conduct to Arab Legion lines, which was granted."

A somewhat less deceitful, but also misleading, description of the events in Lydda and Ramle is provided by Lt. Col. Elhannan Orren, another former director of the IDF History Branch, in his *Ba'derekh El Ha'ir* (On the road to the city), a highly detailed description of Operation Dani published by the IDF in 1976. Orren, like his predecessors, fails to state anywhere that what occurred was an expulsion, and one explicitly ordered from on high (originating, according to Ben-Gurion's first major biographer, Michael Bar-Zohar, from the prime minister himself). Orren also repeats a variant of the "inhabitants asked, the IDF graciously complied" story.

Yitzhak Rabin, ironically more frank than his chroniclers, inserted a passage into his autobiography, *Pinkas Sherut* (Service notebook), which more or less admitted that what had occurred in Lydda and Ramle had been an expulsion. But the passage was excised by order of the Israeli government. (Subsequently, to everyone's embarrassment, Peretz Kidron, the English translator of *Pinkas Sherut*, sent the offending passage to the *New York Times,* where it was published on October 23, 1979.)

The treatment of the Lydda-Ramle affair by past Israeli historians is illustrative of what can be called, for want of a better term, the "old" or "official" history. That history has shaped the way Israelis and Diaspora Jews—or, at least, Diaspora Zionists—have seen and, in large measure, still see Israel's past; and it has also held sway over the way gentile Europeans and Americans (and their governments) see that past. This understanding of the past, in turn, has significantly influenced the attitudes of Diaspora Jews, as well as the attitude of European and American non-Jews, toward present-day Israel—which affects government policies concerning the Israeli-Arab conflict.

The essence of the old history is that Zionism was a beneficent and well-meaning progressive national movement; that Israel was born pure into an uncharitable, predatory world; that Zionist efforts at compromise and conciliation were rejected by the Arabs; and that Palestine's Arabs, and in their wake the surrounding Arab states, for reasons of innate selfishness, xenophobia, and downright cussedness, refused to accede to the burgeoning Zionist presence and in 1947 to 1949 launched a war to extirpate the foreign plant. The Arabs, so goes the old history, were politically and militarily assisted in their efforts by the British, but they nonetheless lost the war. Poorly armed and outnumbered, the Jewish community in Palestine, called the Yishuv, fought valiantly, suppressed the Palestinian "gangs" (*knufiyot* in Israeli parlance), and repelled the five invading Arab armies. In the course of that war, says the old history—which at this point becomes indistinguishable from Israeli propaganda—Arab states and leaders, in order to blacken Israel's image and facilitate the invasion of Palestine, called upon/ordered Palestine's Arabs to quit their homes and the "Zionist areas"—to which they were expected to return once the Arab armies had proved victorious. Thus was triggered the Palestinian Arab exodus which led to the now forty-year-old Palestinian refugee problem.

The old history makes the further claim that in the latter stages of the 1948 war and in the years immediately thereafter Israel desperately sought to make peace with all or any of its neighbors, but the Arabs, obdurate and ungenerous, refused all overtures, remaining hell-bent on destroying Israel.

The old historians offered a simplistic and consciously pro-Israeli interpretation of the past, and they deliberately avoided mentioning anything that would reflect badly on Israel. People argued that since the conflict with the Arabs was still raging, and since it was a political as well as a military struggle, it necessarily involved propaganda, the goodwill (or ill will) of governments in the West, and the hearts and minds of Christians and Diaspora Jews. Blackening Israel's image, it was argued, would ultimately weaken Israel in its ongoing war for survival. In short, *raisons d'état* often took precedence over telling the truth.

The past few years have witnessed the emergence of a new generation of Israeli scholars and a "new" history. These historians, some of them living abroad, have looked and are looking afresh at the Israeli historical experience, and their conclusions, by and large, are at odds with those of the old historians.

Two factors are involved in the emergence of this new history—one relating to materials, the other to personae.

Thanks to Israel's Archives Law (passed in 1955, amended in 1964 and 1981), and particularly to the law's key "thirty-year rule," starting in the early 1980s a large number (hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions) of state papers were opened to researchers. Almost all the Foreign Ministry's papers from 1947 to 1956, as well as a large number of documents—correspondence, memoranda, minutes—from other ministries, including the prime minister's office (though excluding the Defense Ministry and the IDF), have been released. Similarly,

large collections of private papers and political party papers from this period have been opened. Therefore, for the first time, historians have been able to write studies of the period on the basis of a large collection of contemporary source material. (The old history was written largely on the basis of interviews and memoirs, and, at best, it made use of select batches of documents, many of them censored, such as those from the IDF archive.)

The second factor is the nature of the new historians. Most of them were born around 1948 and have matured in a more open, doubting, and self-critical Israel than the pre-Lebanon War Israel in which the old historians grew up. The old historians had lived through 1948 as highly committed adult participants in the epic, glorious rebirth of the Jewish commonwealth. They were unable to separate their lives from this historical event, unable to regard impartially and objectively the facts and processes that they later wrote about. Indeed, they admit as much. The new historians, by contrast, are able to be more impartial.

Inevitably, the new historians focused their attention, at least initially, on 1948, because the documents were available and because that was the central, natal, revolutionary event in Israeli history. How one perceives 1948 bears heavily on how one perceives the whole Zionist/Israeli experience. If Israel, the haven of a much-persecuted people, was born pure and innocent, then it was worthy of the grace, material assistance, and political support showered upon it by the West over the past forty years—and worthy of more of the same in years to come. If, on the other hand, Israel was born tarnished, besmirched by original sin, then it was no more deserving of that grace and assistance than were its neighbors.

The past few months have seen the publication in the West of a handful of "new" histories, including Avi Shlaim's *Collusion across the Jordan* (Columbia University Press, 1988); Ilan Pappe's *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-51* (Macmillan/St. Anthony's, 1988); Simha Flapan's *The Birth of Israel* (Pantheon, 1987); and my own *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949* (Cambridge University Press, 1988). Taken together, these works—along with a large number of articles that have appeared recently in academic journals such as *Studies in Zionism, Middle Eastern Studies,* and the *Middle East Journal*—significantly undermine, if not thoroughly demolish, a variety of assumptions that helped form the core of the old history.

Flapan's work is the least historical of these books. Indeed, it is not, strictly speaking, a "history" at all but rather a polemical work written from a Marxist perspective. In his introduction, Flapan—who passed away last year and who was the former director of the left-wing Mapam party's Arab department and editor of the monthly *New Outlook*—writes that his purpose is not to produce "a detailed historical study interesting only to historians and researchers," but rather to write "a book that will undermine the propaganda structures that have so long obstructed the growth of the peace forces in my country.... " Politics rather than historiography is the book's manifest objective.

Both Ben-Gurion and Abdullah aimed at frustrating the UN resolution and sharing among themselves the areas earmarked for Palestinian Arab statehood.

Despite its explicitly polemical purpose, Flapan's book has the virtue of more or less accurately formulating some of the central fallacies—which he calls "myths"—that informed the old history. These were (1) that the Yishuv in 1947 joyously accepted partition and the truncated Jewish state prescribed by the UN General Assembly, and that the Palestinians and the surrounding Arab states unanimously rejected the partition and attacked the Yishuv with the aim of throwing the Jews into the sea; (2) that the war was waged between a relatively defenseless and weak (Jewish) David and a relatively strong (Arab) Goliath; (3) that the Palestinians fled their homes and villages either voluntarily or at the behest/order of the Arab leaders; and (4) that, at the war's end, Israel was interested in making peace, but the recalcitrant Arabs displayed no such interest, opting for a perpetual—if sporadic—war to the finish.

Because of poor research and analysis—including selective and erroneous use of documents—Flapan's demolition of these myths is far from convincing. But Shlaim, in *Collusion,* tackles some of the same myths—and far more persuasively. According to Shlaim, the original Zionist goal was the establishment of a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine. The acceptance of partition, in the mid-1930s as in 1947, was tactical, not a change in the Zionist dream. Ben-Gurion, says Shlaim, considered the partition lines of "secondary importance ... because he intended to change them in any case; they were not the end but only the beginning." In acquiescing to partition schemes in the mid-1930s, Ben-Gurion wrote: "I am certain that we will be able to settle in all the other parts of the country, whether through agreement and mutual understanding with our Arab neighbors or in another way." To his wife, Ben-Gurion wrote: "Establish a Jewish state at once, even

if it is not in the whole land. The rest will come in the course of time. It must come."

Come November 1947, the Yishuv entered the first stage of the war with a tacit understanding with Transjordan's king, Abdullah—"a falcon trapped in a canary's cage"—that his Arab Legion would take over the eastern part of Palestine (now called the West Bank), earmarked by the UN for Palestinian statehood, and that it would leave the Yishuv alone to set up the Jewish state in the other areas of the country. The Yishuv and the Hashemite kingdom of Transjordan, Shlaim persuasively argues, had conspired from 1946 to early 1947 to nip the UN Partition Resolution in the bud and to stymie the emergence of a Palestinian Arab state. From the start, while publicly enunciating support for the partition of the land between its Jewish and Arab communities, both Ben-Gurion and Abdullah aimed at frustrating the UN resolution and sharing among themselves the areas earmarked for Palestinian Arab statehood. It was to be partition—but between Israel and Transjordan. This "collusion" and "unholy alliance"—in Shlaim's loaded phrases—was sealed at the now-famous clandestine meeting between Golda Myerson (Meir) and Abdullah at Naharayim on the Jordan River on November 17, 1947.

This Zionist-Hashemite nonaggression pact was sanctioned by Britain, adds Shlaim. Contrary to the old Zionist historiography—which was based largely on the (mistaken) feelings of Israel's leaders at that time—Britain's Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, "by February 1948," had clearly become "resigned to the inevitable emergence of a Jewish state" (while opposing the emergence of a Palestinian Arab state). Indeed, he warned Transjordan "to refrain from invading the areas allotted to the Jews."

Both Shlaim and Flapan make the point that the Palestinian Arabs, though led by Haj Amin al-Husayni, the conniving, extremist former mufti of Jerusalem, were far from unanimous in supporting the Husayni-led crusade against the Jews. Indeed, in the first months of the hostilities, according to Yishuv intelligence sources, the bulk of Palestine's Arabs merely wanted quiet, if only out of respect for the Jews' martial prowess. But gradually, in part due to Haganah overreactions, the conflict widened and eventually engulfed the two communities throughout the land. In April and May 1948, the Haganah gained the upper hand and the Palestinians lost the war, most of them going into exile.

What ensued, once Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948, and the Arab states invaded on May 15, was "a general land grab," with everyone—Israel, Transjordan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt—bent on preventing the birth of a Palestinian Arab state and carving out chunks of Palestine for themselves.

Contrary to the old history, Abdullah's invasion of eastern Palestine was clearly designed to conquer territory for his kingdom—at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs—rather than to destroy the Jewish state. Indeed, the Arab Legion—apart from one abortive incursion around Notre Dame in Jerusalem and the assault on the Etzion Bloc (a Jewish settlement zone inside the Arab state area)—stuck meticulously, throughout the war, to its nonaggressive stance vis-à-vis the Yishuv and the Jewish state's territory. Rather, it was the Haganah/IDF that repeatedly attacked the legion on territory earmarked for Arab sovereignty (Latrun, Lydda, Ramle).

Nevertheless, Shlaim, like Pappe in *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-51,* is never completely clear about Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon's main purpose in invading Palestine: Was their primary aim to overrun the Yishuv and destroy the Jewish state, or was it merely to frustrate or curtail Abdullah's territorial ambitions and to acquire some territory for themselves?

Flapan argues firmly, but without evidence, that "the invasion ... was not aimed at destroying the Jewish state." Shlaim and Pappe are more cautious. Shlaim writes that the Arab armies intended to bisect the Jewish state and, if possible, "occupy Haifa and Tel Aviv" or "crippl[e] the Jewish state." But, at the same time, he argues that they were driven into the invasion more by a desire to stymie Abdullah than by the wish to kill the Jews; and, partly for this reason, they did not properly plan the invasion, either militarily or politically, and their leaders were generally pessimistic about its outcome. Pappe points out that Egypt initially did not seem determined to participate in the invasion, and all the Arab states failed to commit the full weight of their military power to the enterprise—which indicates perhaps that they took the declared aim of driving the Jews into the sea less than seriously. In any event, Transjordan frustrated the other Arabs' intentions throughout and rendered their military preparations and planning ineffective.

One of the most tenacious myths relating to 1948 is the myth of "David and Goliath"—that the Arabs were overwhelmingly stronger militarily than the Yishuv. The simple truth—as conveyed by Flapan, Shlaim, Pappe, and myself—is that the stronger side won. The map showing a minuscule Israel and a giant surrounding sea of Arab states did not and, indeed, for the time being still does not accurately reflect the military balance of power. The pre-1948 Yishuv had organized itself for statehood and war; the Palestinian Arabs, who outnumbered the Jews two to one, had not. And in war, command and control are everything, or almost everything. During the first half of the war (December 1947–May 14, 1948), the Yishuv was better armed and had more trained manpower than the Palestinians, whose forces were beefed

up by several thousand "volunteers" from the surrounding Arab states. This superior organization, command, and control meant that at almost every decisive point in the battle the Haganah managed to field more and better-equipped formations than did the Palestinians. When the Yishuv put matters to the test, in the Haganah offensives of April and early May 1948, the decision was never in doubt; the Arab redoubts fell, in domino fashion, like ripe plums—the Jerusalem corridor, Tiberias, Haifa, Eastern Galilee, Safad. When one adds to this the Yishuv's superiority in morale and motivation—it was a bare three years after the Holocaust, and the Haganah troopers knew that it was do-or-die—the Palestinians never had a chance.

The old history is no more illuminating when it comes to the second stage of the war—the conventional battles of May 15, 1948 to January 1949. Jewish organization, command, and control remained superior to those of the uncoordinated armies of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon; and throughout the Yishuv also, the IDF had an edge in numbers. In mid-May 1948, for example, the Haganah fielded thirty-five thousand armed troops while the Arab invaders fielded twenty-five to thirty thousand troops. By the time of Operation Dani in July, the IDF had sixty-five thousand men under arms, and by December it had eighty to ninety thousand—outnumbering its combined Arab foes at every stage of the battle. The Haganah/IDF also enjoyed the immensely important advantage, throughout the conventional war, of short lines of communication, while the Iraqis and Egyptians had to send supplies and reinforcements over hundreds of kilometers of desert before they reached the front lines.

Two caveats must be entered. First, Transjordan's Arab Legion was probably the best army in the war. But it never numbered much more than five thousand troops, and it had no tanks or aircraft. Second, in terms of equipment, during the crucial three weeks between the pan-Arab invasion of Palestine on May 15 and the start of the first truce on June 11, the Arab armies had an edge in weaponry over the Haganah/IDF. The Haganah was much weaker in terms of aircraft, and had no artillery (only heavy mortars) and very few tanks or tracked vehicles. For those three weeks, as the Haganah's officer in command of operations, Yigael Yadin, told the politicians, it was "fifty-fifty." But before May 15 and from the first truce onward, the Yishuv's military formations were superior both in terms of manpower and in terms of weaponry.

Apart from the birth of the State of Israel, the major political outcome of the 1948 war was the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem. How the problem

(Continued on p. 99)

JEWS IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA

CHILDREN OF CIRCUMSTANCES
Israeli Emigrants in New York
By **MOSHE SHOKEID**. The wave of recent immigration to the United States has included a growing number of Israelis. The exodus has come to be known in Israel as *yerida*—"descent"—and its participants have been given the disparaging nickname *"Yordim."* What is the emotional cost of leaving Israel—a place and an ideal—for the American alternative? Shokeid, an Israeli-born anthropologist, left in 1982 to do fieldwork among Israeli immigrants in Queens, New York, where he spent two years in one of the largest enclaves of Israelis in the United States. Here he gives the first comprehensive view of the economic, social, and cultural features of the Yordim community. $9.95 paper, $28.50 cloth

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS
Ethnographic Essays on American Jewry
Edited by **JACK KUGELMASS**. *Between Two Worlds* is a collection of thirteen meditative essays that explicitly confront the problems and perceptions of anthropologists working with American Jews. Written especially for this volume, they are intended to go beyond the special concerns of professional anthropologists and acquaint a wider readership with the pleasures and frustrations of fieldwork in America. The contents of the volume reflect the range and diversity of American Jewry and suggest the depth and richness of the subject. $12.95 paper, $36.50 cloth

UNEASY ENDINGS
Daily Life in an American Nursing Home
By **RENÉE ROSE SHIELD**. "If we continue, we grow old, and this is how it could be for us," writes Renée Rose Shield in her candid and sympathetic account of life in an American nursing home. Drawing on anthropological methods and theory to illuminate institutional life, she probes the sources of the profound sense of unease she found in this predominantly Jewish nursing home. $12.95 paper, $34.50 cloth

Call 1-800-666-2211 with credit card orders.

124 Roberts Place
Ithaca, NY 14850

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS

CORNELL

The Writing Life

Annie Dillard

What if man could see Beauty Itself, pure, unalloyed, stripped of mortality and all its pollution, stains, and vanities, unchanging, divine, . . . the man becoming, in that communion, the friend of God, himself immortal; . . . would that be a life to disregard?

—Plato

I have been looking into schedules. Even when we read physics, we inquire of each least particle, "What then shall I do this morning?" How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives. What we do with this hour, and that one, is what we are doing. A schedule defends from chaos and whim. It is a net for catching days. It is a scaffolding on which a worker can stand and labor with both hands at sections of time. A schedule is a mock-up of reason and order—willed, faked, and so brought into being; it is a peace and a haven set into the wreck of time; it is a lifeboat on which you find yourself, decades later, still living. Each day is the same, so you remember the series afterward as a blurred idyll.

The most appealing daily schedule I know is that of a certain turn-of-the-century Swedish aristocrat. He got up at four and set out on foot to hunt black grouse, wood grouse, woodcock, and snipe. At eleven he met his friends who had also been out hunting alone all morning. They converged "at one of these babbling brooks," he wrote. He outlined the rest of his schedule. "Take a quick dip, relax with a schnapps and a sandwich, stretch out, have a smoke, take a nap or just rest, and then sit around and chat until three. Then I hunt some more until sundown, bathe again, put on white tie and tails to keep up appearances, eat a huge dinner, smoke a cigar and sleep like a log until the sun comes up again to redden the eastern sky. This is living. . . . Could it be more perfect?"

There is no shortage of good days. It is good lives that are hard to come by. A life of good days lived in the senses is not enough. The life of sensation is the life of greed; it requires more and more. The life of the spirit requires less and less; time is ample and its passage sweet. Who would call a day spent reading a good day? But a life spent reading—that is a good life. A day that closely resembles every other day for the past ten or twenty years does not suggest itself as a good one. But who would not call Pasteur's life a good one, or Thomas Mann's?

Wallace Stevens in his forties, living in Hartford, Connecticut, hewed to a productive routine. He rose at six, read for two hours, and walked another hour—three miles—to work. He dictated poems to his secretary. He ate no lunch; at noon he walked for another hour, often to an art gallery. He walked home from work—another hour. After dinner he retired to his study; he went to bed at nine. On Sundays, he walked in the park. I don't know what he did on Saturdays. Perhaps he exchanged a few words with his wife, who posed for the Liberty dime. (One would rather read these people, or lead their lives, than be their wives. When the Swedish aristocrat Wilhelm Blixen shot birds all day, drank schnapps, napped, and dressed for dinner, he and his wife had three children under three. The middle one was Karen, later known as Isak Dinesen.)

One wants a room with no view, so imagination can dance with memory in the dark.

Like Stevens, Osip Mandelstam composed poetry on the hoof. So did Dante. Nietzsche, like Emerson, took two long walks a day. "When my creative energy flowed most freely, my muscular activity was always greatest. . . . I might often have been seen dancing; I used to walk through the hills for seven or eight hours on end without a hint of fatigue; I slept well, laughed a good deal—I was perfectly vigorous and patient" (Nietzsche). On the other hand, A. E. Housman, almost predictably, maintained, "I have seldom written poetry unless I was rather out of health." This makes sense, too, because in writing a book you can be too well for your own good.

Jack London claimed to write twenty hours a day. Before he undertook to write, he obtained the University

Annie Dillard is the author of seven books including Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, Holy the Firm, *and* An American Childhood. *She and her family live in Middletown, Connecticut and Cape Cod, Massachusetts.*

of California course list and all the syllabi; he spent a year reading the textbooks in philosophy and literature. In subsequent years, once he had a book of his own under way, he set his alarm to wake him after four hours of sleep. Often he slept through the alarm, so, by his own account, he rigged it to drop a weight on his head. I cannot say I believe this, though a novel like *The Sea-Wolf* is strong evidence that some sort of weight fell on his head with some sort of frequency—though you wouldn't think a man would claim credit for it. London maintained that every writer needed experience, a technique, and a philosophical position. Perhaps the position need not be an airtight one; London himself felt comfortable with a weird amalgam of Karl Marx and Herbert Spencer. (Marks & Sparks.)

I write these words in my most recent of many studies—a pine shed on Cape Cod. The pine lumber is unfinished inside the study; the pines outside are finished trees. I see the pines from my two windows. Nuthatches spiral around their long, coarse trunks. Sometimes in June a feeding colony of mixed warblers flies through the pines; the warblers make a racket that draws me out the door. The warblers drift loosely through the stiff pine branches, and I follow through the thin long grass between the trunks.

The study—sold as a prefabricated toolshed—is eight feet by ten feet. Like a plane's cockpit, it is crammed with high-tech equipment. There is no quill pen in sight. There is a computer, a printer, and a photocopying machine. My backless chair, a prie-dieu on which I kneel, slides under the desk; I give it a little kick when I leave. There is an air conditioner, a heater, and an electric kettle. There is a low-tech bookshelf, a shelf of gull and whale bones, and a bed. Under the bed I stow paints—a one-pint can of yellow to touch up the window's trim, and five or six tubes of artists' oils. The study affords ample room for one. One who is supposed to be writing books. You can read in the space of a coffin, and you can write in the space of a toolshed meant for mowers and spades.

I walk up here from the house every morning. The study and its pines, and the old summer cottages nearby, and the new farm just north of me, rise from an old sand dune high over a creeky salt marsh. From the bright lip of the dune I can see oyster farmers working their beds on the tidal flats and sailboats under way in the saltwater bay. After I have warmed myself standing at the crest of the dune, I return under the pines, enter the study, slam the door so the latch catches—and then I cannot see. The green spot in front of my eyes outshines everything in the shade. I lie on the bed and play with a bird bone until I can see it.

Appealing workplaces are to be avoided. One wants



a room with no view, so imagination can dance with memory in the dark. When I furnished this study seven years ago, I pushed the long desk against a blank wall, so I could not see from either window. Once, fifteen years ago, I wrote in a cinder-block cell over a parking lot. It overlooked a tar-and-gravel roof. This pine shed under trees is not quite so good as the cinder-block study was, but it will do.

"The beginning of wisdom," according to a West African proverb, "is to get you a roof."

* * *

It was on summer nights in Roanoke, Virginia, that I wrote the second half of a book, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. (I wrote the first half in the spring, at home.) Ruefully I noted then that I would possibly look back on those times as an idyll. I vowed to remember the difficulties. I have forgotten them now, however, and I do, in fact, look back on those times as an idyll.

I slept until noon, as did my husband, who was also writing. I wrote once in the afternoon, and once again after our early dinner and a walk. During those months, I subsisted on that dinner, coffee, Coke, chocolate milk, and Vantage cigarettes. I worked till midnight, one, or two. When I came home in the middle of the

night I was tired; I longed for a tolerant giant, a person as big as a house, to hold me and rock me. In fact, an exhausted daydream—almost a hallucination—of being rocked and soothed sometimes forced itself upon me, and interrupted me even when I was talking or reading.

I had a room—a study carrel—in the Hollins College library, on the second floor. It was this room that overlooked a tar-and-gravel roof. A plate-glass window, beside me on the left, gave out on a number of objects: the roof, a parking lot, a distant portion of Carvin's Creek, some complicated Virginia sky, and a far hilltop where six cows grazed around a ruined foundation under red cedars.

From my desk I kept an eye out. Intriguing people, people I knew, pulled into the parking lot and climbed from their cars. The cows moved on the hilltop. (I drew the cows, for they were made interestingly; they hung in catenary curves from their skeletons, like two-man tents.) On the flat roof just outside the window, sparrows pecked gravel. One of the sparrows lacked a leg; one was missing a foot. If I stood and peered around, I could see a feeder creek running at the edge of a field. In the creek, even from that great distance, I could see muskrats and snapping turtles. If I saw a snapping turtle, I ran downstairs and out of the library to watch it or poke it.

One afternoon I made a pen drawing of the window and the landscape it framed. I drew the window's aluminum frame and steel hardware; I sketched in the clouds and the far hilltop with its ruined foundation and wandering cows. I outlined the parking lot and its tall row of mercury-vapor lights; I drew the cars, and the graveled rooftop foreground.

If I craned my head, I could see a grassy playing field below. One afternoon I peered around at that field and saw a softball game. Since I happened to have my fielder's glove with me in my study, I thought it would be the generous thing to join the game. On the field, I learned there was a music camp on campus for two weeks. The little boys playing softball were musical whizzes. They could not all play ball, but their patter was a treat. "All right, MacDonald," they jeered when one kid came to bat, "that pizzicato won't help you now." It was slightly better than no softball, so I played with them every day, second base, terrified that I would bust a prodigy's fingers on a throw to first or the plate.

I shut the blinds one day for good. I lowered the venetian blinds and flattened the slats. Then, by lamplight, I taped my drawing to the closed blind. There, on the drawing, was the window's view: cows, parking lot, hilltop, and sky. If I wanted a sense of the world, I could look at the stylized outline drawing. If I had possessed the skill, I would have painted, directly on the slats of the lowered blind, in meticulous colors, a *trompe l'oeil* mural view of all that the blinds hid. Instead, I wrote it.

On the Fourth of July, my husband and our friends drove into the city, Roanoke, to see the fireworks. I begged off; I wanted to keep working. I was working hard, although of course it did not seem hard enough at the time—a finished chapter every few weeks. I castigated myself daily for writing too slowly. Even when passages seemed to come easily, as though I were copying from a folio held open by smiling angels, the manuscript revealed the usual signs of struggle—bloodstains, teeth marks, gashes, and burns.

This night, as on most nights, I entered the library at dusk. The building was locked and dark. I had a key. Every night I let myself in, climbed the stairs, found my way between the tall stacks in the dark, located and unlocked my study's door, and turned on the light. I remembered how many stacks I had to hit with my hand in the dark before I turned down the row to my study. Even if I left only to get a drink of water, I felt and counted the stacks with my hand again to find my room. Once in daylight I glanced at a book on a stack's corner, a book I presumably touched every night with my hand. The book was *The World I Live In,* by Helen Keller. I read it at once: it surprised me by its strong and original prose.

When I flicked on my carrel light, there it all was: the bare room with yellow cinder-block walls; the big, flattened venetian blind and my drawing taped to it; two or three quotations taped up on index cards; and on a far table some books, the fielder's mitt, and a yellow bag of chocolate-covered peanuts. There was the long, blond desk and its chair, and on the desk a dozen different-colored pens, some big index cards in careful, splayed piles, and my messy yellow legal pads. As soon as I saw that desktop, I remembered the task: the chapter, its problems, its phrases, its points.

This night I was concentrating on the chapter. The horizon of my consciousness was the contracted circle of yellow light inside my study—the lone lamp in the enormous, dark library. I leaned over the desk. I worked by hand. I doodled deliriously in the legal-pad margins. I fiddled with the index cards. I reread a sentence maybe a hundred times, and if I kept it I changed it seven or eight times, often substantially.

Now a June bug was knocking at my window. I was wrestling inside a sentence. I must have heard it a dozen times before it registered—before I noticed that I had been hearing a bug knock for half an hour. It made a hollow, bonking sound. Some people call the same fumbling, heavy insects "May beetles." It must have

been attracted to my light—what little came between the slats of the blind. I dislike June bugs. Back to work. Knock again, knock again, and finally, to learn what monster of a fat, brown June bug could fly up to a second story and thump so insistently at my window as though it wanted admittance—at last, unthinkingly, I parted the venetian blind slats with my fingers, to look out.

And there were the fireworks, far away. It was the Fourth of July. I had forgotten. They were red and yellow, blue and green and white; they blossomed high in the black sky many miles away. The fireworks seemed as distant as the stars, but I could hear the late banging their bursting made. The sound, those bangs so muffled and out of synch, accompanied at random the silent, far sprays of color widening and raining down. It was the Fourth of July, and I had forgotten all of wide space and all of historical time. I opened the blinds a crack like eyelids, and it all came exploding in on me at once—oh yes, the world.

My working the graveyard shift in Virginia affected the book. It was a nature book full of sunsets; it wholly lacked dawns, and even mornings.

I was reading about Hassidism, among other things. If you stay awake one hundred nights, you get the vision of Elijah. I was not eager for it, although it seemed to be just around the corner. I preferred this: "Rebbe Shmelke of Nickolsburg, it was told, never really heard his teacher, the Maggid of Mezritch, finish a thought because as soon as the latter would say 'and the Lord spoke,' Shmelke would begin shouting in wonderment, 'The Lord spoke, the Lord spoke,' and continue shouting until he had to be carried from the room."

* * *

The second floor of the library, where I worked every night, housed the rare book room. It was a wide, carpeted, well-furnished room. On an end table, as if for decoration, stood a wooden chess set.

One night, stuck on an intractable problem in the writing, I wandered the dark library looking for distraction. I flicked on the lights in the rare book room and looked at some of the books. I saw the chess set and moved white's king's pawn. I turned off the light and wandered back to my carrel.

A few nights later, I glanced into the rare book room and walked in, for black's queen's pawn had moved. I moved out my knight.

We were off and running. Every day, my unseen opponent moved. I moved. I never saw anyone anywhere near the rare book room. The college was not in session; almost no one was around. Late at night I heard the night watchmen clank around downstairs in the dark. The watchmen never came upstairs. There was no one upstairs but me.

When the chess game was ten days old, I entered the rare book room to find black's pieces coming towards me on the carpet. They seemed to be marching, in rows of two. I put them back as they had been and made my move. The next day, the pieces were all pied on the board. I put them back as they had been. The next day, black had moved, rather brilliantly.

Late one night, while all this had been going on, and while the library was dark and locked as it had been all summer and I had accustomed myself to the eeriness of it, I left my carrel to cross the darkness and get a drink of water. I saw a strange chunk of light on the floor between stacks. Passing the stacks, I saw the light spread across the hall. I held my breath. The light was coming from the rare book room; the door was open.

I approached quietly and looked in the room from an angle. There, at the chess table, stood a baby. The baby had blond curls and was wearing only a diaper.

I paused, considering that I had been playing a reasonable game of chess for two weeks with a naked baby. After a while I could make out the sound of voices; I moved closer to the doorway and peered in. There was the young head librarian and his wife, sitting on chairs. I pieced together the rest of it. The librarian stopped by to pick something up. Naturally, he had a key. The couple happened to have the baby along. The baby, just learning to walk, had cruised from the chairs to the table. The baby was holding onto the table, not studying the chess pieces' positions. I greeted the family and played with the baby until they left.

I never did learn who or what was playing chess with me. The game went on until my lunatic opponent scrambled the board so violently the game was over.

* * *

During that time, I let all the houseplants die. After the book was finished I noticed them; the plants hung completely black dead in their pots in the bay window. For I had not only let them die, I had not moved them. During that time, I told all my out-of-town friends they could not visit for a while.

"I understand you're married," a man said to me at a formal lunch in New York that my publisher had arranged. "How do you have time to write a book?"

"Sir?"

"Well," he said, "You have to have a garden, for instance. You have to entertain." And I thought he was foolish, this man in his seventies, who had no idea what you must do. But the fanaticism of my twenties shocks me now. As I feared it would. □

The Virgin in the Brothel and Other Anomalies: Character and Context in the Legend of Beruriah

Rachel Adler

Some events do take place but are not true; others are although they never occurred.

—Eli Wiesel

A true story is one which helps us to go on.

—Stanley Hauerwaus

Those who teach us inevitably teach us themselves, since all learning flows through the medium of relationship. Our teachers bind us to them with their stories. We take into ourselves their Torah sealed inextricably in narrative and with it their blunders, their blindness, their brutalities. God may heal the brokenhearted, but it is our teachers who break those hearts. Our teachers break our hearts when they do not see how their Torah is bounded by their context.

And should that break our hearts? A story has to take place somewhere, and every somewhere has its context, its frame of assumptions about what is real and unshakable and safe. Usually we inhabit this frame without feeling constraint. But sometimes a context becomes a cage. Suffocating, we burst its walls and step out into a new world. It is in the retelling in this new world that some of our teachers' stories break our hearts.

The legend of Beruriah is just such a story. Retelling it from the world in which we stand, we can see how character strains against context, how it shakes assumptions about what it means to be a woman, a Jew, a sexual being. It is precisely this tension of character and context that makes the Beruriah legend anomalous. It is a story about a woman, although at the time of its formation, women seldom were held to have stories. Beruriah was viewed as unlike other women, although women were, as far as the storytellers were concerned, alike in all the ways that mattered. And is it a true story? Say rather that the shards of truth are in it, but by the power of the Torah that it contains I hope to understand it and go on.

I call it a story, though in fact it is many stories from many times and many texts, flotsam and jetsam thrown up by the unsounded seas of rabbinic and postrabbinic lore. Probably until nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft* compilations, few people could have told them all. But teachers and preachers driving home some lesson must have told one and then another, until in the imaginations of tellers and hearers one story shaped itself, the story of a life. Women told bits and pieces of this story to other women. I know, because that is how I myself first heard a story about Beruriah—from an older Orthodox woman who was unable to read it in a book. And if she could have told it to me in its entirety, it would have gone like this:

> Once there was a woman named Beruriah, and she was a great talmudic scholar. She was the daughter of the great Palestinian rabbi Hananyah ben Teradyon, who was martyred by the Romans. Even as a young girl, she far outstripped her brother as a scholar. It was said she had learned three hundred laws from three hundred teachers in one day. She married Rabbi Meir, the miracle worker and great Mishnaic sage.
>
> One time when Rabbi Meir prayed for some robbers to die, Beruriah taught him to pray that their sin would die, that they would repent. She also taught Meir resignation when their two sons died. Loving and gentle as she was with Meir, Beruriah could also be arrogant and biting. She ridiculed a Sadducee, derided an erring student, and made a fool of Rabbi Yose the Galilean when he met her on the road.
>
> Finally, she mocked the sages' dictum that women are easily seduced, and she came to a shameful end. Rabbi Meir set one of his students to seduce her. After long denial she yielded to him. When the plot was revealed, she strangled herself, and Rabbi Meir fled to Babylonia because of the disgrace.

What is arresting about the portrayal of Beruriah is the vividness and solidity of her selfhood. She is, in literary terms, a rounded character rather than a flat or stylized one. She does not illustrate a single virtue like Rachel, the magnanimous wife of Rabbi Akiva, nor does she appear in a single role like the learned maid-

Rachel Adler lives in Los Angeles and has written extensively about women and Judaism.

servant of Rabbi Yehudah Ha'Nasi. In some texts she is the ideal daughter or wife, in others simply the source of a legal opinion, and in still others a caustic and formidable figure. What integrates the Beruriah traditions into a complex and ambivalent tale is the tension between a self portrayed as morally significant, and a sexually polarized society in which moral significance belongs to the opposite sex; the conflict, in other words, is between character and context.

It is unusual for rabbinic legends to depict women in a rounded or complex way. Since they are exclusively male creations or redactions, rabbinic legends are necessarily androcentric. Women appear in cameo roles at best. At worst, they are shadowy utilities like the black-garbed stagehands of the Japanese Noh drama. But Beruriah is no utility. Mastering, defending, even mocking the tradition that shapes her context, she embodies, as do the most memorable of the rabbis, a distinctive moral destiny. The problem of Beruriah—what we will have to understand in order to go on—is what it means that male rabbis transmitted a legend about a woman with a moral life like a man's, and how that legend breaks our hearts.

Paradoxically, it is precisely the anomaly of such a creature as Beruriah that rendered her interesting to the rabbis. In their search for universally applicable principles, the sages continually formulated cases that burst the bounds of their generalizations. So, for example, it is written in Tractate Ketubot: "He who forfeits his life pays no monetary fine." But what would happen, the rabbis ask, if one managed to do two separate but concurrent acts, one a capital crime, the other a tort? Could one be sentenced both to die and to pay?

The effort to imagine such an occurrence led the rabbis to propose such improbable situations as a man's first devouring forbidden priestly food and then stealing it, or loosing an arrow in the public domain on the Sabbath, which in its trajectory plows through someone's silk garments before coming to rest in the private domain. What do these surrealistic situations represent if not a passionate attempt to capture some elusive truth by smashing context? Imagining Beruriah must be regarded as just such an effort—a straining for a more encompassing context, an outrageous test case proposed as a challenge to all contextually reasonable assumptions: *What if there were a woman who was just like us?*

What would it mean? In Palestine in 200 B.C.E. or Babylonia in 500 C.E., a woman who was like a scholar would indeed be anomalous, important, and worthy of attention as ordinary women were not, and yet unwomanly, shameful, and grotesque. It is no surprise, then, that the rabbis who told stories about Beruriah projected into them their own mixed feelings about such a woman. It is more surprising that some of the storytellers were aware that had there been such a woman, as Beruriah *she* would have had correspondingly mixed feelings about *them* and their tradition.

Beruriah's story is thus imbued with profound ambivalence. On the positive side are Beruriah's brilliance, her special usefulness as a woman who vindicates rabbinic Judaism, and the uniquely appealing depictions of her relationship with her husband. On the negative side, Beruriah is viewed as a threat, a competitor, an arrogant woman contemptuous of men and of rabbinic tradition.

The curse of scholars is the delusion of transcending context, all the while being trapped in a frame to which they are oblivious.

This negative pole of the rabbinic attitude toward Beruriah, which culminates in the tale of her adultery and suicide, is filled with malignant power. It so pervades the legend retroactively that we cannot mention Beruriah's intelligence or accomplishments without adding, if only mentally, "But she came to a bad end." This mental reservation brings the iron bars of the rabbinic context crashing down upon the anomalous woman, indeed upon all women.

If we consider for a moment the position of women in the rabbinic system, the context-breaking nature of a creation like Beruriah is immediately apparent. In the world of the rabbis, received tradition teaches that women are the intellectual and moral inferiors of men. In Tractate Ketubot it is said that "women are flighty," that is, easily seduced, and because of their looseness, inherently seductive. "Whoever converses overmuch with women brings harm to himself, neglects the study of Torah, and in the end will inherit perdition," write the rabbis in Mishnah Avot. Women's hair, women's movements, women's voices, women's garments are all enticements to sexual license, according to the Talmud. Because contact with menstruants is ritually defiling, contact with even a man's own female relatives is circumscribed with prohibitions.

It is no exaggeration to say that women are viewed as aliens inhabiting a culture that at certain points intersects male culture while remaining distinct from it. This must be the meaning of the adage attributed to Ulla that "women are a separate people." The very lives of women can be viewed as intrinsically less valuable than those of men, since Mishnah Horayot teaches that when a choice must be made about whose life to save

first, a man's life takes priority.

Since women are most praiseworthy when they are least visible, a woman's occupation of the central role in a story must be explained. The most reasonable explanation is that she has displaced a man. Thus, in several texts identified with Beruriah the woman is portrayed as having bested a less competent man.

In one of the earliest of these texts, her competitor is her own brother. The Tosefta poses a legal question concerning the purification of an oven. Hananyah's son says it becomes pure when it is moved from its place. His daughter (Beruriah) says it becomes pure when its parts are disassembled, a more elegant solution, since as soon as its parts are disassembled, the oven reverts to a pile of stones. Because it is no longer a cultural object, it is not susceptible to ritual impurity. The two opinions are told to Rabbi Yehudah, who remarks, "His daughter said better than his son."

A text from Tractate Semakhot depicts further the rogue's progress of Rabbi Hananyah's disappointing son and his replacement by his pious sister. Having fallen into evil ways, the son is murdered by outlaws. Each of his relatives recites over him a condemnatory verse from Proverbs. His sister's verse, "Bread of falsehood is pleasant to a man, but in the end his mouth is filled with gravel," is rendered more cruelly apt by a later parallel text in Ekhah Rabbah. In that version, the outlaw son is murdered by his companions for betraying their secrets, and his mouth is filled with gravel. The narrative rationale for the high visibility of Rabbi Hananyah's daughter is thus established: She is a replacement for a worthless son.

Beruriah's displacement of men is also achieved by confuting them. Tractate Berakhot describes a dispute between Beruriah and a Sadducee. The Sadducee challenges the verse "Rejoice, O barren one who has not given birth" on the grounds that a barren woman has no cause for rejoicing. Since this is a Pharisaic narrative, the plot requires that the Sadducee, seeking a theological alliance by basing his objection on "women's experience," be stopped in his tracks by a woman learned enough to direct him to read to the end of the verse: "For more numerous are the children of the forsaken than the children of the favored wife."

But Beruriah then presses her advantage. "Why 'barren one who has not given birth'?" she questions. "Rejoice, O community of Israel, which is compared to a barren woman, which has not borne children for perdition like you!" Not only does Beruriah resist the Sadducee's temptation to argue that the text does not represent women's experience, she vehemently rejects all kinship with him. Like her Pharisaic creators, the Beruriah of this story views herself as a representative of the normative tradition. It is not she but the Sadducee who is marginal: the implication of her taunt is that he is not a member of the community of Israel at all.

The portrayal of an incisively contemptuous Beruriah enlivens the Pharisaic polemic against Sadduceeism, but when the rabbis come to imagine their own relationship with such a woman, the mood becomes more threatening. Rabbi Yohanan uses the example of Beruriah, who learned three hundred traditions from three hundred masters in a day, to discourage or conceivably to insult the persistent Rabbi Simlai, whom Rabbi Yohanan does not wish to teach.

In a text from Tractate Eruvin, Beruriah herself rebukes a student for his ineffective study habits. She predicts that because he studies silently and passively, he will be unable to retain what he hears. In an ironic reversal, the woman is a scathing and authoritative scholar, the scholar silent and passive like a woman.

This irony is doubled and tripled in an encounter between Beruriah and Rabbi Yose the Galilean in which all the rabbinic ambivalence and fear about Beruriah is encapsulated.

> He asked her, "By what road do we go to Lydda?" She replied, "Silly Galilean! Didn't the sages say, 'Do not converse too much with women'? You could have said, 'How to Lydda?'"

The story is laden with ironies. Rabbi Yose, fearing that a superfluous pleasantry will open him to lust, rudely asks directions without a greeting. Beruriah obligingly demonstrates how he might have made the conversation briefer yet, thereby prolonging their contact. Not only must Rabbi Yose converse with a woman, he must be rebuked by her; not only rebuked, but taught Torah; and not just any Torah, but precisely the dictum he had been trying so zealously to observe.

But the ultimate joke, if it is a joke, is on Beruriah. The Torah she has taught Rabbi Yose is genuine, and it clearly discriminates against her. The originators of this text have thus come to the crux of the problem: Were there a woman like Beruriah, schooled in and committed to a tradition that views her as inferior, how could she resolve the paradox inherent in her loyalty to that tradition?

The irony through which the potential explosiveness of this paradox is conveyed is itself multileveled. Irony is, first of all, a language that the self speaks to the self over the heads of the unwitting. That is how it functions within the text. Beruriah speaks ironically to the obtuse Rabbi Yose. In response to his zeal, she exposes the sexist dictum and teasingly reproaches its adherent for not observing it.

The Lament of the Single Practitioner

Essays on the Law

Mordecai Rosenfeld

Foreword by Louis Auchincloss

With a precise and uproarious wit, Mordecai Rosenfeld surveys in these essays the workings of the law, a law that all too seldom meets the high standards of wisdom sent down from Mount Sinai or even from Mother Rosenfeld in Brooklyn.



From the pontifications of Supreme Court justices to the scurryings of paralegals in the word-processing centers of Big Firms, Rosenfeld's observations bring his humor to bear on a profession that often takes itself far too seriously. $18.95 *Illustrated*

Mixed Blessings

An Almost Ordinary Life in Hitler's Germany

Heinz R. Kuehn

Born into Hitler's Germany to a Jewish mother, Heinz Kuehn survived—was both saved and scorned—through his official designation as a *Mischling Ersten Grades*, or Mixed Breed of the First Degree. Though Kuehn's early life was filled with the easy laughter and warm security of the *Mischpoke*, his mother and her relatives fled before the Nazi onslaught, and he spent the cataclysmic war years anxiously wondering about his fate and watching the slow obliteration of Berlin.

$17.95

Illustrated



The University of Georgia Press

Athens, Georgia 30602

But irony is also a code by which the knowing can speak to, and make alliance with, the knowing. The Beruriah of this text sends a message of defiance to like-minded readers. For what can her behavior mean other than that she rejects the rabbinic dictum that she purports to teach?

There is, however, a third level to this irony—a third secret message that is conveyed. This is the message that the rabbinic transmitters of the story convey to their audience, the message that Beruriah is subversive and unmanageable, a fifth column in the patriarchal domain in which she has hiterto enjoyed the privileges of a resident alien.

This story, with its ironies within ironies, epitomizes the negative pole of the rabbinic ambivalence toward Beruriah and adumbrates the story of her downfall. Other texts, however, illustrate the positive pole. For while it is threatening to imagine being ridiculed and exposed by a woman too learned and powerful to be controlled, it is also moving to imagine being loved and befriended by her. Thus the rabbis, in describing the domestic life of Beruriah and Meir, portray Beruriah as a feminine version of the ideal study partner.

In one episode, Rabbi Meir prays for the demise of robbers who are plaguing the neighborhood. Beruriah addresses him in the language of talmudic dispute:

> On what do you base your opinion that it is permissible to pray for the robbers' deaths? Because it is written, "Let sins end" [Ps. 104:35]? Not "sinners" but "sins" is written! Moreover, read to the end of the verse: "And the wicked shall be no more." Pray rather that they should repent and not be wicked any more.

Meir prays as Beruriah directs, and the robbers repent.

It is interesting to compare this story with the medieval representation of the virtuous wife of Meir as depicted in Midrash Mishlei on Proverbs 31:10. Although Beruriah's name is not mentioned, the story has become one of the homiletic classics of the Beruriah legend. In this story, Meir's two sons have died on the Sabbath. Their mother evades Meir's questions about their whereabouts until the day has ended. She then proposes a legal case to him, addressing him as a student would a teacher. "Master, a while ago a man gave me an object in trust. Now he wishes to take it. Should we return it to him or not?" Meir quotes the law: The object must be returned.

The wife, thereupon, shows Meir the dead children. When he begins to bewail their loss, she reminds him, "Master, did you not say to me that I must return the trust to its owner?" He responds, quoting Job, "The

Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

One virtue attributed to the wife of the second story is restraint. Because God is owed a Sabbath unmarred by mourning, she restrains her own grief as a mother and her concern for her husband. Her second, less apparent virtue is a distinctive *hesed,* a sort of loving-kindness that only one scholar can offer another. This scholar-wife breaks the terrible news to her husband by asking a question framed to address the subtext of his grief. The metaphor of the owner's reclaiming the object left in trust prevents Meir from interpreting the deaths as punishment for parental sins. Consequently, it allows the bereaved parents to grieve without self-reproach. The wife in the text agrees with the opinion cited in Tractate Berakhot that the death of children is a trial of love and not a punishment. Meir signifies his acceptance of this reframing by quoting from Job.

But how can Beruriah be a man's intellectual and spiritual intimate when women, simply by reason of their womanhood, continually emanate sexual invitation? Rabbi Yose the Galilean was not alone in believing that women were ineluctably sexual beings. The polarization of sexual and nonsexual intimacies is characteristic of rabbinic Judaism. Mishnah Avot says:

> All love which is dependent on sexual desire, when the desire is gone, the love is gone. Love which is not dependent on sexual desire never ends. What is love dependent on sexual desire? The love of Amnon and Tamar. And love which is not dependent on sexual desire? The love of David and Jonathan.

If Amnon and Tamar and David and Jonathan represent the two ends of a continuum, the fact that one end is represented by an incestuous rape and the other by a relationship presumed to be nonsexual does suggest a dichotomy between sexual desire and true love. The love of David and Jonathan, moreover, evoked for the rabbis their own study partnerships—passionate relationships, yet devoid of conscious sexuality.

The study partnership was one of the defining social structures of rabbinic society and one of the most idealized. As it is written in Avot d'Rabbi Natan:

> Yehoshua ben Perahyah says: "Appoint for yourself a teacher, and get yourself a companion." This teaches that a man should get himself a companion, to eat with him, drink with him, study Bible with him, study Mishnah with him, sleep with him and reveal to him all his secrets, secrets of Torah and secrets of worldly things.

From the rabbinic perspective, the study partners' lack of sexual motive is what safeguards these intimacies. What is eroticized instead is the study. Hence, it is not surprising that the Talmud describes ordination celebrations that mimic weddings. At Rabbi Zera's ordination, for example, the sages sing him the traditional praise-song for a bride: "No kohl, no rouge, no waved hair and still a graceful gazelle." Rabbi Ammi and Rabbi Assi, who are mentioned together at least eight times in the Talmud, are given a joint celebration even more reminiscent of a wedding.

It is not even problematic for the rabbis to appreciate one another's physical attractiveness. Yohanan ben Napha's beauty is celebrated in several stories. In one, the sight of Rabbi Yohanan's bared arm lights up the sickroom of Rabbi Eleazar ben Pedat, who weeps unashamedly over the mortality of his friend's beauty.

Another text narrates the lovers' tragedy of Rabbi Yohanan and his partner Resh Lakish. Resh Lakish, a bandit chief, happens upon Yohanan swimming in the Jordan and is struck by his beauty. Yohanan is equally struck by the bandit's strength. He teaches Resh Lakish Torah and gives him his sister as a wife.

One day the two study partners have an academic dispute which becomes a bitter quarrel. Resh Lakish then falls ill and dies unreconciled with Rabbi Yohanan. After Resh Lakish's death, Yohanan mourns him wildly and dies of grief.

Attachments between teachers and students may be equally passionate. Several stories recount Rabbi Meir's continued loyalty to his teacher Elisha ben Abuyah, who turned heretic. In one, Meir declares, "If God will not save him, I will." He spreads his garment over his teacher's grave, which is aflame with infernal fire, until, by morning, the flames have ceased.

It is precisely Beruriah's inability to provide herself with a teacher and get herself a companion that leaves her isolated in the rabbinic world. The crucial difference between Beruriah and the rabbis is that no teacher claims her as student, that no student quotes her as teacher, and that Beruriah herself quotes texts but never names teachers. Whatever her gifts and capacities, they funnel, ultimately, into a void because Beruriah lacks authority.

Authority in rabbinic Judaism flowed through the medium of rabbinic relationships, and the rabbis could not imagine how to give Beruriah authority without including her in the web of rabbinic relationships—the web of teachers and students and study partners. And they could not imagine doing that without also imagining her sexuality as a source of havoc. Sexuality was regarded as women's most compelling characteristic, and it constituted, in the rabbis' opinion, an insurmountable barrier to any relationship other than a

(Continued on p. 102)

You are Invited to
Attend

Tikkun's Conference of Liberal & Progressive Jewish Intellectuals . . .

the first such gathering in many decades.

It will be a major intellectual and cultural event and a unique opportunity to meet people who share your interests.

Don't miss it.

Dec. 18–20, New York City

Tentative Schedule and reservation information on the other side.

BUSINESS REPLY LABEL
FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO. 920 OAKLAND, CA
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

TIKKUN
5100 Leona St.
Oakland, CA 94619

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

The TIKKUN Conference . . .

Reconstituting the Progressive Tradition of American Jewish Intellectuals

Tentative Schedule:

Sunday, December 18

8:00-11:30—Registration

8:30-10:00—Roundtable of Palestinians and American Jews

10:00-12:00—Learning Sessions with our Respected Teachers.

1:00—Opening Plenary Session: Michael Walzer, Marge Piercy, Michael Lerner, Arthur Green, Nan Fink and Peter Gabel. *Topic:* Issues of Politics and Culture Facing the Contemporary Jewish Intellectual.

4:00-6:00—Concurrent Sessions

1. The Rise and Fall of the Neoconservatives. Paul Berman and Ilene Philipson.

2. American Politics After the 1988 Elections—Strategies for the Coming Years. Heather Booth, Ruth Messinger, and David Cohen.

3. The Progressive Possibilities in Contemporary Art, Music, Film, and Theater. Phillip Lopate and Robert Polito.

4. The Social & Political Meaning of American Jewish Literature. Francine Prose, Ted Solotaroff, and Jay Cantor.

5. AIPAC, the Conservative Jewish Establishment and the Challenge from the Left.

7:30-10:00—Concurrent Sessions

1. Judaism, Spirituality, and Radical Politics: The Conflict and Possible Alliance between Religion and Progressive Intellectuals. Arthur Waskow, Harvey Cox, and Jesse Lemisch.

2. Responding to Bloom, Bennett and the Conservative Agenda for Education: Issues in Moral Relativism and the Tensions between Religion and Progressive Intellectuals. Russell Jacoby and Leon Botstein.

3. Zionism in Light of the *Intifada* Steve Zipperstein, Ellen Willis, Milton Viorst, and Jerry Siegel.

Monday, December 19

8:30-9:30—Small Group Discussions.

9:30-12:30—Concurrent Sessions

1. Mass Culture, Post-Modernism and the Struggle for a Liberatory Culture. Todd Gitlin, Marshall Berman, and Herbert Gans.

2. Liberalism and its Critics. Paul Starr and Gary Peller.

3. How to End the Cold War. Joanne Landy, Stanley Hoffman, Robert Jay Lifton, and Abraham Brumberg.

4. Anti-Semitism in the Left and the Dynamics of Internalized Oppression.

1:45-4:45—Israel Plenary: The Role of Liberal/Progressive Jews in Light of Recent Developments in Israel and in the PLO. David Gordis, Michael Lerner, and Yossi Sarid.

4:45-5:45—Small Group Discussions

6:30-11:00—Banquet Ceremony to Honor the Contributions of Some Who Kept the Flame During the Darker Days. Honorees who will address the Banquet: Irving Howe, Grace Paley, Alfred Kazin. Plus Music and Poetry.

Tuesday, December 20

9:00-12:30—Concurrent Sessions

1. The Conflict between Blacks and Jews: Strategies for Healing the Rifts. Cornel West, Congressman Barney Frank, and Chaim Seidler Feller.

2. Feminist Critiques of Jewish and Secular Culture. Jessica Benjamin, Lynn Chancer, and Carol Meyer.

3. A Political Agenda for the 90s. Herbert Gintis, David Gordon, and Hendrick Hertzberg.

11:30-12:30—Small Groups and Poetry Reading

1:45-3:45—Concurrent Sessions

1. Conflicts in Remaining True to Progressive Values and the Jewish World. Al Vorspan, Anne Roiphe.

2. The Role of Progressive Values and Judaism in Cultural Creativity. J. Hoberman, Howard Fast, and Marx Wartofsky.

3. Jewish Perspectives on the Ecological Crisis. Allan Freeman and Betty Mensch.

4. Yuppie-ism and Segmented Professionalism: Radical Alternatives to the Culture of Self-Interest.

4:00-6:00—Concluding Plenary and Strategy Session.

All sessions are at the Penta Hotel, New York City, Dec. 18-20, 1988

Conference Registration

- ☐ $160 Full Conference and Banquet
- ☐ $85 REDUCED FEE if the full fee would be an impediment to your attending
- ☐ $35 Special Student Rate (doesn't include banquet)
- ☐ $55 Sunday only, December 18
- ☐ $55 Monday only (doesn't include banquet), December 19
- ☐ $50 Tuesday only, December 20
- ☐ $50 Banquet only, December 19

Use this registration application or send your name, address, telephone number and registration code with payment to: *Tikkun*, 5100 Leona St., Oakland, CA, 94619.
For Housing: Call the Penta Hotel directly at 212-736-5000 and ask for the special conference rates.
Airline Discount: In U.S. (except Missouri) call TWA at 1-800-325-4933. In Missouri, call TWA at 1-800-392-1673. (#9914193)

Payment Enclosed ☐
Charge my Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐
Account No. _____ Exp. Date _____

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
City/State/Zip Phone no.

Peace Soon? Israeli Protest Politics and the Intifada

Aaron Back and Gordon Fellman

On a summer Saturday morning, joining close to one hundred demonstrators, we travel from Jerusalem to the outskirts of Ramallah on the West Bank to protest the announced deportation of a Bir Zeit University professor. Although the Israeli army has ordered the university closed, two hundred students are waiting to meet with us. But the army prevents us from reaching them. Instead, we hold up our protest signs to the curious eyes of the infrequent Arab motorists passing through the nearby countryside.

We are allowed into the town itself, and we try to improvise a brief demonstration; but the twenty soldiers who face us tell us that we must leave the area, which, because of our presence there, has suddenly been declared a closed military zone. We stand our ground. With a touch of desperation in his voice, one soldier pleads for us to go. He tells us that it isn't pleasant for him to have to beat or teargas us.

The situation is tense, but we are fairly confident that these soldiers will not attack us. After all, we are Israelis and tourists. We raise our signs and start to chant. Three of our people are arrested. We are ordered to disperse immediately, but we make it clear that we will not budge until the three arrestees are released. An hour later they are free, and we go home.

This is a typical Israeli protest action in the *intifada* era: idealistic, committed, and focused. At the same time, however, the actors are few and their influence is limited. The Ramallah protest generated barely a one-sentence mention in the newspapers the next day. All too often one senses that Israeli protesters are speaking only to themselves—incapable of communicating to enough Palestinians that there really are Israelis who support the Palestinian right to self-determination, and incapable of mobilizing the Israeli public against the occupation. Faced with Israel's most important election in years, progressive Israeli forces have been largely ineffective in translating public alarm into political support for the peace movement.

Gordon Fellman, who teaches sociology at Brandeis University, is at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem this year. Aaron Back, a Lady Davis Fellow at the Hebrew University, is on the Israeli staff of Tikkun.

Despite scant coverage in the international media, Israeli protest groups—while not yet sufficiently organized to be considered a movement—have blossomed in the past nine months. While the majority of Israelis who criticize the occupation have been mostly passive, the activists have kept alive the public voice of protest. Each new harsh governmental policy is met with some kind of public demonstration. Yet there remain some crucial limits on what the protest movement is able to accomplish. Woefully short on well-planned strategies, the movement has not made clear to whom its demonstrations are directed, or how to increase the number of people who participate in these demonstrations—much less whether these protests are in fact the most effective way to further the peace process. These kinds of basic issues are rarely discussed at the planning meetings of the various peace organizations.

There will be room for a peace movement to maneuver even if Israel ends up being ruled by a right-wing government.

When the *intifada* began, three veteran protest groups sang their usual songs. Shalom Akhshav (Peace Now) mounted large public demonstrations and attempted to influence reserve officers and government officials. Religious doves from Oz V'Shalom/Netivot Shalom (Strength and Peace/Pathways to Peace) expressed concern at a major public forum. Members of Yesh Gvul (There is a Border/Limit), the controversial organization that organized reservists' resistance during the Lebanon War, refused to serve in the occupied territories, and for the first time began to inform soldiers of their rights to resist illegal orders.

Yet many Israelis wanted to do something more. A spate of protest groups was formed. Some groups represent specific constituencies, such as women (Shani), Sephardim (East for Peace), architects, mental health professionals, lawyers. Others have a broader focus, attempting to encourage dissenters to work together more regularly. On Fridays in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel

Aviv scores of women stage a one-hour silent vigil. Dai La'Kibush (End the Occupation), a coalition of activists from left parties and protest organizations, organizes weekly "solidarity visits" to West Bank refugee camps, villages, and prisons. Ha'Shanah Ha'Esrim V'Akhat (The Twenty-First Year—of the occupation) attempts to show Israelis how they have helped perpetuate the occupation, and how they can stop collaborating. The organization's recommendations, which are just beginning to be implemented, include boycotting goods made by the settlers, monitoring the portrayal of the occupation in school curricula, and urging Israelis and tourists to refuse to visit the occupied territories unless they have been officially invited to meet Palestinians.

Unexpectedly and ironically, the *intifada* has made Palestinian and Israeli activists more receptive to meeting and talking with one another. Visits by both parties across their respective sides of the Green Line have become an important form of protest activity. These visits have strengthened the Israeli activists' conviction that there *is* someone to talk to, and that many Palestinians wish to live in peace alongside Israel. Unfortunately, the protest groups have not succeeded in finding an effective way to convey this information to the Israeli public. Nor have the contacts with Palestinians from the territories brought about closer relationships with Israeli Arabs; though a few Israeli Arabs have joined groups that include Jews, most Arab protest activities have remained separate.

However limited in their overall effect, the numerous Israeli peace activities remain crucial. As Israeli human rights abuses proliferate, protest helps constrain the authorities and it reinforces the right to free speech. The protest organizations legitimate public discussion of the two-state solution and of negotiations with the PLO—positions dismissed as "ultraleft" and "anti-Zionist extremism" a short time ago.

Peace Now

Peace Now has been losing its hegemony over peace activists for some time. Nevertheless, no one doubts that Peace Now is central to the peace process. It is the only group known internationally; and its lobbying campaigns in Washington, its efforts to bring Arab and Israeli speakers to the U.S., and its sponsoring of public advertisements have helped support Americans who question Israeli policies. Indeed, few Americans who follow Israeli politics know any other Israeli protest group's name. And within Israel, Peace Now is the one group that can mobilize thousands (and sometimes tens of thousands) of people to demonstrate against the government's current policies.

Part of Peace Now's success can be attributed to its political moderation. It has confined its criticism to statements opposing current Israeli policies, refusing to make a public endorsement of negotiations with the PLO and of a demilitarized Palestinian state. This reticence has made the organization feel safe to some political centrists, intellectuals, and professionals, and it has also served to increase Peace Now's access to military officers in the reserves and to government officials. At the same time, some of the central activists in Peace Now are every bit as committed and principled as people in the more openly left organizations, and they have begun to move beyond the self-imposed organizational constraints. They played an important role in publicizing the statement of Bassam Abu Sharif, Yasir Arafat's spokesman, who indicated a PLO willingness to live in peace with Israel. Partly through their support of two-state Palestinian moderates like Feisal Husseini, Peace Now has unofficially begun to advocate mutual recognition and negotiations with the PLO. But it still hesitates to take the lead in stating these positions or in organizing people to support them. Peace Now's Askhenazi, educated, liberal following is not so much a group of activists as it is a Greek chorus reacting with horror and anguish—and offering no real alternatives.

There are significant drawbacks to Peace Now's approach. Not only does the organization reinforce the public perception that the peace movement has no answers, but it also projects an elitism that alienates many of those people who should be reached. Moreover, Peace Now rallies and the Peace Now culture in general tend to discourage emotion and passion. Many members of the organization are too dispassionate, and the rallies often feel tepid rather than politically alive. Peace Now does little to validate the average Israeli's pain, anger, or moral passion.

The right, by contrast, manages to appeal to the Israelis' deep passions. Though some people point out that the more expressive nature of Sephardic culture may be part of the reason that many Sephardim are attracted to the right, this argument does not help explain Peace Now's failure to generate enthusiasm among many Ashkenazim as well.

Since the *intifada* started, Peace Now has occasionally had an Israeli Arab or a Palestinian from the occupied areas (once one of each) speak at its rallies. It sometimes has a Sephardi on the program, and a woman will often read a poem or sing a song (although women seldom give speeches). The audience is called upon to listen and sometimes to sing quietly (and halfheartedly) *Shir Ha'Shalom,* the movement's peace song, and *Hatikvah,* Israel's national anthem. The stage is set: tightly structured program, boring format, Ashkenazi-male-dominated, western norms of civility, avoidance of strong passion.

Cultivating moderation, Peace Now makes sure it cannot be accused of being extreme. It refuses to work in coalitions that include groups supporting refusal to serve in the army, and it avoids appearances with groups that officially endorse a two-state solution and negotiations with the PLO. It has rejected any form of nonviolent civil disobedience. And a recent Peace Now auto-caravan, which drove through the West Bank in order to show solidarity with the Palestinians, lost most of its credibility in Palestinian eyes when its riders agreed to army stipulations not to leaflet or carry banners, and even accepted an army escort. This kind of deference to authority, fostered in part by the way many Israelis have been shaped by their experience in the army, makes it very difficult to convey to Palestinians that there are some Israelis who really do understand their pain and who sympathize with their outrage when the army acts as it did in Beita.

Part of Peace Now's success can be attributed to its political moderation.

In many ways Peace Now is more like the Nuclear Freeze movement in the U.S. than it is like the anti-Vietnam War movement. Like the Freeze, and unlike the antiwar movement, it has one theme and one goal, and it consciously stays away from any action that might be interpreted as more broadly radical and oppositional to the dominant society (for example, analyzing the complex economic, social, and political dynamics in Israeli society that contribute to its current right-wing tilt).

Mass Psychology and Peace

Those groups that do not impose upon themselves the political constraints of Peace Now are similar to Peace Now (and to left political movements in the U.S. as well) in their striking insensitivity to the emotional concern of the people whom they most need to reach. While the other protest groups go beyond Peace Now in recognizing the importance of some level of emotional expression in their public demonstrations, they do not yet ask themselves how they might address the fear and pain that are central to the mass psychology of most Israelis.

There is, of course, the lingering fear of trusting outsiders—which is part of the continuing legacy of the Holocaust. This fear is based on real experience, and an effective peace movement should validate this fear while offering a different set of conclusions about what we might learn from it. In addition, Israelis have legitimate security fears that, although inappropriately manipulated by the right, are based both on genuine concerns about Palestinian intentions and on the threat to Israeli security posed by the surrounding Arab states. The important work of the Council for Peace and Security—composed of thirty-four reserve generals and scores of other high-ranking reserve officers—has been to articulate effectively the ways that Israeli security needs can be better maintained by relinquishing territory. Yet the protest groups have not placed enough emphasis on finding ways to convey this kind of analysis to those who have not yet heard it articulated persuasively.

Protest groups must also deal with the fear of many working-class Sephardim that a settlement might return them to the underclass—a position they held until cheap Arab labor in the years following the 1967 war made Sephardic economic advances possible. Protest groups need to propose a clear vision of an Israeli economy that would not be dependent on exploited Arab or Sephardic workers.

Finally, a viable peace movement must recognize the legitimate nationalist aspirations of the Israeli public. Much like its American counterpart, the Israeli right has successfully wrapped itself in God, family, and flag. It has thus tapped into Israelis' needs to feel strong, self-respecting, and part of a larger community of purpose and meaning. These are universal needs and should be legitimated and properly channeled, not dismissed.

Don't Kvetch, Organize

The desire to respond to the outrages of the *intifada* is morally commendable, but endless demonstrations and vigils cannot by themselves counter the powerlessness and despair felt by most Israelis who oppose the occupation.

The peace movement must develop a strategy to combat this despair. The protest groups ought to focus on the following questions: In light of the results of the November election, what kinds of protest activities are likely to push the new government toward peace? What response is appropriate to the newest PLO statements that seem to indicate an openness to peace? What new constituencies can be reached, and what tactics should be used to reach them? What can be done to create a mass psychology favorable to peace? How do we politically mobilize people who agree with us but who have never been activists—except for periodically participating in a Peace Now rally? What kinds of joint activities with Israeli Arabs make sense? What is the relationship between protest activities and electoral success?

Right now there is great resistance to developing such protest strategy, and much of this resistance is due to the fact that the peace activists tend to be pessimistic. They often dismiss strategic suggestions as naive. Just

as the Israeli right argues that "you just don't know these Arabs, because if you did you'd know they'd never accept peace," so too the Israeli left argues that "you just don't know these Israelis [or sometimes, these Sephardim], because if you did you'd know that nothing we do could ever change their minds." A similar refrain is, "We've tried that before and it didn't work."

While these responses often reflect genuine frustration, they do not help peace activists develop alternative strategies that are appropriate to the current political circumstances. Instead they make people passive and encourage them just to react to what others have initiated. Furthermore, beneath this resistance often lie leftist biases that perpetuate false stereotypes about much of the Israeli population, as well as hostility toward the average Israeli which makes it harder for him or her to identify with the protest groups.

The left's experience in the United States indicates that the Israeli left is not alone in being reluctant to organize across classes. People are most comfortable working with others who share their cultural and social assumptions and habits. Middle-class activists are rarely willing to face their ambivalence about people from other social classes. This fact, along with the activists' fear of rejection and failure, leads them to make half-hearted efforts to organize a peace movement on a mass level. If activists are ever to be effective, they must first work through some of these difficult and troubling feelings. In the process of coming to understand their own resistance, they may also become more sensitive to the resistance they are likely to meet from those whom they are trying to organize.

A peace movement that seriously addresses the psychological issues discussed above would be able to command serious attention from many Israelis. It also might be able to pursue other kinds of concerns, thus expanding its following. In working-class neighborhoods and towns, for example, imaginative campaigns might focus on expenditures of money in the occupied territories—money that could otherwise be used on housing and education as well as on reviving an Israeli medical system that is on the verge of economic collapse. Current estimates peg the direct cost of suppressing the *intifada* at more than $1.5 million per day. Like the U.S. peace movements, the Israeli peace movement could use vivid graphics and texts to show how money now being spent in the territories on defense and settlements could be improving life in Israel proper.

It may seem like a difficult time to be optimistic about Israel's peace movement, given the likely November election results. Yet, even when preelection polls showed a strong surge to the right, many of the right-wingers said that they were willing to accept territorial compromise in return for peace. The fact is that most Israelis—on the right as well as on the left—really want peace, skeptical though they are about whether it is achievable. As a result, there will be room for a peace movement to maneuver even if Israel ends up being ruled by a right-wing government or a "national unity government" paralyzed by indecision.

Israeli protest groups are energetic and devoted. Except for Peace Now, Yesh Gvul, and the religious doves, most are barely a year old. Reaching maturity will require paying more attention to the "how to's" of organizing. At a time when the right-wing Tehiyah party's slogan is "We are the only ones who talk straight with you," straight talk from Peace Now and other protest groups is sorely needed. These groups will have to inspire people to transcend the current reality and envision a peaceful future that is safe, appealing, and within reach. If the protest groups can get together and implement such a strategy, they may be able to move beyond the important moral protest function that they have served thus far and create a politically effective peace movement capable of changing Israel's policies. □

A Plain Brown Wrapper

David Mamet

The periodic arrival of the Charles Atlas material disturbed me greatly. I was nine or ten years old and had answered their ad in a comic book. The ad assured me that there would be no charge for information regarding the system of Dynamic Tension—the system that could and would transform the weakling into the well-proportioned strong man of the ads. The ad further assured me that the material would arrive in a plain brown envelope.

The material did come, as advertised, in the plain wrapper. But it did not make me strong. It terrified me, because each free installment dealt with one thing and one thing only: my obligation to the Charles Atlas Company and my progressively intransigent, incomprehensible, and criminal refusal to pay for materials received.

I dreaded the arrival of those envelopes, and when they arrived I slunk in shame and despair. I loathed myself for ever having gotten involved in this mess.

Was the whole Charles Atlas promotion geared to idiots and children? Looking back, I think it must have been. The method of Dynamic Tension promised fairly instant strength and beauty at no cost to the consumer. And the vicious and continual dunning letters played masterfully on the undeveloped ego of that idiot or child. I, one such child, thought, on receiving their threats: "Of course they are disappointed in me. I am weak and ugly. How dare I have presumed to take these fine, strong people's course? How dare someone as worthless as I aspire to possess the secrets of strength and beauty? The Charles Atlas people have recognized, as they must, my laughable unworthiness, and my only defense against them is prayer."

For they were, of course, God—they offered me transformation in exchange for an act of sacrifice and belief. But I was unprepared to make that act.

The other religious experience of my youth was equally inconclusive and unfortunate. It was Reform Judaism: and though the God Jehovah, the God of Wrath and Strength and Righteousness, spoke through the mouth of Charles Atlas, he was deemed quite out-of-place at the Sinai Temple.

The rabbis were addressed by the title "doctor," the trumpet was blown in deference to the shofar, the ancient Hebrew chants and songs were rendered in Victorian settings, and we went to Sunday School rather than to *shul*. There is nothing particularly wrong with these traducements of tradition, except this: They were all performed in an atmosphere of shame.

Untutored in any religion whatsoever, we youngsters were exposed to the idea of worshipper-as-revisionist. Our practices were in-reaction-to. The constant lesson that we learned in our Sunday School was that we must be better, more rational, more up-to-date, finally, more *American* than that thing that had come before. And that thing that had come before was *Judaism*.

Judaism, at my temple in the 1950s, was seen as American Good Citizenship (a creed we could be proud of), with some Unfortunate Asiatic Overtones that we were not going to be so craven as to *deny*. No, we were going to bear up steadfastly under the burden of our taint—our Jewishness. We were such good citizens that *although it was not our fault* that our parents and grandparents were the dread Ashkenazi, the "superstitious scum of Eastern Europe," we would not publicly sever our connection with them. We Reform Jews would be so stalwart, so American, so non-Jewish, in fact, as to "Play the Game." We would go by the name of Jews, although every other aspect of our religious life would be Unitarian. Our religion was nothing other than a corporate creed, and our corporate creed was an evasion. It was this: We are Jews, and we are Proud to be Jews. We will express our Jewishness by behaving in every way possible exactly like our Christian Brethren because what they have is better than what we have.

I found the Reform Judaism of my childhood nothing other than a desire to "pass," to slip unnoticed into the non-Jewish community, to do nothing that would attract the attention, and, so, the wrath of mainstream America.

Why would America's notice necessarily beget its wrath? Easy: We were Jews, and worthless. We were everything bad that was said against us; we didn't even

---

Chicago-born David Mamet is the author of many plays, including Glengarry Glen Ross *for which he won both the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for the best American play of 1984. Most recently, he has directed Broadway's* Speed the Plow. *He has also directed a movie,* House of Games.

have a religion anymore; we'd given it up to placate the non-Jewish community, to escape its wrath.

What of the Wrath of Jehovah? He, too, was better left behind if we were to cease being Jews.

What was it, then, to be Jewish? Heaven forfend that it was to be part of a race, and spare us the wretched image of dark skins, loud voices, hook noses, and hairy hands.

Was it to be part of a religion? Of what did that religion consist? Every aspect of its observance had been traduced. Which of us Reform (which meant and means, of course, *reformed,* which is to say changed for the better, and, implicitly, penitent) Jews could remember the names, let alone the meanings, of those joyless holidays we attempted to celebrate? Those occasions—sabbath, holidays, bar mitzvahs—were celebrated with sick fear and shame. Not shame that we had forsaken our heritage, but shame that we had not forsaken it sufficiently.

One could both despise and envy Kissinger, Goldwater, and others who, though they had rejected the faith of their fathers, at least had the courage of their convictions.

The lesson of my Reform Temple was that metaphysics is just superstition—that there is no God. And every Sunday we celebrated our escape from Judaism. We celebrated our autonomy from God and from our forefathers, and so, of course, we were afraid.

My coreligionists and I eventually sought out the God we had been denied. We sought God in Scientology, Jews for Jesus, Eastern Studies, consciousness-raising groups—all attempts to explain the relationship between the one and the all, between our powerlessness and the strength of the universe. We sought God through methods not unlike Dynamic Tension—in which the powerless weakling, having been instructed in the Mysteries, overcomes the Bully (the Juggernaut, the World) and so restores order to the Universe.

Here is my question: what was so shameful about wanting a better physique?

Why did such information have to come in a plain brown wrapper?

Why did the Charles Atlas Company know that such an endeavor needed to be hidden?

The answer is that the desire for a better physique was not shameful, but we, the *applicants,* were shameful: We were intrinsically unworthy, and the idea of weaklings such as ourselves desiring strength and beauty was so laughable that, of *course,* we wanted our desires to be kept secret.

That was why the dunning letters worked. They threatened to expose not the fact that we hadn't paid our bills, but the fact that we had the audacity to want a beautiful life.

And that was also my experience, as a child, of Reform Judaism. It was religion in a plain brown wrapper, a religion whose selling point was that it would not embarrass us.

Thirty years later, I am very angry at the Charles Atlas Company, and at the Sinai Temple. Neither one delivered what it could and should have, and, more important, neither one had the right to instill in a child a sense of shame.

Thirty years later I am not completely happy with my physique, but I am very proud of being a Jew, and I have a growing sense of the reality of God. I say to that no doubt long-demised Charles Atlas Company, "You should be ashamed," and to the leaders of that Reformed temple, "What were you ashamed of?" □

LANGUAGE, TORAH, AND HERMENEUTICS IN ABRAHAM ABULAFIA

Moshe Idel

Abraham Abulafia, the founder of the ecstatic Kabbalah, exposed a mysticism that includes a deep interest in language as a universe in itself, to be studied as the philosophers study nature, in order to attain higher knowledge than natural science and philosophy. The status of Hebrew as the natural, intellectual, and primoridial language is discussed against the background of the medieval speculations regarding this topic.

Torah was regarded by Abulafia as the most important text, reflecting the constitution of the intellectual world and being identical with the Active intellect and even to God Himself . On the other hand, Torah was interpreted in Abulafia's Kabbalah as an allegory to the psychological processes of the mystic, an approach different from the regular Kabbalistic interpretation of this text as a symbolic corpus reflecting the divine intrasefirotic life.

224 pp. $12.95 pb.

S U N Y

THE POETICS OF ASCENT: Theories of Language in a Rabbinic Ascent Text

Naomi Janowitz

This book represents the first English translation of *Maaseh Merkabah*, a heikhalot text. Through dialogue, a rabbi-teacher reveals to his student the techniques of ascent, methods for traveling up through the heavens by means of the recitation of hymns. The hymns include praise of the deity and words that have no semantic meaning, but draw attention to sounds of letters in God's name. Since God's name is used to create the world, the sounds of the name are creative, but the Name cannot be spoken. The hymns create a multiplicity of Name-equivalents, words that have the functional status of the divine Name and which can be employed in ritual. The dialogic structure of the text permits to reader to become the next student in a chain going back to the deity by means of Moses. *176 pp. $12.95 pb.*

State University of New York Press
State University Plaza, Albany, New York 12246
To order: 1-800-666-2211

Judaism: Creating a Faithless People?

Donniel Hartman

Recently I was picked up by a taxi driver who, upon learning that I was a rabbi, said that he must speak to me since, in his words, I was a man of G-d. Two weeks earlier, he said, G-d had spoken to him in the same taxi. A sense of immediacy permeated his voice: For him, G-d was not a concept or a mere object to serve his needs; G-d was a living entity who had changed his life.

My initial reaction was that this taxi driver was slightly deranged. Further reflecting on the incident, however, I began to wonder why I had responded as I did; and why, for that matter, did I suspect that most Jews would have reacted in precisely the same way. Realizing that I had never heard a Jew describe this type of religious experience, I asked myself why most Jews seem to be cynical about personal religious encounters with G-d. After all, many Jews pray to G-d and engage in theological discussions. Why then is it that, in a fundamental sense, we have become a faithless people? Furthermore, why is it that I don't perceive myself or almost any of my rabbinic colleagues as "men of G-d"?

Although I do not think that this "faithlessness" is advocated explicitly by Judaism, I do believe that it is a by-product of our religious tradition. This tradition has created a legal system and a theology that make religious intimacy with G-d difficult to generate and even harder to respect.

Nowhere is this attitude more evident than in the decision to regulate and give specific obligatory form to prayer. In Tractate Berakhot, the Babylonian Talmud records the following debate: "Rabban Gamliel says: 'Every day a man should say the Eighteen Benedictions'.... Rabbi Eliezer says: 'If a man makes his prayers fixed [*kevah*], it [his prayer] is not genuine supplication.'" Jewish scholars chose to follow Rabban Gamliel, making a decision that culminated ultimately in the creation of the *siddur*—the standard prayer book.

In explaining the move toward regimented prayer, Maimonides states: "The number of prayers is not prescribed in the Torah. No form of prayer is prescribed in the Torah. Nor does the Torah prescribe a fixed time for prayer.... Consequently, when anyone ... prayed in Hebrew, he was unable to adequately express his needs or recount the praises of G-d without mixing Hebrew and other languages. When Ezra and his Council realized this condition, they ordained the Eighteen Benedictions in their present order."

Whether or not Maimonides's explanation is adequate, the spirit behind it seems accurate. Fixed prayers were formulated because Jewish leaders wanted Jews to speak appropriately with G-d, to request the right types of things in the right manner, and to articulate their personal needs in words and tenses that connected them to the praying Jewish community at large. Standardizing the liturgy took priority over making prayer a form of genuine supplication, a regenerative force, and a reflection of an intimate relationship with G-d.

Judaism has created a legal system and a theology that make religious intimacy with G-d difficult to generate and even harder to respect.

I do not claim that the *siddur* by definition destroys the possibility of intimate spirituality—only that a fixed liturgy makes spirituality more difficult and that the creation of a standard *siddur* reflects Judaism's general tendency not to place personal connection with G-d at the top of its list of priorities. The force of this claim is not weakened by the presence of Hassidic groups that do not seem to be plagued by spiritual deficiencies. These Hassidim constitute a very small segment of the Jewish people, and, in any case, the secret of their spiritual success lies precisely in their de-emphasis of the halakhic regimen and their focus on the innovative and personal.

Donniel Hartman is an Orthodox rabbi, the director of the American Friends of the Shalom Hartman Institute, and Judaic scholar-in-residence at the Jewish Community Center on the Palisades in Tenafly, New Jersey.

Moreover, it is not simply the *siddur* but a whole array of statements made by Jewish authorities that have influenced and shaped the faithlessness of our people. Jewish scholars have traditionally demanded, for example, that we reject any conception of G-d that might limit His absolute power and essence. Consequently, Maimonides and other Jewish leaders endorsed the "Doctrine of Negative Attributes." According to this doctrine, one must talk not about what G-d is, but about what He is not. A clear separation between the worldly and the divine is thus maintained.

But a consequence of this doctrine has been that Jews today have difficulty being intimate with G-d. A G-d about whom one must speak only in negative attributes is a G-d with whom it is difficult to have personal religious experiences. In creating a perfect G-d, we have created a distant G-d as well.

Other Judaic tenets reinforce this conception of a G-d to whom Jews need not strive to have personal access. It is written in the Sifre that "if one rejects idolatry it is as if one has accepted the whole Torah." This statement obviously does not mean that Judaism is merely the rejection of idolatry, but it does imply that Judaism cares more about what one should not believe than about what one should believe. Moreover, such a statement could emanate only from a religion that does not consider spiritual intimacy its primary agenda.

This antispiritual tendency is expressed most clearly in Tractate Baba Batra of the Babylonian Talmud. There the rabbis state that "the scholar is preferable to the prophet" and that "[when] the Temple was destroyed, prophecy was taken away from the prophets and given to lunatics and children." The rabbis probably had sound reasons for preferring scholars to prophets. They believed that a radical transformation of religious priorities was necessary for the maintenance of Judaism in a world where G-d often hides His face. Nevertheless, to claim that prophecy is tantamount to childishness or even madness is to denigrate spiritual intimacy with G-d.

It is often argued that Judaism is primarily a religion of action and law, and not a religion of faith. Judaism's devaluation of religious intimacy is particularly ironic, however, since such intimacy plays a key role in both understanding and fulfilling Jewish law. In Deuteronomy, for example, it is written: "Do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord." Nachmanides, in his commentary on Deuteronomy, asks why it is necessary to have this form of general commandment. Do we not do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord when we keep all the other commandments? Nachmanides explains that no legal system is capable of addressing all aspects of complex daily life, and consequently an awareness of G-d's larger purpose is necessary if one is to conduct one's life properly according to Jewish law. In order to achieve this awareness one must be able to answer the question "How do I do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord?"—which is possible only if one is sufficiently intimate with G-d. A lack of religious intimacy, therefore, creates not only a spiritually deficient Jew, but one who, in losing sight of the ultimate purpose of G-d, cannot genuinely fulfill Jewish law. Such a Jew tends to embrace a system of halakhic minutiae devoid of a proper sense of religious priorities and of G-d's ultimate purpose.

To claim that prophecy is tantamount to childishness or even madness is to denigrate spiritual intimacy with G-d.

In conclusion, since we rabbis suffer from the same spiritual inadequacies that plague the rest of the Jewish people, I can give only vague suggestions of how to combat this fundamental problem. We might learn a lesson from Socrates, who considered himself the most knowledgeable of men because he alone was aware of his own ignorance. We too ought to be aware of our deficiencies, to recognize our own "faithlessness" and to search for its causes. One avenue worth questioning is whether halakhic regimen ought to have a role in prayer. I believe that commitment to halakhah is one of the most essential parts of Judaism since it concretizes Judaism's values, helping us to incorporate them into our daily lives. Nevertheless, halakhic regimen does not seem to give life to spirituality. On the contrary, it seems at best to inhibit it and at worst to destroy it. Is it possible that a *siddur* with many empty pages will help people relate more intimately with G-d?

Responding to a person who claimed, "I don't feel like praying; my spirit is not moving me," Abraham Joshua Heschel said, "Maybe it's time *you* moved the spirit." An honest assessment of our people shows, however, that the halakhic regimen of prayer has not helped to produce Jewish people who move their spirits, but rather has produced people who have left their spirits far behind them. It is time for some serious and genuine introspection, for it seems that our people, who often perceive themselves as the Lord's chosen ones, have lost sight of their G-d. □

Philip Roth's Disease

Jonathan Wilson

Philip Roth's disease is control. Nowhere is this fact more apparent than in the final section of his "novelist's autobiography," *The Facts,* where almost every self-congratulatory reader's insight or penetrating critical discernment is anticipated and articulated by Roth himself—including, disarmingly, his obsession with control. On one level, *The Facts* is an engaging, open memoir that documents, in the manner of a *Künstlerroman,* those moments in Roth's life that have impinged most powerfully on his development as a writer: his protected childhood in Newark; his intellectual and emotional fun and games at college; his raw, abrasive relationship with his terribly destructive first wife (there has been no second); his clashes with the Jewish Establishment after the publication of *Goodbye Columbus;* and his healingly therapeutic love affair with a refined, kindhearted, docile super-WASP. At the end of these adventures we find Roth, like the hero of any good portrait of the artist as a young man, taking his first steps toward the mature self-expression that will culminate in *Portnoy's Complaint.*

But there is more to *The Facts* than clean memoir. For the carefully modulated exercises in recall are sandwiched between two letters, prologue and coda, that divert and distort the "straight" autobiographical material. The first letter is from Roth to Nathan Zuckerman, the protagonist of his last five novels. It includes a brief account of a depression and breakdown that Roth underwent in 1987, and in it Roth asks Zuckerman for advice on whether or not to go ahead with publishing *The Facts.* Zuckerman's reply gives cursory treatment to Roth's "crack-up" (it is mentioned in a postscript at the end of the letter) and consists largely of a lengthy undercutting of all that has come before. In his letter, Zuckerman attempts to restore to the reader's imagination the notion of Roth as a "bad Jewish boy," which the tasteful, decorous memoir, with its loving portraits of Roth's parents, may have convinced us to abandon (if we ever believed that Roth was a bad Jewish boy to begin with). On this level, *The Facts* seems less about who Philip Roth is than about who Roth thinks that his readers in general—and his Jewish readers in particular—think he is.

Are Roth's readers hostile or benign? Philistine or cultured? Voyeuristic or intelligently inquisitive? What should Roth tell them and what should he withhold? Is the audience "thoughtful" and "serious," as it is characterized in the opening pages of *The Facts?* Or does it consist, as it later appears to, of "perfect strangers" who have to be thwarted in their desire to "paw over" Roth's friends and relatives?

An episode in *The Facts* accurately reveals the stormy, ambivalent, and sometimes querulous relationship that Roth has had in the past with some of his real readers and seems to need to continue to have in the present with some of his imaginary ones. Roth recalls an unpleasant experience that he had as a panelist on a Yeshiva University forum. The year is 1962, shortly after Roth has won the National Book Award for Fiction and the Daroff Award of the Jewish Book Council of America—both for *Goodbye Columbus.* What is supposed to be a civilized literary evening featuring Roth, Ralph Ellison, and the lesser-known Pietro di Donato, turns into the Trial of Philip Roth as one member of the audience after another rises to excoriate the young Jewish writer. Roth is even asked (as Nathan Zuckerman will be by Judge Leopold Wapter in *The Ghost Writer*), "Would you write the same stories you have written if you were living in Nazi Germany?" Initially, Roth is combative, but eventually, worn down and grilled to the point of exhaustion, he has to be rescued by Ellison. Roth finds the hostile response of his audience all the harder to take because, unlike his fellow panelists who have winged it in their opening remarks, he has "read from some prepared pages, thus allowing me to speak confidently, while guarding, I thought, against an interrogator's altering the context in which my argument was being made. I was determined to take every precaution against being misunderstood."

Here, it seems to me, is the paradigm of Roth's recent

Jonathan Wilson is an assistant professor of English at Tufts University. His books include On Bellow's Planet *(Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985).*

writing: a powerful desire to control the fate of his texts, manifesting itself first in energetic preparation for the reader's onslaught—the text is shored up, interpretation anticipated and blocked—and culminating in an exhaustive piece of fiction, an essay, or as in the case of *The Facts,* a "fictional autobiographical projection of a partial self" (Zuckerman's description). Now, "exhaustive" and "exhaustion" are not so far apart; and the state in which Roth found himself at the end of the Yeshiva University meeting is akin both to the condition that led him, however temporarily, to abandon fiction last year—"exhaustion with masks, disguises, distortion and lies ... exhaustion with making fictional self-legends"—and to the entire process of his writing, with his desperate need to cover every angle. At the end of *The Facts* Zuckerman writes disparagingly to Roth, "It's surface mining ... and not much more: in spite of your being very much in control of your defensiveness. Just as having this letter at the end is a self-defensive trick to have it both ways." Of course, the only way that Zuckerman can know that Roth plans to put Zuckerman's letter at the end of the book is if Zuckerman and Roth are one—which indeed they are in the sense that Zuckerman is Roth's creation, but not in the sense that they appear to be in this book, where the veneer of an ironic distance between author and character is stripped away. The problem here, in any case, is not Roth's trickiness, which is entertaining, but his analytic thoroughness, which is irritating.

What lies behind Roth's need to attempt to imprison the reader in an all-powerful text? Roth's fiction has always concerned itself—to brilliant effect—with individuals who are blocked in a variety of ways. Whether it is a constipated father in *Portnoy's Complaint,* or a writer who can't write in *The Anatomy Lesson,* the frustration is the same. Often, the only way for Roth's characters to get past what is blocking them is to explode everything in their way. They have to go "too far"—in hurting their families, in their writing, in their sexual relations—in order to get anywhere at all. But, protagonist or antagonist, father or son, elder or younger sibling, each character experiences the other as blocking, defining, and surrounding. Even the text itself, as in *My Life as a Man* or *The Counterlife* or *The Facts,* contains within it blocking "countertexts" analogous to the relationships between individual characters.

Roth is at his best when he plays out these obsessions within the confines of the Jewish family. In *The Counterlife,* for example, the unfortunate Henry, having abandoned his wife and children in suburban New Jersey and having settled on the West Bank, is visited by his older brother Nathan. Henry interprets Nathan's mere presence as a rebuke—the latest in a long line of "Nathan knows best" appearances. Roth, as is common in the Zuckerman novels in which Henry appears, gives the younger brother one great speech. Henry denounces Nathan's pervasive psychologizing: "All my life you've been right on top, like a guy guarding me in a basketball game. Won't let me take one lousy shot. Everything I throw up you block. There's always the explanation that winds up belittling me. Crawling all over me with your fucking thoughts. Everything I do is predictable, everything I do *lacks depth,* certainly compared to what *you* do" (emphasis in original). Henry is, of course, mercilessly exposed as soon as he finishes talking, but what's most interesting is that the position that he has outlined parallels the relationship between Roth and his reader. In other words, Roth's central concern in his fiction and nonfiction—who controls whom and how—extends in a variety of ways to his relationship with his readers. Everything that Roth can imagine us throwing up—he blocks.

Roth's activity as a writer is almost precisely antithetical to that of the great Jewish novelist whom Professor Harold Bloom has identified as Roth's undoubted precursor—Franz Kafka. Kafka's texts resist interpretation; Roth's texts are *all* interpretation. In fact, as Roth's texts have become more sophisticated both psychologically and stylistically, they have also become more self-referential and more obsessively involuted. In 1969, Bruno Bettleheim was able—half-seriously, half-jokingly—to "analyze" Alexander Portnoy as if from the perspective of that peripatetic analyst in Roth's fiction, Dr. O. Spielvogel. The resulting character study certainly offers more insight into Alex than Alex himself would have been capable of, and perhaps even "psychs out" Roth in ways that twenty years ago may have been beyond his attentive consciousness. Now, however, Roth has become his own well-practiced Bettleheim/Spielvogel, and in *The Facts* his analysis of his own life and literature is broad, inclusive, and dauntingly intelligent. Of Kafka, Bloom has noted, there is almost nothing to discuss except his evasion of interpretation. Of Roth, there is almost nothing but the fullness of his interpretation. Whatever needs to be said about *The Counterlife* or *The Facts,* Roth has pretty much already said it himself.

Or has he? For while Nathan Zuckerman's wife Maria can wonder in *her* notes on *The Facts,* "Hasn't anything ever happened to [Roth] that he couldn't make sense of?" Roth himself seems always to be wondering if out there somewhere there aren't some perverted readers, reincarnations of the hostile Yeshiva University audience, who are twisting his meanings, reading him badly, reading in and out of context, confusing his life with his work and vice versa—and these readers, like all readers, are uncontrollable!

Roth sees himself, in relationship to his audience, occupying a position between "aggressively exhibitionistic Mailerism and sequestered Salingerism." But these are extreme polarities, and the truth is that Roth does not fit exactly in the middle: Though Roth is no hermit, both his life and his narratives are well-protected territories. Even in *The Facts,* where the genre demands a great deal of personal disclosure, the form that the narrative takes is designed to keep the reader at arm's length. Roth writes to Zuckerman of his fear that publication of *The Facts* will leave him "exposed in a way [he doesn't] particularly wish to be exposed," but the mere fact that the intimate revelations of the prologue—particularly those regarding Roth's breakdown—are recorded in a letter to Zuckerman and not in a direct address to the reader has the effect of deferring and diluting the intimacy. In a way, Roth uses the letter to Zuckerman to tell us how to read the material that follows it: We must behave courteously with the information that is being supplied; we are not to descend into vulgar voyeurism.

Roth's civil and decorous tone adds to the sense of distance. Even the description of his breakdown is given in coded literary terms that refuse pity or sympathy and request instead an appreciation of his "writerliness." The term that Roth chooses to use is "crack-up," which evokes less the contemporary valium-addicted world than the graceful literary world of F. Scott Fitzgerald, whose own "crack-up," precipitated in the same way as Roth's—a depression following recovery from a serious illness—is documented in his famous essay titled after the event.

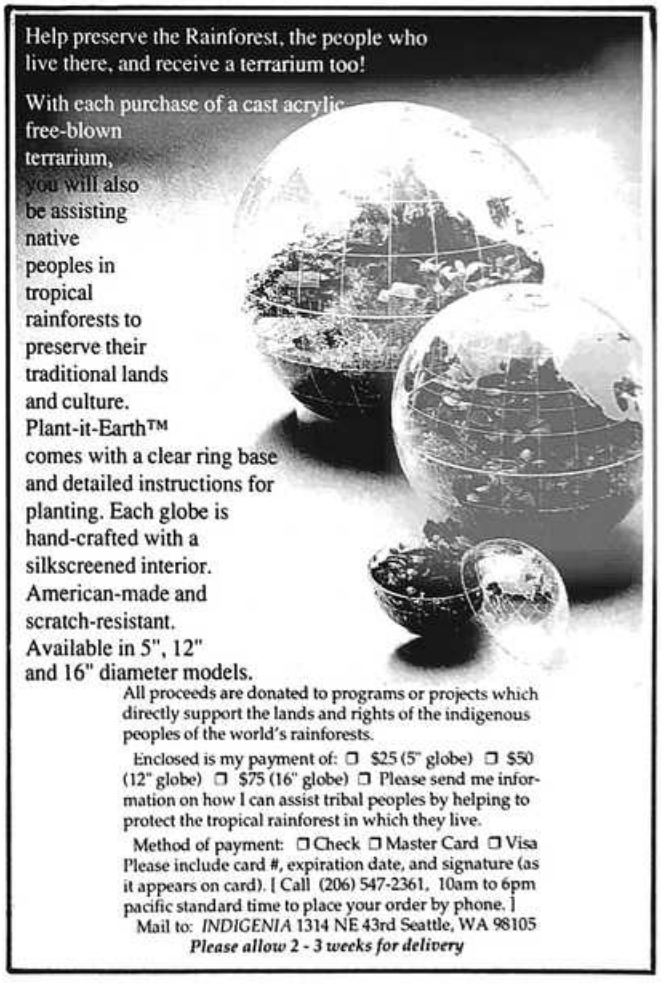
Of course, Philip Roth, more than most writers, has reason to be wary of his readership: In the early seventies he was, after all, accused of hating women, hating Jews, and hating himself. Nevertheless, I don't think he has much to worry about anymore. He is considered by hardly anybody, any longer, to be a bad Jewish boy. In fact, most new readers of Roth have no idea that he was ever a bad Jewish boy. To the contrary, he has become an enormously respected establishment figure in the literary/academic world, and as much as is possible for a serious writer in America, he is also popular in the world of the common reader.

Moreover, Roth's recent portraits of Jews—honest, funny, psychologically insightful, and definitely characters rather than caricatures—are hardly offensive. For a long time now, he has been one of the few Jewish writers who not only seem interested in the social fabric of middle-class Jewish life (the sociological reality that Roth's nemesis, historian Irving Howe, ten years ago claimed was a dry well for imaginative literature), but who also elevate for our serious attention the foolish, regular, and admirable personalities that are woven into it. Indeed, Roth has become a kind of Jane Austen of contemporary Jewish life, charting the emotional ups and downs of Zuckerman, his writer/protagonist who shuttles between those modern Jewish equivalents of Hampshire's great houses—a mother's condominium in Miami, a brother's temple in New Jersey, a friend's apartment in Tel Aviv.

Nevertheless, in the last section of *The Facts,* Roth makes it clear that a part of him still wants to *épater les juifs.* Here's what Nathan Zuckerman has to say to his creator about Roth's relationship with his readers:

> Your work has always been to intertwine facts *with* the imagination, but here you're unintertwining them ... de-imagining a life's work, and what is left even [your readers] can now understand. Thirty years ago, the "good boy" is thought of as bad and thereby given enormous freedom to *be* bad; now, when the same people read those opening sections, the bad boy is going to be perceived as good, and you will be given the kindliest reception.... Your Jewish readers are finally going to glean from this what they've wanted to hear from you for three decades. That your parents had a good son who loved them [emphasis in original].

Zuckerman goes on to urge Roth to go the way of the bad boy once again. It's better, he says, when they "keep reminding their friends not to read you."



What is all this about? No one has reminded anyone for twenty years not to read Philip Roth. In his last five novels he has characterized Nathan Zuckerman's family, with the possible exception of Henry Zuckerman, in a deftly and subtly sympathetic fashion. In fact, as Roth of course notes in *The Facts,* any reader worth his or her salt will quickly be aware that the fictional Jewish family created by the bad-boy Jewish novelist and the nonfiction family created by the good-boy autobiographer dovetail rather than contrast with each other.

What is behind Roth's need to remind us that he is still capable of being a bad boy? His motivations are complex and have to do both with his relationship to his current audience and with the formal and aesthetic imperatives of his writing. Roth, it turns out, wants both to be read properly—which is why in his novels, interviews, and other prose he attempts to incorporate, intercept, and nullify potential criticism—and to remain the *enfant terrible* of Jewish writers. The reason he wants to remain the *enfant terrible,* as he makes quite clear in *The Facts,* is that his recalcitrant and antagonistic audience, though irritating and exhausting, is also inspiring. Like Roth's difficult wife, Josie, who in her extreme behavior—she faked both a pregnancy *and* an abortion in order to draw Roth into marriage—educated him in the "aesthetics of extremist fiction," the angry Jewish audience that Roth encountered early in his career proved, in the long run, artistically beneficial. The fate of the celebrated Jewish writer and his relationship with his Jewish audience, whether in the guise of family or community, became Roth's "found subject." Labeled a "bad boy," Roth not only could record and transform his bad-boy experiences, but he also could define himself, if he so chose, in opposition to his public image: The tasteful, restrained novella *The Ghost Writer* is an example of this refusal to be boxed in, as is the final section of *The Facts,* where Roth is clearly worried that he's coming across as too much of a good boy.

Now that the hostility to Roth has died down, he has had to re-create an angry audience in order to inspire himself. But since his *real* audience isn't angry, he has had to affront and control an imaginary one. This is where Roth's aesthetic designs come into play, for as Nathan Zuckerman points out in *The Facts,* "The whole point about [Roth's] fiction is that the imagination is always in transit between the good boy *and* the bad boy—that's the tension that leads to revelation" (emphasis in original). In other words, the internal demands of Roth's writing process reflect his relations to the external world and determine that each of his texts will contain its own countertext. Roth is a writer who thinks dialectically, and he can't write if he's going to present only one side of an argument. He needs to *imagine* both a kindly and a hostile Jewish readership in order to adopt the simultaneously placatory and oppositional stance that fires his imagination.

This dialectic is evident in Roth's modes of characterization as well. Like Dostoevsky imagining the Grand Inquisitor and providing him with a foolproof argument against Dostoevsky's own most deeply cherished beliefs, or Tolstoy waxing moralistic on extramarital sex in *Resurrection* while chasing the kitchen-girl all around the pantry every time he puts his pen down, Roth has to imagine his mother (whom he obviously loved very much) as her stereotypical, exaggerated other—Sophie Portnoy. Similarly, in *The Facts,* where Roth's mother is treated with tact, admiration, and love, Nathan Zuckerman has to come along at the end to remind us, diabolically, that fictional characters are not created out of thin air and that therefore Mom must have been a lot more like Sophie Portnoy than Roth is letting on.

Nathan's countertext derives from Roth's need to balance his writing, to enliven it, and as in his fiction, "to create the tension that leads to revelation"; but at the same time Roth recoils from the reader who may think that he or she "has Roth down." In this instance, however, Roth fails to convince the reader, and the portrait of his mother that he sketches in the early parts of *The Facts* is only partially changed by Nathan Zuckerman's provocative comments.

Toward the end of *The Facts,* Roth takes a moment to remind the reader that he or she should not see psychological factors as the primary motive behind his work. Of *Portnoy's Complaint* he tells us: "It was a book that had rather less to do with 'freeing' me from my Jewishness or from my family . . . than with liberating me from an apprentice's literary models, particularly the awesome graduate-school authority of Henry James." The message here is "read me only as an artist"—which is also the message implicit in Nathan Zuckerman's entering into *The Facts.* Roth wants us to behave ourselves as readers and curtail our psychological speculations.

In the late sixties, when I was growing up in England, my own mother put some energy into reviling "that awful book by Philip Roth." She hadn't read *Portnoy's Complaint* but asserted that she didn't need to read it in order to know how awful it was. Twenty years later, I couldn't resist calling my mother in London to tell her what I had read in *The Facts.* Just as Nathan Zuckerman predicts will happen, I told my mother that it turned out after all that Philip Roth's parents had a good son who loved them. "I knew it all along," said my mother—a piece of wisdom that should tell Philip Roth that no matter what he does, short of marrying Abu Nidal's sister, he is going to be perceived as a good boy and there's no point in trying to be a bad one. *The Facts,* without Nathan Zuckerman's coda, speak for themselves. □

Tikkun has argued editorially that ending the cold war is the top political priority for the coming years. In this special section, and in future issues, we present articles from a range of different political perspectives on how to understand the possibilities and constraints of the current period.

Can Summits Replace the Peace Movement?

Joanne Landy

We believe that only the efforts of an independent society, of the ordinary peoples of East and West, can guarantee the establishment of a climate of trust and a stable peace. Genuine détente is possible only from below, through the growth of a world-wide revolution of grass-roots peace initiatives.... It is impossible to speak about peace without also discussing human rights. Peace in the world and peace in society depend on one another in the most intimate fashion.

—Moscow Group to Establish Trust Between East and West, Spring 1987

The INF Treaty and the Moscow Summit raise the basic question of whether or not the Soviet Union and the United States are now willing to bury the hatchet, instead of each other. In the afterglow of Ronald Reagan's disavowal of his belief that Russia is the "evil empire," many peace activists are confronted with the vaguely discomforting suggestion that after another summit or two the peace movement could declare victory and go out of business.

The notion reflects the popular belief that peace is something to be achieved by existing governments without fundamental social changes in either of the superpower blocs. According to this view, all that was ever needed was a change in government policy, and it now looks like both sides are on the way to resolving issues that have driven the U.S.-Soviet rivalry and the nuclear arms race for forty years.

The lessening of tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States is certainly to be welcomed, even though we should recognize that only two thousand out of a total of fifty thousand U.S. and Soviet nuclear warheads have been eliminated to date. Moreover, although Europe is far from denuclearized, and both sides are right now deploying an array of weapons *not* included in the treaty—across Europe and around the globe, particularly in the escalating and extremely dangerous arms race at sea—the very signing of the INF Treaty on intermediate and shorter-range nuclear weapons may serve as a starting point for further disarmament agreements. It can also set the stage for defusing, at least for a period of time, several regional conflicts that are potential flash points of nuclear confrontation.

Most important, though, the INF ratification both reflects and reinforces the growing delegitimization of the cold war. It fosters a new climate in which it is far more difficult for the governments of East or West to draw on militaristic excuses for suppressing civil liberties or denying the self-determination rights of smaller nations. This comes at a critical moment because the United States and the Soviet Union are already facing serious domestic socioeconomic problems as well as unprecedented difficulties in keeping a firm grip on what are politely called their "spheres of influence." Nevertheless, peace groups and their supporters will not be able to take advantage of the new opportunities for social movements arising in both blocs if they depend upon representatives of superpower governments to achieve a lasting peace.

The United States under Challenge

In this country, the signing of the INF agreement has helped to engender a far-ranging debate on the nature of U.S. foreign policy. The treaty is being signed at a time of mounting alarm about the social and economic cost of an arms budget that exceeds $280 billion a year. The peace movement, though not very audible at this moment, has generated profound popular concern about the danger of nuclear war—concern that encourages a reconsideration of the goals and methods of U.S. foreign policy. And, on the issue of military interventionism, a recent survey by the Chicago Council on

Joanne Landy is the director of the New York–based Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West. She has often visited Eastern Europe to promote contacts with independent human rights and peace activists. Ms. Landy is an editor of New Politics *magazine.*

Foreign Relations confirms that the "Vietnam syndrome" still shapes American public opinion, if not the actions of our country's political leaders.

The United States is facing challenges to its global power on virtually every front. In Latin America, for example, President Reagan's policy is unraveling in several countries at once. The Reagan administration has been politically unable to offer consistent and dependable support to the Nicaraguan contras. Popular resentment toward the U.S. is rising in Honduras, and Panama's General Noriega offered unexpectedly strong resistance when he was told to step aside by the State Department at the point when he became an embarrassment to the Reagan administration. In El Salvador, as one Western European diplomat noted in the *Washington Post*, "U.S. policy ... is toppling like a house of cards." Duarte's showcase democracy was the centerpiece of Reagan's Central America policy (and was, incidentally, also supported by most Democrats), but its inability to satisfy either the right wing or the popular demand for genuine social reform led it to a seemingly irreversible defeat at the hands of Roberto D'Aubuisson's Arena party earlier this year. Moreover, the United States' difficulties are not limited to Latin America: Radicalism and anti-Americanism are on the rise in countries such as the Philippines and South Korea as well.

The extent of the erosion of U.S. global power is such that even cold war luminaries like Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger, and Samuel P. Huntington have to acknowledge it. In their much-publicized report, *Discriminate Deterrence*, Brzezinski, Kissinger, Huntington, and others propose an enhanced high-tech military program designed to stem the decline. They note resentfully that countries such as the Philippines, which in the past could always be counted on to guarantee a home for U.S. military bases, are no longer reliable, a trend they invoke as a reason for Americans to create "versatile, mobile forces, minimally dependent on overseas bases, that can deliver precisely controlled strikes against distant military targets."

In Western Europe, the postwar junior partnership with the United States is no longer accepted as given. Several social democratic and labor parties, while still "pro-American," have expressed strong concerns about the consequences of continuing to subordinate Western Europe to U.S. leadership. Even conservative politicians are for the most part no longer simple Atlanticists. While they support the NATO structure, many Western European conservatives are increasingly uncertain about America's long-term relationship with the continent and therefore feel driven toward greater military self-reliance, whether by invigorating the Western European Union, through bilateral French-British or French-German military collaboration, or by other means.

Part of the tension between the U.S. and Western Europe has an economic foundation: In today's highly competitive global economy, Western European countries and Japan are major rivals to the United States. But the tension is also rooted in a widespread popular apprehension in Europe that America tends to be cavalier about nuclear weapons and militarily confrontational with the Soviets. This worry persists despite the fact that Reagan has toned down his rhetoric about "prevailing" in a "protracted nuclear war," has adopted some of the language and symbolism of the peace movement, has signed the INF agreement, and has developed a better relationship with Gorbachev.

One sign that people in Western Europe are growing more wary of the American military is Spain's decision early this year to force the U.S. 401st Tactical Fighter Wing to leave the country. West Germany is another Western European nation that has begun to distance itself from U.S. military policy. West Germany's political landscape was radically altered by the movement against Pershing and cruise missiles and will probably never return to the old pronuclear consensus. Tangible evidence of this transformation came in the summer of 1987 when Chancellor Helmut Kohl was forced to abandon his attempt to block the INF Treaty in the face of massive defeat for his Christian Democratic party at the polls. Today the West Germans, with Kohl still at the helm, are resisting the United States' attempt to carry out the modernization of nuclear weapons agreed on at the 1983 NATO Montebello meeting, even though at that time the West German government gave full support to the policy.

Denmark is another case of the continuing legacy of the Western European movement against U.S. nuclear weapons. At the last minute, the spring 1988 meeting of NATO defense ministers had to be moved to Brussels from its scheduled meeting place in Kolding, Denmark. This change took place because the Danish conservative government decided to hold a snap election in response to the strong challenge from the country's more left-wing parties over Denmark's policy toward ships carrying nuclear weapons. These parties wanted to require that visiting warships be specifically notified of the thirty-year-old, but hitherto buried, policy forbidding nuclear weapons on Danish territory. Like people in New Zealand, many Danes are both anxious and angry that the U.S. will not confirm or deny the presence of nuclear weapons on its ships. While the opposition parties did not win the election, the issue was left unresolved, and Denmark is one of many sites of enduring opposition to American nuclear policy in Europe.

U.S. Policy Debate

Within the American establishment there are two broad approaches to the new international situation. The first is put forward by the authors of *Discriminate Deterrence*, who call for future increases in the arms budget at the rate of 3 percent per year in real dollars. While strongly defending nuclear weapons and an ambitious SDI program, they emphasize the need to develop high-tech, "smart" conventional weapons with "more selective and effective capabilities for destroying military targets." In denying that the U.S. economy will be hurt by this increased military expenditure, the authors are probably in the minority: An emerging bipartisan consensus holds that the country cannot afford to continue arms spending at the rate sustained under the Reagan administration.

Much of *Discriminate Deterrence* is devoted to the need for the U.S. to be able to respond effectively to threats from radical movements in the Third World by waging "low-intensity" warfare. The authors of the report acknowledge the political awkwardness of this kind of war, but urge the American public to be unsentimental and tough-minded about what has to be done. For instance, in defending the need for duplicity when supplying military aid to forces friendly to American interests in the Third World, they say: "If the U.S. support for these insurgents is a large and continuing effort, it is bound to be referred to in the press. Nevertheless, neighboring countries that provide access to or bases for the freedom fighters often prefer that the U.S. government's role not be officially acknowledged. By designating the U.S. support as a 'Special Activity' (also known as 'covert action'), the U.S. government can maintain official silence."

The Emerging Moderate Establishment

While the Brzezinskis of this world dream of ever-expanding military budgets and high-tech battlefields on earth and in space, the more sober establishment thinkers argue for greater realism. In a recent article in *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1988), James Chace presents a view typical of this approach. Chace agrees with historian Paul Kennedy, author of the surprise best-seller *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, as well as others who argue that the U.S. has overextended itself and must now pull back to practical limits. He hopes to establish a new equilibrium in relations with the Soviet Union, and to trim military spending so that the U.S. can live within its own means. He argues that the recent Gorbachev foreign policy initiatives offer an



opportunity to achieve both goals.

Chace believes it is necessary and possible to "curb" U.S. engagement in the Third World and to negotiate substantial arms reductions from the Soviet Union. He says that "West Europeans now can begin to assume the lead in providing for their own security, though they still would need to be backed up by a reduced American military presence." Chace concludes that "the United States could reasonably withdraw one-half of its NATO-assigned divisions, at a saving of about $67 billion." He maintains that this 50 percent reduction in the 354,000 troops now stationed in the area would be valuable and correct in and of itself, but he is especially concerned that it should be considered in the near future "before economic turmoil leads to rash congressional actions on troop withdrawals"—that is, before Congress makes the unfortunate decision to reduce troops in Europe in too large numbers, or to pull out altogether.

While Chace believes that the U.S. has become obsessed with defending its credibility in the post-Vietnam period—and thinks this obsession must be overcome—

he does not question the legitimacy or necessity of the division of the world into East-West blocs and rival social systems. In addition to projecting a Europe that continues to be divided into two, with its halves aligned with the competing superpowers, Chace also explicitly defends the right of the U.S. to keep its Southern neighbors in its camp, though he couches this prerogative partially in terms of necessity:

> The United States cannot remain indifferent to a region that is considered by others, if not always by Americans, as a U.S. sphere of influence. The Soviet attempt to position nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962 and the tough American response bore this out. Similarly, the 1983 invasion of Grenada and the Reagan administration's contra war against the Sandinistas also attest to this fact of geopolitical life. U.S. security concerns and domestic political pressures virtually dictate a spheres-of-influence policy in the Caribbean basin. In this regard, Washington should continue to make it clear to Moscow that any Soviet bases or high-performance aircraft in the region would be intolerable.

Chace's nonradical approach extends to his views on U.S. economic policy toward the countries that fall within its sphere of influence. Noting the debt problems of Latin America, Chace recommends modest (but, he makes clear, only modest) amounts of U.S. aid to help repay outstanding loans. His basic solution to Latin America's mounting economic difficulties is to reduce trade barriers between the United States and Latin American countries, and he strongly implies that such liberalization would be feasible and would resolve the crisis facing Latin American economies. Chace clearly believes that it is not necessary or wise to challenge the legitimacy of multinational corporations or to expect the North to redress the vast inequalities between North and South.

The Crisis in the Eastern Bloc

The drama now unfolding in the Soviet Union has captured the world's attention: Hundreds of political prisoners have been released, more and more of the grisly truths about the Stalinist past are being revealed to the public, restrictions on culture have been radically relaxed, and the Soviet leadership has said that it will be undertaking a major reform of the penal code. Perhaps more important, in the short time since Gorbachev initiated a more liberal atmosphere Russians have begun to abandon their apathy and fear, revealing that, beneath the surface, profound changes in attitude had been taking place for many years before his rise to power.

One indication of new trends in popular thinking was revealed in a poll conducted in May 1988 by the Soviet Academy of Sciences, based on questions formulated by the *New York Times* and CBS News. That such a poll could be conducted at all was truly remarkable, and a number of the responses showed many people, particularly members of the younger generation, holding views dangerous to the stability of the Soviet system. The most striking response was that 28 percent said they disagreed with the idea that "the one-party system in the USSR promotes the development of democracy," with 34 percent of those between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine rejecting this institutional and ideological cornerstone of the Communist system.

People in the USSR have begun to form independent clubs and associations of the most diverse sorts, some completely nonpolitical, others openly concerned with public issues. It is believed that across the country there are thirty thousand such clubs, perhaps more. For a society that for decades has been forced to accept a state monopoly over not only political but also social life, these clubs represent an important breakthrough.

These changes are not cosmetic. They are tremendously significant in and of themselves, and also for the dynamic of even greater change that they have set in motion. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind certain continuing realities. As of June 1988, more than 350 political and religious prisoners remain in jail, and the pace of releasing such prisoners has slowed to a trickle. Unconscionable restrictions on the rights of emigration and free travel remain, despite modest improvements. Even though political jailings have decreased markedly in 1987 and 1988, there have been ominous new arrests—notably of a group of individuals who attempted to form an alternative political party, the Democratic Union, as well as of Armenian activist Paruir Ayrikyan and *Glasnost* magazine editor Sergei Grigoryants. (Since this article was written, Ayrikyan was expelled from the USSR.)

Anatoly Russovsky, the editor of the official newspaper *Vechernaya Moscovy*, called *Glasnost* "immoral and unnecessary." "What is the need for an unofficial press?" he asked Western reporters, according to the *Washington Post*. "There is no need for any other glasnost—only one, single, honest, broad glasnost.... There is no need for competition." And when Gorbachev himself was asked in a *Washington Post* interview about Grigoryants's arrest, his response was chillingly reminiscent of the old days. He said: "People here know that the Grigoryants 'organization' is tied not only organizationally but also financially to the West, that his constant visitors and guests are Western correspondents. Therefore people think of him as some kind of alien phenomenon in our society, sponging on the

democratic process, sponging on the positive aspects of *perestroika*."*

The Contradictions of Glasnost

This mixture of openness and repression is symptomatic of the contradictions of today's reform attempts, in which Gorbachev is trying to modernize Soviet society without giving up Communist party control, which is the basis of the Soviet Union's class structure. On the one hand, Gorbachev needs the motivation and participation of the Soviet people, particularly of the intelligentsia and technical strata, but also of the entire working population. To gain this support, he has to liberalize and promise positive results. On the other hand, he needs to protect one-party rule in order to secure the continuation of the social system itself. In capitalist countries free elections are possible because the continuing economic position of the ownership class is not determined by the outcome of a vote, since property is private (although the outcome of elections can affect the terms of the employer-employee relationships, and in desperate times, such as in Germany in the 1930s, important capitalist forces can decide to dispense with elections altogether). In the Soviet Union, by contrast, holding truly free elections would be analogous to having the population vote democratically on who should be on the board of General Motors.

So far, Gorbachev has won the support of most of the intelligentsia, though from its ranks come those who are demanding more far-reaching democratic reforms. Gorbachev's major challenge will be to deal with the working class, which will be asked to bear the greatest part of the burden of the planned economic restructuring. (One of the determinants of the success of any working-class protest in the Soviet Union will be its ability to form an alliance with at least part of the critical intelligentsia. Such an alliance, which had its seeds in the 1970s in the work of the KOR, the Polish Workers Defense Committee, was an important element in the formation of Solidarity.)

When asked why his reform program could be expected to succeed when a similar attempt by Khrushchev had failed, Gorbachev replied that the problem with his predecessor was that he wasn't sufficiently "democratic," that he did not involve the Soviet people in his reform program. In light of Gorbachev's approval both of Grigoryants's imprisonment and of the jailing of individuals who tried to form a second political party, and in view of his hostility toward independent unions like Solidarity (positions all based on his desire to preserve the core of the system), the question remains whether or not the Communist party will be able to make Soviet workers feel "involved."

The cold war has enabled each side to use the other's militaristic and repressive actions to justify its own, and a democratic and peaceful foreign policy on the part of the United States would help human rights everywhere by breaking this cycle of mutual justification.

Gorbachev's ambitious and desperate reform program is a risky venture, made far more risky by the close links between the Soviet Union and a highly volatile Eastern Europe. The spring 1988 strikes in the Nowa Huta steel factory near Krakow and in the Lenin shipyards of Gdansk came in response to the Polish government's attempts to establish price increases and austerity programs in the hope of achieving economic reform—Polish *perestroika*. The *Washington Post* suggested that the Soviet Union's decision to postpone major price increases at least until 1991 was in part a response to

(Continued on p. 105)

*Gorbachev's charge that Grigoryants is "financially tied to the West" is unsubstantiated. Confusion on this question has been compounded by an article that appeared in the *Nation* on March 19, 1988, entitled "U.S. Funds for Soviet Dissidents." Despite the implication of its title, the article documented only that National Endowment for Democracy funds have gone to the U.S. publishers of the English-language version of *Glasnost*, not that such funds went to the Soviet editors. However, it's worth stopping for a moment to think through the issues raised here. What if it could be shown that Grigoryants or his colleagues *had* taken funds from the NED, which receives its money from the U.S. Congress? Would this be any justification for putting them in prison, as Gorbachev argues? Without taking a hard look at their own reasoning, many progressives in this country vaguely feel that it would be some kind of a justification. But would they think that U.S. peace organizations that receive funds from the Soviet government in the form of free, all-expense-paid travel worth thousands of dollars should be put in prison? Of course not.

In my own opinion, East-bloc dissidents should not accept U.S. government funds, for the same reason that Western peace organizations shouldn't accept subsidized trips to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: The psychological and financial pressures that grow out of such funding make it harder for groups to maintain an independent posture on the issues. But organizations anywhere in the world clearly have a *right* to accept such support if they so desire.

An entirely different issue is raised in the case of international support from one independent grass-roots organization to another. Movement activists in this country have often raised money to help black trade unionists in South Africa, for example. This kind of support across international boundaries is the most elementary form of solidarity. It would be an innovative and effective gesture if American peace, environmental, and human rights groups could raise money to aid their independent counterparts in the Soviet bloc as well as in other parts of the world.

THE COLD WAR: A RESPONSE TO LANDY

After the Thaw

Todd Gitlin

The cold war has been more than a wretched fact, a policy, a national commitment. It has been an ice age for thinking about global reconstruction. Joanne Landy's framework is essential as we try to think out what ought to follow the current thaw. She recognizes that we have to do far more than oppose weapons systems, cheer on the arms controllers, and clamor for agreements. We have to set out a point of view, a counterconcept—indeed, to use that much abused and trivialized term, a vision.

For forty years, the problem of how to oppose the cold war has been conceptual as well as practical. The cold war crusade lined up behind a simple banner: If you want Security, arm the Freedom-loving State to contain/resist/deter the Slave State. What political elites purveyed, the population, on the whole, believed. Opposing the cold war looked like opposing Strength and Realism in the name of Weakness and Naiveté. The breathtakingly pure melodrama of the cold war was all but impossible to fight with appeals to diplomacy, moderation, and disarmament. Accommodations by the USSR were interrupted often enough by bursts of American paranoia—and not least by political takeovers (the satellite seizures of the late forties) and military expeditions (Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Afghanistan in 1979), which confirmed demonic images of Soviet foreign policy. The Soviet policies of censorship, secrecy, terror, and closed borders moderated at times, but a U.S. in which hysteria lay just beneath the surface easily equated internal repression with external aggression. Americans, overcome by paranoia, failed to grasp that the Soviet Union was in general concerned with preserving its empire, not expanding it. In other words, it was vastly more convenient to hold onto a neat symmetry: Liberal democracy at home certified that the U.S. fostered freedom everywhere; Soviet totalitarianism was automatically expansionist. Whence American missiles were, as the man said, Peacekeepers; and the more the better. Q.E.D.

But the perpetual cold war (what John F. Kennedy called the "long twilight struggle"), coupled to the arms race, has periodically run up against a built-in paradox. In the name of security, the Great Powers mobilize fear. And the name of their system of mutual fear, their ingenious way to love the Bomb, is deterrence. Deterrence promises to make it possible for the population to live everyday life in a demobilized state of mind. The State is in charge; the threats ostensibly work (as if the Bomb were the only possible explanation for East-West peace). Most of the time the population agrees not to know—not to feel—how ready its leaders are to blow up the world. Citizens consent to take their places as hostages to their states' designs. But the political paradox is that whenever the cold war breaks into Americans' consciousness as preparation for a state of war, clear and present fear threatens to outweigh the promise of Security. Then, in popular eyes, deterrence looms not as a solution but as a problem. People begin to panic when they are reminded vigorously enough that the balance of terror amounts to readiness for Armageddon. In 1961, for example, when the Vienna summit broke down and the Berlin crisis heated up, President Kennedy stoked up a fallout shelter boom—which faded because it demanded too much of most people, namely that they buy expensive equipment, even shotguns, that they couldn't believe in. After the Cuban missile crisis made nuclear war thinkable, a peace movement of women and students, along with pacific sentiment in the population at large, helped convince Kennedy to deal for détente and the limited test ban. Similarly, in 1981–82, Washington blurted out slogans—nuclear "demonstration shots" and "war-fighting" plans—that corresponded to actual policy normally left unspoken. The Reagan and Haig proclamations terrified millions in the U.S. and Europe, leading to enormous demonstrations, the nuclear freeze demand, and the moral initiative of the Catholic bishops. Reagan recouped with the idea and image of Star Wars—that most American of fantasies, a technological Utopia. Its conceptual clarity was as sharp and compelling as its practicality was dubious.

Todd Gitlin, professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, is the author of The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage *(Bantam Books, 1987), which will appear in paperback in February 1989.*

The present moment is full of promise because the old conceptual clarities are breaking down. Eras are expiring. In the USSR, the Stalinist legacy of fear is slipping away, although openings are followed by partial closures. Amid a larger *glasnost,* debates about historical rights and wrongs spring up—about the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact, the 1968 Czech invasion, the 1979 Afghanistan invasion—amounting, in effect, to debates, hitherto taboo, about what Soviet policy shall be today. (Of course there are limits: Some people in Moscow hoped Gorbachev would honor the twentieth anniversary of the crushing of Prague Spring by admitting that the Czech invasion was wrong—in Soviet parlance, "a mistake." They were sorely disappointed when, this past August, the police brutally broke up an anti-invasion demonstration in Pushkin Square.) In the U.S., the military establishment is chastened; and the Reagan era expires with the INF treaty, the benign cooing of the two imperial chiefs, and an exchange program for high military commands—amid revelations of military-industrial corruption, which should hardly come as a surprise. Of course, the militarists have fought back: The whitewashing of Persian Gulf policy in the official report on the *Vincennes* shows that the military's crackpot realism will not shrug its shoulders and gracefully yield. Democrats remain so fearful of looking like pitiful, helpless dwarfs that even Jesse Jackson's 1988 military program called for nothing more radical than a plateau in real dollars spent on defense, and Michael Dukakis has permitted George Bush to define East-West tensions in military terms—competence indeed.

Still: In both the U.S. and the USSR, the assumption of perpetual confrontation is embattled. This means that the mood on both sides is more fluid and promising than at any time since the Kennedy-Khrushchev détente a quarter century ago. At least as long as Gorbachev can ride his party tiger, it is hard (though, alas, not impossible) to imagine a return to the paranoid confrontation that had frozen Eastern and Western political spirits since 1945. A corrosive force, reality, is eating away the master map that most people carry in their heads, that black-and-white chart that claims to settle all political questions virtually before they are asked. Simplifying the world into two mutually exclusive, eternally confrontational blocs doesn't describe, let alone explain, much of what is happening in the world—capitalist-authoritarian hybrids from China to Chile; political and ethnic tensions within both blocs; halting moves toward East-West cooperation in order to defuse the Middle East, southwest Africa, Central America, and Cambodia; growing economic interdependence.

The right in particular has trouble navigating these turbulent waters. The problem for the right (including George Bush, at least for campaign purposes) is to resurrect the fifties, complete with Pledge of Allegiance, and to keep up the sense of alarm—and the military budget—now that The Enemy has resigned its post. Glory be at the spectacle of Howard Phillips calling a press conference on the eve of the Washington summit to denounce Ronald Reagan as "a useful idiot for Soviet propaganda"! The clenched-teeth right has to deny that anything can *really* change. What can it do without barbarians beating at the gates? Pundits of the right resort to incantations about the structural essence of the Soviet system—the more Gorbachev concedes, the more the Soviet Union is suspect. Outside the nightmare world of the fundamentalist Manichaeans, this attitude does not go over so well now that Ronald Reagan intones dreamily from the shadow of the Kremlin wall. Sensing the dissolution of the old order, dovish parties in both superpowers want to melt the cold war altogether, and start—something else.

The peace movement should press for nuclear cuts down to a minimum deterrent—and, simultaneously, for nonprovocative, much reduced, conventional forces.

The challenge is to think past this moment toward the next East-West order, to work out analysis and strategy that can focus the collective imagination in the coming years. Without this collective imagination, we are left with resistance to one weapon after another, clamors for one treaty after another—necessary, make no mistake, but guaranteed to lose momentum as the tides of summitry wane. (Consider how antinuclear movements faded after 1961–63 and again after 1982–83.) In the past year, a host of conceptions and phrases have tumbled out, vying to fill the ideological hollow—*a hollow that will probably not stay open forever.* Shall the sequel to cold war be East-West "peaceful competition" (Gorbachev and various peace groups), "cold peace and peaceful competition" (*New York Times* editorial of August 10, 1987), "stable coexistence" (the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations)—or, grudgingly, "steps ... to reconcile vital U.S. and Soviet interests" (Henry Kissinger and Cyrus Vance)? Or, as Joanne Landy (along with Great Britain's European Nuclear Disarmament [END] and a good many Eastern Europeans) hopes, "détente from below" and a Europe "beyond the blocs"? At a bare minimum, Joanne Landy rightly reminds us that the East-West military mobiliza-

tion works to the advantage of hard-liners in both camps. She reminds us in particular that aggressive American rhetoric and bigger and better weapons encourage Soviet militarists—and vice versa. But a series of ad hoc campaigns inevitably yields initiative to the sheer weight, the momentum, the economic enormity and appetite of the arms race. To oppose that momentum successfully we need, among other things, a counter-concept of a world in the making—a vision of peace that is more than the absence of shooting war. Where there is no affirmative vision, the campaigners weary and the campaigns perish.

Throughout the twentieth century, American reformers and left-wingers have been polarized into two camps—millenarian outsiders and hard-nosed insiders. Especially since we lack experience in practical national politics, the American left tends to split between the visionary and the practical—the visionary, as in Joanne Landy's vision of bloc-dissolving movements East and West; the practical, as in the Nuclear Freeze politics that was eroded by the combination of congressional Democrats' timidity and Reagan's Star Wars fantasy.

We need both. Summits can't replace the peace movement. Neither can the peace movement—even the sum of all peace movements—replace summits. Even as the blocs become more centrifugal, the superstates cannot be wished away. Like it or not—and I don't—the bombs (and the even more costly conventional armies) are in the hands of governments. The governments have to be pressed to deal the weapons away and to take unilateral initiatives, conventional as well as nuclear, to defuse the mutual threats. But a world from which the superpowers suddenly disappeared would not automatically be peaceful. The burdens of geography still weigh on the Europeans—some Polish and Hungarian activists, for example, are not impressed by the military significance of a hypothetical Soviet troop withdrawal, since the troops will not move far away in any case. Moreover, there are places—the Middle East in particular—where the superpowers should intervene still more vigorously to promote regional settlements and beat back nuclear proliferation. What are the U.S. and the USSR going to do about India/Pakistan and Israel/Arab countries, which are to my mind the most likely flash points for a nuclear war?

Realism imposes certain agendas even as we try to change them: That is why I disagree with Joanne Landy's statement that "debates about the Soviet Union's ultimate intentions toward Western Europe or about the relative military strength of NATO and the Warsaw Pact are fruitless and irresolvable." To walk away from these debates, however retrograde and burdensome they are, is a luxury we don't have. More than four decades of chronic fear have sunk in. The fear remains to be dispelled so that we can wedge open a space for the larger discussion of what ought to follow the cold war. Yes, we want to change the terms of the discussion, and we should try to do that; we need to argue not only against the next rounds of weapons systems but for a nonmilitary conception of national security, a demilitarized and democratic Europe, a transformed North-South relationship, and a drastically cut military budget. But as long as mainstream politics (Democratic as well as Republican) is stuck on retrograde premises, as long as Sam Nunn looms as a Senate powerhouse and media sage, we cannot afford to abandon arguing on these grounds, even if they are grounds we deplore and did not choose. We have to take apart the still-prevailing view of Soviet tank-hordes poised for aggressive war in Central Europe and the Finlandization of Western Europe. I do not think it is possible to talk about a disarmed world without defusing these alarms.

Which is to say only that a vision of a disarmed world is not much good if it simply shimmers in the air as something devoutly to be desired. A vision of that sort is a mirage: it recedes as you approach it. To be of use, the vision has to suggest a route. Which requires that it take into account a lot of unpleasant realities, not the least of which is the tension between super- (and other) states as well as the arguments they offer and the interests they proclaim in order to defend their stakes in the status quo. I agree with Landy, therefore, that one way to defend the cause of democratic opposition in Eastern Europe (including the USSR) is to oppose the appetite of the American military and its civilian feeders. We should have learned by now that the American and Soviet militaries, perhaps their entire national security apparatuses, are like Siamese twins, joined at the stomach. Feed one and you feed both. But as deeply committed as I am to the Eastern dissidents, especially those who share the vision of a single Europe and a disarmed world, I do not think that they by themselves are likely, in the foreseeable future, to constitute the social basis for a transformed state relationship between East and West. We should take their side in the name of democracy because their rights are being trampled upon. We should express solidarity with them because that solidarity gives weight and body and credibility to any vision of a positive peace—a peace among human beings that is the ultimate justification of a peace among states. We should form direct relations with them in order to invigorate our own commitment to democracy in the withered political cultures of the West; we should not abandon them to the dollar-dispensing cold warriors of the AFL-CIO

and the National Endowment for Democracy. But we should not delude ourselves that the opposition groups by themselves hold the key to disarmament.

Landy reminds us that for decades East-West relaxation has alternated with East-West confrontation. Already, the U.S. plans to substitute other thermonuclear marvels for its sacrificed Pershing and cruise missiles. Just when we think it's time to relax, the cavalry arrives—not to save us, but to dragoon us into a new round of military hysteria. And therefore four cheers for Landy's point about military budget cuts as the core program for a peace coalition—one that would include a great variety of social groups, not just confirmed peaceniks. I would add only that, to affect the immediate course of events, the peace movement will have to be more than an antinuclear movement. Since the Eisenhower fifties, the movement against nuclear bombs has been vulnerable to the status quo argument that these weapons afford, after all, "more bang for the buck." But now that there has been a turn toward nuclear cuts, arguments for a conventional weapons buildup have been cropping up, high costs notwithstanding. For both economic and pacific reasons, the peace movement (for openers) should press for nuclear cuts down to a minimum deterrent—*and,* simultaneously, for nonprovocative, much reduced, conventional forces.

The arms debate has been skewed so far to the right that, for the foreseeable future, the orientation that Landy and I share is going to occupy the farthest sliver of left field. Much as it would be preferable to have a Dukakis administration to wrestle with for the next four years, there is no dramatic sign that Michael Dukakis and his principal advisers would want to move beyond moderate arms control and continued détente—or would know how to mobilize the country to go further even if they wanted to. (It is also true that, in what passes for political life in America, an election campaign has limited predictive value.) If worse comes to worst and the Bush-Quayle league prevails, there will still be prospects for arms control and détente (though the prospects for autonomous politics in the world's impoverished countries will almost certainly suffer). No matter who wins the election, as long as Gorbachev rides high and no Eastern European crisis results in a Soviet invasion, modest arms control and U.S.-USSR détente are likely to remain on the American agenda. The moment cries out for us to press for more. Windows of opportunity have a way of slamming shut. □

THE COLD WAR: A RESPONSE TO LANDY

Liquidating the Cold War: What Is to Be Done

James Chace

Ms. Landy is right to point out that both the United States and the Soviet Union are on "the way to resolving issues that have driven the U.S.-Soviet rivalry and the nuclear arms race for forty years." Unfortunately, however, she takes the view that "debates about the Soviet Union's ultimate intentions toward Western Europe or about the relative military strength of NATO and the Warsaw Pact are fruitless and irresolvable." But the very nature of foreign policy is to determine the intentions of other powers. One may be right or wrong in assessing their intentions, but how can a nation decide whether to arm or not, or whether or not its security is actually threatened, unless it tries to assess the intent of another power, particularly if that power is its greatest ideological and military rival. Which leads us to the notion of a bloc-free world.

A bloc-free world is extremely desirable, and it will come into being if, for example, the United States believes the Soviet Union seriously *intends* to loosen its ties to Eastern Europe. In Eastern Europe Mikhail Gorbachev is likely to find his greatest challenge—managing the liberalization of Eastern Europe in such a way that he will not be accused of indifference to Russian security. It is the task of Western analysts to try to gauge Moscow's intentions toward this bloc and to further the efforts to dissolve it. Therefore, I strongly object to Ms. Landy's characterization of my own position as not "question[ing] the legitimacy or necessity of the division of the world into East-West blocs and rival social systems." While it is true that I did not deal with this subject in my article in *Foreign Policy* (Spring

James Chace is the director of the Program on International Affairs and the Media, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. He is the coauthor of America Invulnerable: The Quest for Absolute Security from 1812 to Star Wars *(Summit Books, 1988) and is now working on a biography of Dean Acheson.*

1988), I remain very much opposed to the division of the world into East-West blocs. Soviet control in Eastern Europe leads to instability and hence to the possibility of conflict with Western powers. It will be a crucial test of Western statesmanship and diplomacy to continue to work for the liberalization of Eastern Europe, indeed for the dissolution of the Soviet bloc.

How to do that is another matter. We should certainly work for a radical drawdown of Eastern and Western troop concentrations from the Atlantic to the Urals, as Gorbachev has proposed, as well as aiming to reduce nuclear warheads to less than six hundred on either side. We should increase cultural ties to the Eastern bloc. Should there be a serious cutback in the troop concentrations on both sides, it is not beyond hope that the military alliances could eventually be dissolved. But a unilateral dissolution of the Western alliance would hardly serve the cause of the East Europeans. Ms. Landy seems to believe that the Soviets are in Eastern Europe because of "the American threat," and that a unilateral withdrawal of U.S. troops from Western Europe "would offer invaluable political assistance to the East-bloc activists demanding the removal of Soviet troops." Nothing could be further from the truth. Ask a Hungarian or a Pole or an East German or a Czech if the Soviets are there to counter "the American threat." The only way the Soviets are likely to withdraw their troops is in concert with Western troop reductions, and only if the Soviets believe that their military presence in Eastern Europe is no longer necessary. Of course, it's possible to reduce the number of U.S. troops stationed in Western Europe (350,000 at present), but it would be wise to link these reductions to concomitant Soviet reductions.

Again and again Ms. Landy invokes the term "peace activists"—without identifying any particular group and without differentiating among any number of antinuclear organizations—when she wishes to advance her own policy proposals, such as urging "peace activists" to "demand" the unilateral withdrawal of U.S. troops from Western Europe, which could "break the vicious circle of the cold war." She also appears to credit peace activists with forcing the Reagan Administration to seek a treaty banning medium-range nuclear weapons—the so-called INF Agreement. Doubtless the protests during the early 1980s, made by antinuclear groups in Western Europe against placement of U.S. missiles on West European soil, coupled with a wave of antinuclear sentiment in the United States, persuaded the Reagan administration to adopt the "zero-zero option"—no intermediate-range missiles to be deployed by either side. But the agreement banning these weapons resulted from the Soviets' desire to cut their military spending as well as from their fear of the new U.S. military buildup on the continent. Moreover, the medium-range missiles have never been of any military significance; Moscow and Washington have simply been playing a political game.

One of the reasons that antinuclear groups are often ineffective in changing military and strategic policies is the absence of any mass organization. The 1983 Pastoral Letter by the National Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops, which offered moral guidelines for citizens in the nuclear age, probably had and will continue to have the most significant impact on public opinion; unfortunately, the Protestant denominations have been divided on nuclear issues, and the Jewish congregations have generally been silent. The peace movement that Ms. Landy refers to waxes and wanes with the vagaries of the cold war. Whatever this movement is, it is not likely to embrace the range of social issues that she would like it to embrace.

As for the evolving world order, Ms. Landy seems to think I believe that the solution to the debt problem is mainly to reduce trade barriers between the United States and Latin America. On the contrary, it also involves writing down a large portion of the Latin American debt. I have never suggested that aid be given to help repay outstanding loans. One solves the debt crisis first by writing off most of the debt, and then by changing World Bank policies to offer loans in order to improve the social and physical infrastructure of Third World countries, instead of lending money to cover balance-of-payment deficits. The United States should also support redistributive policies rather than simply encourage greater privatization, which does nothing to nurture democratic reform. It is true that I have suggested that we foster a special relationship with the countries of Latin America, precisely because of the excellent export market we offer each other. That is why the U.S. ought to forgive Latin American debt and offer Latin American countries special opportunities to gain entry into the U.S. market.

With the liquidation of the cold war, moreover, what may well emerge is a five-power world consisting of the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and the European community. Both Russia and America are likely to cut back on their military expenditures and rethink their security systems, expending greater effort on refurbishing their respective domestic economies. On the other hand, Japan will continue to strengthen itself economically, and China both economically and militarily. The European Economic Community will take a great leap forward in the 1990s and find a new impetus for economic growth. Other states will surely challenge this pentagonal world. India, Brazil, and Indonesia will each insist on a high place within any

hierarchy of nations and will increasingly place constraints on the hegemony of the great powers. It will become more difficult for the traditionally strong countries to force their will on the traditionally weak ones.

As tensions with the Soviet Union continue to diminish and other powers come to rival the superpowers, the international institutions may play an increasingly important role in managing the newly emerging hierarchy of nations. Mikhail Gorbachev has already proposed a greater use of the United Nations Security Council for peacekeeping measures. At the end of the Second World War, the United States had envisaged the Security Council as an outgrowth of FDR's view of the four policemen (America, Russia, Britain, and China) that were to monitor the international system and keep the peace. What the Security Council of the United Nations can now do is to serve as a mechanism for conflict control, though probably not conflict resolution. Moreover, the United States and the Soviet Union need to reassure the rest of the world that neither superpower will seek to gain an advantage over the other in Third World conflicts. Such reassurance would help convince the smaller nations to accept some measure of conflict control from the outside in seeking an end to conflict. This scenario is not as remote as it once seemed. Indeed, this approach to U.S.-Soviet relations looks forward to the twenty-first century rather than backward to the legacy of the cold war. □

THE COLD WAR

Can We Count on Perestroika?

Samuel D. Kassow

Under *glasnost* Soviet citizens no longer need *samizdat* (clandestine distribution of government-suppressed literature) to learn that Stalin was a sadistic killer or that Leonid Brezhnev was a corrupt hack who hastened the political and moral decay of the nation. By exposing the past, Mikhail Gorbachev hopes to discredit dangerous opponents and to create fertile political ground for *perestroika*—a radical break with the traditional Soviet system of centralized planning, bureaucratic control, and an administrative party. But *perestroika* requires massive resources. One way Gorbachev hopes to free those resources is to lessen tensions with the West and pare down expensive Soviet commitments to the Third World. The INF Treaty, the retreat from Afghanistan, the overtures to Israel, and the new Soviet interest in a settlement in Angola reflect these new Soviet priorities.

At the same time, the Soviet Union is clearly rethinking its strategic doctrine. The SS-20 fiasco (the failure of the Soviets to prevent American missile deployment in Europe) showed the pitfalls of letting purely military and technical considerations outweigh political analysis and advice. The new doctrine of "sufficient force" and strategic defense paves the way for major cuts in Soviet conventional as well as nuclear forces. Indeed, some Soviet military commentators are complaining about an unjustified rush to pare military spending, a rush reminiscent of Nikita Khrushchev's deep cuts of 1960 to 1961.

Are we on the verge of a new era in Soviet-U.S. relations? Or will the pleasant surprises of the last two years go the way of previous "false starts": America's World War II infatuation with Uncle Joe, Soviet premier Georgy Malenkov's peaceful coexistence campaign of 1953, Khrushchev's reforms, and the Nixon-Brezhnev détente? Gorbachev is a skillful and courageous leader, but should we want him to succeed? Is a reformed, rejuvenated Soviet Union in America's best interest?

The answer to these questions isn't simple. At best, Gorbachev has started a *process* of political, social, and economic change that will take many years to play out. If all goes well, the Soviet Union will become a more pluralistic society, and domestic and foreign policy-making will move outside the secret chambers of the Politburo and party apparatus to include the press, the soviets (governing councils), and other forums of a new Soviet public. Obviously, a more tolerant Soviet political culture could dispense with the demonology of "foreign encirclement" and "ideological subversion" as a way of enforcing civic loyalty. If millions of Soviet citizens traveled abroad—or if members of the managerial elite were working closely with Western firms—then

Samuel D. Kassow is a professor of history at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. His book, Students, Professors and the State in Tsarist Russia, *will be published by University of California Press in January 1989.*

the ignorance and isolation that have fueled East-West tensions would sharply diminish, allaying Westerners' fears that an economically retooled Soviet Union would be a threat.

At the very least, optimists argue, recent developments in the Soviet Union disprove traditional hard-line assertions that "the evil empire" is an implacable enemy, incapable of real reform, unwilling to cut back its military. Scholars such as Moshe Lewin—one of the best historians studying the Soviet Union—assert that the Gorbachev phenomenon reflects rising levels of urbanization and education in the Soviet Union. Too many Western analysts, the argument goes, have failed to recognize that even during periods of apparent political stagnation, sweeping social changes were transforming the Soviet Union. The rise of professional groups and voluntary associations, as well as the growing importance of the social sciences, has given reformers such as Gorbachev unprecedented sources of information and social support. Gorbachev has a constituency, and *perestroika,* optimists assert, is not just a flash in the pan. By the same token, *glasnost,* by encouraging citizens to be interested in the media and to participate in public discussion, renders irreversible the changes in the Soviet Union. As a result, the international climate as a whole will fundamentally improve. Some people even suggest that the cold war is over.

These optimists are probably wrong, however. The state of *perestroika* is still fragile, despite Gorbachev's personal position, and reform carries with it the risk of both an unstable, unpredictable Soviet Union and a backlash with potentially ugly consequences. While we shouldn't write off Gorbachev, we ought to indulge in some healthy skepticism. In other words, we must take into account Soviet domestic and foreign policy, the impact of past foreign policy failures on Gorbachev's consolidation of power, the obstacles to reform, and the dangers of placing too much hope in one man.

The basic premise underlying Gorbachev's reforms is that the international status of the Soviet Union depends on the strength of its economy and the resilience and creativity of its society. In this light, the Soviet press has begun to stress how the terror of Stalin's era and the institutionalized mendacity of the Brezhnev years damaged the foreign policy of the USSR. In a May 18, 1988, article in the *Literaturnaia Gazeta,* Professor Viacheslav Dashichev argued for a sweeping reappraisal of the connection between domestic and foreign policy as well as for more openness in the discussion of Soviet foreign policy errors. "Can it really be true," Dashichev wrote, "that we made terrible mistakes for 70 years in our internal policy and avoided them in foreign affairs?" According to Dashichev, had Stalin not destroyed the officer corps in 1937 to 1938 and discredited the moral standing of the Soviet Union with the purges—his war against the nation—then perhaps France and Britain would have made more serious efforts to sign an anti-German pact, which would have averted World War II. Dashichev also implied that Stalin's opportunism and bombastic rhetoric played a major role in bringing on the cold war.

But Dashichev's principal argument is that the Brezhnev regime made serious foreign policy blunders, which stemmed from its incompetence, its hubris, and (by implication) its tendency to focus on military factors at the expense of political ones, as well as from its refusal to listen to the advice of civilian experts:

> We formulated our general principles correctly: peace, security, disarmament, cooperation, noninterference in the internal affairs of other nations, peaceful co-existence. But clearly, our actions were not rational, competent, carefully thought through. We were mistaken in our fundamental analysis of the world situation and the balance of forces and did not undertake serious steps for the regulation of our fundamental political conflicts *[protivorechii]* with the West. Our political, military [arms transfers and advisers] and diplomatic involvement in regional conflicts proceeded without our considering how this affected [relations] between the USSR and the West.

By the time Brezhnev died, Dashichev concluded, the USSR had to face a powerful anti-Soviet bloc (the U.S., U.K., France, West Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan, and China), whose strength far outweighed its own.

Dashichev calls for a basic reevaluation of Soviet foreign policy. The leadership has to create an international climate that will give the Soviet Union time to restructure its economy and society. Creating such a climate involves far-reaching détente with the West, mutual renunciation of interference in Third World countries, and a declaration that competition between the U.S. and the USSR will play out not in international confrontation or jockeying for influence but in peaceful internal development. Once the U.S. and the USSR renounce direct international competition, arms control talks can work. But unless they rethink the ground rules of their relationship, such talks will do little to halt spiraling military expenditures.

One needn't be a genius to take away Dashichev's text and provide an alternative one. Put simply, American toughness worked. Had we gone with a nuclear freeze in 1981, a Neanderthal such as Viktor Grishin, and not Gorbachev, might be general secretary today. Without American firmness on Pershing and cruise missile deployment, there would have been no INF

Treaty and maybe even no NATO. Had the United States not backed the Afghan rebels, Gorbachev might never have called the boys home. And (swallow hard here!) it is plausible that at least some of the credit for *perestroika* and *glasnost* should go to American politicians who lobbied for massive SDI research. Okay, SDI is expensive and it might not work, but it forced the Soviet leadership to confront its only real competition: American technology. SDI brought home the message that Soviet military power could not depend on a sick economy and a corrupt society. Even the Soviet military finally accepted that argument. Not democratic idealism, but the bleak realities of Great Power competition, propelled *perestroika*. In turn, the imperatives of transforming a centrally managed Stalinist economy into a vibrant system capable of dealing with this challenge forced Gorbachev to recognize the connection between economic reform and *glasnost*.

Soviet leaders realize that their economy is in a state of crisis, and this awareness bolsters Gorbachev's position, notwithstanding hints that other Politburo members have deep misgivings about the rapid pace of *glasnost*. In 1964, by contrast, party leaders sent Khrushchev into retirement because they believed that Brezhnev and Aleksey Kosygin would better manage an essentially healthy economy and protect the interest of key constituencies from Khrushchev's unpredictable flights of fancy. Now there is no ready alternative to Gorbachev, especially as a shrewd manager of Soviet foreign policy. The recent special meeting of the Central Committee, which elected Gorbachev president, removed any doubts concerning his immediate hold on power.

Gorbachev's foreign policy agenda is to create an international climate that will allow the Soviet Union to accomplish its daring international reforms. This will include husbanding resources, cutting losses in Third World trouble spots, pushing forward new "think tanks" that can challenge traditional military preeminence in the formulation of strategic doctrine, and projecting a positive image abroad. Gorbachev is trying to improve the Soviet public image not through unilateral renunciation of Soviet interests, but through new approaches that manipulate Western public opinion. Recent displays of Gorbachev's skills in clude his unexpected acceptance of the zero option and his ingenious offer to trade Soviet naval bases in Vietnam for much larger American bases in the Philippines.

But the question remains whether the U.S. should want *glasnost* and *perestroika* to succeed. Is a stronger Soviet Union in America's interest? Is the reform process leading to a fundamental redefinition of Soviet national policy that would enhance international stability? Dashichev's article as well as recent speeches by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevarnadze certainly suggest that such a redefinition is beginning to happen, but it is too soon for us to count on it. To be sure, Egor Ligachev, a key Politburo member sharply critical of the dovish Shevarnadze foreign policy line, has lost his role as ideology chief. But he remains a powerful member of the Politburo. Moreover, retreats from Third World trouble spots do not necessarily mean that the

Reform carries with it the risk of both an unstable, unpredictable Soviet Union and a backlash with potentially ugly consequences.

Soviets are no longer expansionist or that they are no longer interested in weakening the alliance between Western Europe and the United States. Moreover, the Soviet Union's more benign public image might lull Westerners into a false sense of security even as the USSR continues to deploy such sophisticated new weapons systems as the Akula submarine. The best way to keep the peace is for the U.S. to pursue a foreign policy based on a sober assessment of Soviet intentions, while at the same time remaining open to positive new initiatives from Moscow.

* * *

One major reason for caution is that *perestroika* and *glasnost* are still fragile. Relentless criticism of the past, coupled with economic disappointment and ethnic tensions, may create an ideological vacuum, exacerbate internal conflicts, and ultimately undercut Gorbachev's reforms, notwithstanding his growing power within the Politburo. Granted, we should not underestimate the impact of social changes in the Soviet Union during the postwar era or the genuine hopes of a new Soviet "middle class" for true national renewal. Nor should we discount the genuine idealism now sweeping Soviet society or Gorbachev's apparently sincere determination to redefine socialism in a more humane, democratic way. Gorbachev does have some cards to play: a sense that there is no ready alternative to *perestroika,* the possibility of dramatic gains in food production if recent reforms work, the vast natural wealth of the Soviet Union, and the skill and resources of the Soviet people.

But it is hard to tell just how wide the social base for reform is—whether the emerging "civil society" embraces the urban working classes or the peasantry. We should also not assume too much about middle-class

support for *perestroika*. Privileged groups within the Soviet middle and working classes have a vested interest in the status quo. Decades of stagnation have spawned intricate webs of corruption, self-interest, and complacency that suit millions of Soviet citizens. Do they welcome *perestroika?* Yes, but only in the same way that many Americans welcome cutting the deficit as long as they get to keep their favorite program. Furthermore, bringing "democracy" to a population that is unused to it is always a delicate exercise, especially when it is accompanied by economic disruption and national tensions. Democratic reforms, in and of themselves, are hardly a guarantor of stability, and they may actually aggravate social conflict. Recent demonstrations in the Baltic states, the Nagorno Karabakh problem, and the rise of organizations with openly anti-Semitic overtones may be only the tip of the iceberg. If nationality problems escalate or if problems in Eastern Europe worsen, it is easy to imagine calls for a "strong hand" and an end to reform.

Already, the Soviet Union has entered a period of confusion. Traditional Soviet institutions and values have been heavily criticized, and the reform process is still too undeveloped to furnish anything more than the vaguest outlines of a new political and civic culture. Changes are taking place rapidly: After years of attacks on markets, speculation, and the bourgeois materialism of the West, the Soviet Union is now allowing citizens to enter cooperatives and earn profits. The party is to lose its key role in economic troubleshooting and personnel decisions, especially on the local and plant level. Projected political reforms promise revitalized soviets chosen in real elections, powerful factory committees elected by workers, and a new president—Gorbachev himself—with real authority.

Gorbachev is obviously hoping that a healthy dose of participatory democracy, while leaving the party's monopoly of power unchallenged, will energize the Soviet system in a number of ways. First, citizen participation in running the soviets and factories would encourage a greater sense of responsibility and provide stronger incentives to work harder. Citizens would have more control over allocation of resources—housing, education, health—as well as more say in the running of their workplaces. Second, expanded citizen participation would presumably buy time for Gorbachev by defusing resentment against the leadership: soviets and factory committees would deflect some discontent away from the party. But so far Gorbachev has few results to show.

There is talk of giving the republics economic autonomy. But what will happen when local agendas—protecting the environment, slowing economic growth to keep Russians out of non-Russian republics—clash with national priorities? Developments in Estonia, which has called for economic autonomy, will be a revealing litmus test. Indeed, a potentially serious problem for *perestroika* would be a *pied-noir* type of backlash from Russians in non-Russian republics (like the Baltics), fearful of a possible loss of privilege and status if economic autonomy goes too far.

Faced with mounting problems, Gorbachev used the June party conference to argue that successful economic reform depends on a far-reaching transformation of the Soviet administrative and political system. While key economists push radical market reforms, critics from both the right (Pamyat) and the left (the Popular Front for Perestroika) warn against carrying free-market ideas too far. The new role of the party has yet to be defined, and it is unclear how Gorbachev will avoid the contradictions and political difficulties that derailed major economic reforms in 1957 and 1965. Also, it is unlikely that the revitalized soviets will work unless they receive vast new sources of income. And where will the money come from? The questions are endless, the problems enormous.

The economy poses the most immediate danger to Gorbachev. Simply put, it is getting worse. This sense of crisis explains the urgency behind the recent Politburo shake-up. Food is in short supply, and Gorbachev admitted in his speech to the July party plenum that the USSR might even have to step up food imports. Some leading supporters of *perestroika* are pleading with Gorbachev to "buy time," even if that means using precious gold and foreign currency to import Western consumer goods in order to demonstrate some tangible signs of improvement to the Soviet people. Writing in the April 1988 issue of *Novyi Mir*, the influential Soviet economist Nikolai Shmelev warned that *perestroika* is in deep trouble:

> Sure we can take comfort from the fact that the moral standing [*kredit*] of the new course is still high, especially among the intelligentsia. But if we consider that the politics of *perestroika* began two years ago, then a natural question arises. How long will the credit line be open? It seems maybe another year or two, after which it is entirely possible that we will see an upheaval in the popular mood—disappointment, apathy, growing distrust of the [new course].

According to Shmelev, not just the local party organizations but also the soviets and the ministries are carrying on a "hidden and sometimes not so hidden" sabotage of *perestroika*. Despite Gorbachev's encouragement of cooperatives and private initiative, local authorities are

(Continued on p. 110)

Joanne Landy Responds

Though much of Todd Gitlin's article is excellent, he makes a false distinction between "visionary" and "practical" politics. A vision is of no use unless it serves as a guide for effective action. I would expect Gitlin to agree that it is self-defeating crackpot realism to go along with the assumptions of Sam Nunn and his ilk if one wants to reshape the American political landscape. After all, Gitlin himself notes that the Democratic party's leadership has made precisely that mistake by echoing the principles of Reaganism for close to a decade.

In this context, however, perhaps my statement that "debates about the Soviet Union's ultimate intentions toward Western Europe or about the relative military strength of NATO and the Warsaw Pact are fruitless and irresolvable" was misleading. I do believe the peace movement has been wrong to make disarmament policy *revolve around* the notion that the USSR is really quite weak militarily in Europe and would never move into Western Europe. As I argued in my article, a democratic peace policy on the part of the United States is the only way to offer a sustained political challenge to the permanent Soviet military occupation of Eastern Europe—and that's true whatever the USSR's strength or intentions. At the same time, however, it is obviously important for peace advocates to point out that the Soviets are making disarmament initiatives that offer significant hope for peace, and that they certainly are not going to invade Western Europe in the near future. These facts can enable people in the U.S. and Western Europe to feel more comfortable about embarking on what they see as a perilous peace policy. But it's essential to incorporate the notion of political challenge into the disarmament argument; otherwise *we* will be disarmed if and when the Soviets again do something like invading Czechoslovakia or Afghanistan—which I assume Gitlin doesn't rule out, notwithstanding the fact that the Soviet leadership today clearly prefers not to take such action and will go to great lengths to avoid doing so.

Gitlin is right to argue that oppositionists in Eastern European countries are not "by themselves likely, in the forseeable future, to constitute the social basis for a transformed state relationship between East and West." I would only add that, unless social movements in the East, West, and Third World become much stronger, the prospects for peace and democracy are dim. There is no immediate solution to the disarmament issue precisely because these movements are still so weak. But the recent tumultuous events in Poland show that movements once thought minuscule or dead can rapidly come to life.

Gitlin implies that I believe that peace movements can replace summits. I said nothing of the kind. In fact, I suggested different ways in which peace movements would relate to superpower negotiators and summits—by putting demands on them, supporting particular agreements, and so on. I simply stressed the need to distance ourselves from the negotiators' logic and interests. Thus, when Gitlin says that "there are places—the Middle East in particular—where the superpowers should intervene still more vigorously to promote regional settlements and beat back nuclear proliferation," his tone makes me uneasy. It's reasonable to favor an international meeting of some sort to get things moving in the Middle East, but we should always frame our support for such international initiatives in terms of strengthening the popular movements among Jews and Palestinians who can work out a solution based on democracy, self-determination, and mutual recognition.

In response to James Chace, I find it peculiar for someone writing an article with the overarching title "A New Grand Strategy" (the title of his *Foreign Policy* article which I discussed in my piece) to neglect to mention his bloc-transcending convictions. But let's take Chace at his word when he tells us that he too hates blocs and that he wants to further the Soviet bloc dissolution. While Chace hopes that both the Warsaw Pact and NATO can eventually be dissolved, his opposition to blocs seems rather one-sided. He doesn't retract his *Foreign Policy* statement legitimizing the U.S. version of a Brezhnev doctrine for Latin America; i.e., viewing the area as a legitimate part of the U.S. "sphere of influence."

I'm happy to learn that Chace favors "redistributive policies" in Latin America, but I am skeptical about how prepared he is to support radical democratic change in the Third World, given his overall moderate approach

and his failure to challenge the notion of special rights for the U.S. I'm also glad to see that Chace wants to forgive much of the Latin American debt, and I'm sorry if I misstated his views on this matter. Nevertheless, my basic point about the inadequacy of Chace's program to redress inequalities between North and South remains, unless he repudiates the assertion he made in *Foreign Policy*: "As for Latin American debt, direct U.S. aid can assist these countries in applying their national profits toward loan repayment. But caution is in order: There is a point at which direct aid no longer affects a country's status. Too much aid can be and is misused—private pockets being chief among the misappropriations." Of course it's important to find ways to avoid lining private pockets, but I can't think of any major policy expert who has proposed giving "too much" direct aid to the Third World.

A tip-off to Chace's attitude about movements from below is his snide remarks about the disarmament movement. He complains that I speak with too much "authority" about the peace movement and that I don't understand that the 1983 Pastoral Letter of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops had a greater impact on public opinion. Simply looking at the date of the pastoral letter should make one realize that when secular and religious peace activists poured into the streets in 1981 and 1982 they played an enormous role in influencing the bishops' decision. Only a deep disdain for popular movements would blind one to this obvious fact.

Chace argues against my proposal for unilateral withdrawals of U.S. troops from Europe by mischaracterizing it. He claims that I maintain that Soviet troops are in Eastern Europe simply in response to the American threat. But I stated in my article that a major reason the Soviets want to maintain their military occupation in Eastern Europe, even if on a scaled-down level, is in order to impose their social system on neighboring countries. I added that the continuing presence of U.S. troops in Western Europe more than forty years after the end of World War II serves as an excuse for continued Soviet occupation, and I simply proposed taking away that excuse.

Chace then plays his trump card: A Hungarian or Pole or East German or Czech wouldn't see things my way. Todd Gitlin makes a similar point when he remarks that some Polish and Hungarian activists are not impressed by the possibilities of a Soviet troop withdrawal because the geography of the region makes a return quite easy. We must bear in mind, however, that if the Soviets were to withdraw from Eastern Europe as a result either of a bilateral agreement with the United States or of pressure from unilateral U.S. initiatives, it would be politically (though not technically) difficult for them to come back. There are no guarantees, of course, that they wouldn't do it anyway, but this possibility has to be weighed against the perpetual stalemate guaranteed by the present situation. There are today some activists in Eastern Europe who understand the leverage to be gained by Eastern European social movements if there is a cross-bloc call for both bilateral and unilateral withdrawals of superpower troops from Europe. Let's hope that more activists come around to this view.

Despite limited time and space in which to provide a response to Samuel Kassow's article, here follow a few of my comments on his ideas. First, there is a problem with Kassow's underlying assumption that "we" —i.e., all Americans—can formulate a common foreign policy. As I said in my piece, I believe elites in this country have very different domestic and international interests from those of the vast majority of U.S. citizens. Second, Kassow suggests that, since Gorbachev and his reforms are by no means secure, one should therefore be "prudent" about disarmament steps. Although I agree that the reformers' position is precarious, I would not agree that consequently the U.S. ought cautiously to continue its cold war policies. A democratic, peaceful U.S. foreign policy is the best way to protect emerging independent Soviet-bloc movements from garrison-state justifications for repression—and it is only these movements that can counter the power of bureaucratic antireformers.

Kassow makes the case that U.S. firmness on Pershings, cruise missiles, and SDI was a powerful factor in bringing about *glasnost* and *perestroika*, with the implication being that this fact vindicates the Reaganite military buildup. Viewed from a certain perspective, the contention that military might can produce concessions holds some truth. But such concessions are won at a price: the perpetuation of the militarist cycle that undermines all efforts to dismantle the symbiotic structures of the cold war. A comprehensive peace policy can also win concessions—and at the same time open up new possibilities for progressive social change in both East and West.

Finally, Kassow is obsessed with the search for "stability," for an orderly process of reform without disruption. But building an alternative to cold war elites depends upon the growth of a powerful democratic mass movement—and real movements for social transformation are inevitably untidy and turbulent, wherever they are. □

FICTION

Five Seasons

A.B. Yehoshua

Translated from the Hebrew by Hillel Halkin

Molkho's wife died at 4 A.M., and Molkho did his best to mark the moment forever, because he wished to be able to remember it. And indeed, thinking back on it weeks and even months later, he was convinced that he had managed to refine the instant of her passing (her passing? he wasn't sure the word was right) into something clear and vivid containing not only thought and feeling but also sound and light, such as the maroon glow of the small electric heater, the greenish radiance of the numbers on the digital clock, the yellow shaft of light from the bathroom that cast large shadows in the hallway, and perhaps, too, the color of the sky, a pinkish ivory set off by the deep obscurity around it. He would have liked to think he recalled the dark morning sky because it added a stirring, elemental touch of nature, but he could not be sure of it, any more than he could be of the whisper of the wind and the rain; yet he was certain that there had been music—yes, real music he himself had turned on hesitatingly but convinced that if she wished to hear anything at all as she died, it was the music she had cared for so much in those last months when reading had become such a chore for her. Like the radio operator of a military vehicle heading into battle, she would adjust the small stereo earphones in the dead, painful twilight hours between the visits of her friends, her talks with her children, and her various treatments and pills; choose one of the cassettes by her bedside; and switch on the tape machine. She discussed this music with him and even once hinted that when the end came (so they referred to her death), she would like him to play some of it for her: if he saw it wasn't too much for her, she said, he should let her have music—and he was happy to be able to oblige, for she had trained him well during those last months and he had learned to do exactly as she told him, taking everything with the utmost seriousness. And so now, too, he remembered to flip the switch, though he didn't dare put on the earphones but rather left them dangling by her head as he cranked up the bed, so that from the two pillows came the sound of wind instruments, distant and muffled but assertive, the solemn, aerial flourish of the breathless, staccato hunting horns in the Mahler symphony that he had inserted in the deck three days ago, for though he did not know if its throbbing strains were really the most suitable, he was afraid to surprise her with anything new, no matter how peaceful and simple.

It was thus that he remembered the moment of her death, by its exact bars, the repetition of which could recreate at will that final scene in the silence of the night. He had no way of knowing which of the undulating notes had entered her consciousness as she breathed her last, no way (nor did he seek to find one) of telling if she heard them at all. Never taking his eyes off her, ardent with pity and zeal, he had let himself be led through a black forest in the light of a damp, chill dawn, struggling past heavy branches toward a lit valley or hollow and the soft, tawny doe that stood there, pursued and yet summoned by the throbbing horns.

Just then her breathing had stopped. He didn't touch her, afraid to wake her or hurt her—and yet that was it, the moment she never would know, though of all the moments in the world it was the most intimately and individually hers, presided over by that invisible hand that tells us thus far and no further. He had never thought much about such things as life after death or reincarnation, had indeed thanked her mentally for shying away from all that mysticism, whose dark unreason would only have been swept away anyhow by her aggressive, bitter intellectuality. It suited him perfectly to be alone with her now, alert, quiet, and wholly concentrated, with no one to distract him or share his thoughts with and, above all, with no doctor or nurse to try some new tube or drug, but rather all by himself, exclusively in control and in charge—alone with the lights, alone with the sounds, alone with Death, the same Death he once had imagined in the form of the black shot put he was made to throw in gym class, the ball of Death that had rolled into her room several days ago and lain silently beneath the furniture or the bed,

A. B. Yehoshua is a novelist living in Israel. Excerpted from the book Five Seasons *by A. B. Yehoshua. Translation copyright © 1989 by Doubleday and William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. Copyright © 1987 by A. B. Yehoshua. To be published in January 1989 by Doubleday.*

despite all his efforts to heave it back even a few feet. That Death was now right by him, astonishingly piercing and bursting forth from her at once, while his only thought was to keep her from feeling any pain—yes, that had been his sole mission in recent months, to ease her pain, so that even now, at the last moment, a whole battery of remedies and devices was available for the task: cranks, handles, crutches, a wheelchair, a wash basin, a fan, medicines, drugs, an oxygen mask, an entire field hospital in one small room, all to lessen her pain, all to help her soul exit gently.

Yes, always, even when sitting at his desk, even when walking in the street, erect, slow, and preoccupied, his head already gray yet his body still youthful, even when eating or sleeping, he had thought all the time of her pain and how to cope with it, had listened continually to her disease-eaten, scalpel-scarred, drug-swollen hulk of a body, which stewing in the inflorescence of its poisons, had lain for weeks on end in the same giant, ultramodern hospital bed standing like a chariot in the middle of the room with its jellylike water mattress and its cranks, bars, and wheels, in the hope that her last journey might take place at home and that all those ministering to it—her mother, her children, her family, her friends, and above all, he himself, its general manager—might get her safely past her rampaging illness to the competent quietude of an inevitable death. Lying next to her like a loyal staff officer on the plain, narrow bed that had replaced the old king-size one they had shared since their marriage until the day it was moved out of the room, half beside and half beneath her, he had listened intently, on call to fight her pain, sleeping in snatches, waking up and dozing off so quickly that it seemed to happen automatically, though not without dreams—no, not without dreams. For even on that last, fearful night, he had suddenly dreamed that he was a child again and that someone was whistling for him, looking for him in some street or field, perhaps his wife, perhaps someone like her. At once he awoke as usual, only to realize that the sound, which had frightened him by not stopping and had made him sit up in bed, was simply the wheezing of her breath.

This time, though, he was not mistaken, and in full possession of himself, he acted sensibly and calmly, careful not to repeat his error of three days ago when, awoken by the same wheezing in the middle of the night, he had agitatedly sought to do something and had called out to her, sitting her up in bed when she answered, hugging her and trying to wake her, giving her tea and then wine, even phoning his elder son to come at once from his college dormitory. Together, in the hours before dawn, they had made her put on her glasses and get out of bed to wash her mastectomized body, unthinkingly forcing more life on her by propping her almost upright against the pillows, pale, groggy, and breathing weakly as she listened to the news and the morning jingles on the radio. Only later, when her mother and the doctor dropped by and he told them with pride what had happened, did he understand from their silence and lowered, averted looks that they quite failed to see the point of it.

There followed two excruciating days in which the vestige of the death he had repelled caused her great pain. And yet she had chatted, listened to music, and even laughed when shown old home movies of their youngest son as a chubby little tot rolling in the sand on the beach. Why, her laughter is a gift, Molkho thought, scanning her face greedily: I've raised her from the underworld! Does she have any idea where she's been, any memory or keepsake from there? He even enjoyed it greatly when she argued with him about some trivial matter. It's like quarreling with a ghost, he thought—and indeed, that evening she lost consciousness and then became delirious, so that he gave her a shot of morphine in case the pain started up again. But it didn't. She simply faded rapidly, and he disconnected the telephone by her bed and took her friends' calls in the next room, repeating the same bulletin over and over with infinite patience while her old mother sat with her through the next day, moistening her lips from time to time and trying to get her to talk, though in fact she would not even eat, pushing away the food she had always swallowed heartily until now.

In the evening his mother called from Jerusalem and friends arrived, all walking about on tiptoe—but eyelids fluttering, she heard them and knew who they were, now and then murmuring a word or phrase that assumed for them all an intense and ceremonial significance. At exactly 7 P.M. Death appeared in her hand with a fanning, uncontrollable tremor and they all knew the end was near, that it was imminent; yet, though several people offered to spend the night with him, he stubbornly, firmly refused. "There's time yet," he said, believing his own words. "We have to save our strength." And he sent them all home, even her mother, who didn't want to go, even the student to his dormitory. Later, his daughter arrived from her army base, sat up with the dying woman a while, and then went off to her room, too fatigued to stay awake any longer. His youngest son, a high school boy, was in his room too, studying for a history exam, and at ten o'clock Molkho turned off the lights, collected the scattered sections of the newspaper, replaced the books on their shelves, and consulted the calendar, on which the next two days' visits were already written down, purposely staggered to keep too many people from coming at once and exhausting her. At midnight he put on his

pajamas and lay down in his bed beneath hers. Soon afterward his son left his room, passed hesitantly by the open doorway, afraid to enter, and asked if he was needed. "No," said Molkho. "Go to bed."

Then he, too, dozed off, only to awaken at 3 A.M. with the knowledge that he would sleep no more that night. He rose, fiddled with the heater, boiled water to sterilize a hypodermic that he knew would not be needed, and drank the last of the cognac from the little bottle they had bought on the airplane two years ago on their last trip to Europe. His wife was restless. "What, what did you say?" he called softly to her when she murmured something, but there was no answer. He went over to her bed, arranged the blankets, and even decided to raise the bars, as though she were a baby who might fall out; then he went to the living room and sat down in the darkness on the couch, inviting Death to come and finish what it had begun. Suddenly, though, remembering the music, he went back and switched on the tape machine. How odd it was, he thought, that after so many years of so many doctors and nurses, now, at the moment of her death, there was no one left but himself—yet he felt sure he had room in him even for Death, and sticking his hands beneath the blankets, he grasped her two feet, which were soft, smooth, and still there. Once again she murmured something that sounded like "Isn't that so?" "What?" he asked gently, bending down to her after a moment. "Isn't what so?"

She didn't answer now either. Slowly she opened her large, heavy, amber eyes, the eyes of a weary animal from which the light had fled, leaving in them neither anger nor pain, but only ultimate defeat. He smiled at her, spoke her name, tried encouraging her as always, but she failed to respond, for the first time not recognizing him, her moist yellow glance spilling out emptily. He had never imagined that Death could be so damp, and when her breathing stopped, he rearranged the blankets and kissed her lightly on the forehead, imbibing her scent. "You're free now," he whispered, switching off the little twenty-four-hour night-light and opening the window, though he did not believe in such freedom at all, only in nothingness. A deep, urgent need to look at the world made him step out on the terrace: this was the moment, this was their last farewell. It was late fall, and the first rains had cooled the earth without sating it. His eye followed the line of the ravine in the darkness below the house, looking for some unfamiliar sign of life, but the night was gray and silent, with a slight, motionless mist hanging over the sea. It was, he thought, his last quiet hour before the bustle of condolence calls began, leaving him no time for himself. Meanwhile, however, the exclusivity of his knowledge made him feel advantageously strong. A car



sped along the highway by the coast. Soon he, too, would be free.

Upon returning to the room, he realized he should never have turned off the night-light. Suddenly he felt a twinge of fear. The border between Death and Life should be clearer, he thought, the shock of crossing it should be greater: why, if I look at her now in the darkness, I may imagine I see her move. And indeed, he seemed to detect a slight movement as he peered back through the glass door of the terrace, which he vigorously opened, however, refusing to believe in yet another resurrection, striding silently back through the room with his eyes on the floor until, by the hallway door, he turned to look at her again. Now he could see her face clearly, defeat still written on it. For seven years she had fought her illness; four years ago she was actually sure she had triumphed. Yet now the same hand that hours ago had moved with a slow, fanning motion hung lifelessly down from the bed. He glanced at the clock. It was 4:15. All at once he thought with emotion that not only she but her illness, too, that cruel cousin that had moved in with them, was gone.

He walked swiftly out, shut the door behind him, collapsed on the living room couch, and tried to sleep, to rest up for the ordeal ahead, his knowledge like a

warm blanket covering him; yet the thought of all the people he was at liberty to wake was too much for him, and rousing himself, he went to phone his mother-in-law, who, perfectly clear-headed, answered at once in her slow, soft, irrepressibly German-flavored Hebrew. "It's all over," he said quietly, tersely, flinging her the death in one throw. For a heartbreaking moment she said nothing. Then, though, she asked, "When?" And now it was he who couldn't speak. With a thickening lump in his throat, he began to sob and shake, the unseen sorrow of the eighty-two-year-old woman stirring up his own grief with unexpected force. The receiver fell in his lap while, with her accustomed restraint, she waited patiently for him to get a grip on himself and answer, "Ten, fifteen minutes ago." "I'll be right over," she said. "Why rush?" he asked. "You may as well wait for it to be light out, you have a long hard day ahead of you." But she wouldn't hear of it. "No, I'll be right over. Are the children still sleeping? Don't wake them. I'll call a cab." And she hung up.

He went to the bathroom and sat doggedly on the toilet until he passed a few drops of urine, washed his hands and face without shaving, and walked down the darkened hallway past the children's rooms. For a second his daughter opened her eyes and saw him, but as he said nothing, she closed them again, while his youngest son, deep in sleep, did not stir. They had been bracing themselves for this death, almost angry with it for taking so long.

He opened the front door and turned on the stairway light. It was damp outside. A soft, noiseless rain fell furtively into the world, slicking the front steps with a bright coppery gleam. It occurred to him that in her agitation the old woman might slip coming down the garden stairs. All I need now is for her to take a fall on me, he thought bitterly. His wife had been her only daughter. Throughout her illness she had continued to look after her mother, and now, he thought, all that burden would be his, even if she was a responsible old woman who took good care of herself. Deciding to meet her downstairs, he put on his shoes, an old sweater, and a coat, took an umbrella, and stepped out into the rain, first waiting for her by the entrance, from which he had a view of the street, and then stepping into the garden, treading on the dead leaves that strewed the wet path, all the while thinking of the funeral arrangements. He had already reached the street when the gruesome thought occurred to him that his son or daughter might awake and discover their dead mother, and so he ran worriedly back upstairs, where he locked the bedroom door after a quick glance at her lying in the dark sheen of night flowing through the open window. Relieved to have everything under control again, he stuck the key in his pocket and hurried back down, feeling the light spray of the rain which, scarcely hitting the ground, seemed to have as its sole mission the cleansing of the air.

The sky had cleared, but the rain, as though coming from elsewhere, kept falling. With an unfamiliar freedom he paced up and down the sidewalk, fingering the key in his pocket, secure in the knowledge that from this moment on, there were no further claims on him. For a moment, as though looking down on her from above, he imagined his wife, utterly alone now, dressed in an old coat among a crowd of dead people in front of some clinic or office that they were waiting to enter, though it was only their first stop. The thought that never again could he help her made him shiver with grief, the hot lump swelling in his throat and sticking there, refusing to overflow, until slowly it dissolved again. By now his mother-in-law should have arrived from her old-age home on the next flank of the mountain—and indeed, approaching the curve in the street, he saw a small light that bobbed in midair like a drunken little star, slowly groping its sinuous way, faltering, flickering, and then flaring up again. Molkho rubbed his eyes. Could she have decided to come by foot? She actually had a small flashlight—he had seen it more than once—yet he was sure this wasn't it. Stopping short to let the Death-propelled world spin on dizzily without him, he suddenly realized that what he saw was the headlight of a bicycle whose rider, a large, cumbersome newsboy, kept dismounting, leaning his vehicle against the curb, disappearing into buildings with his papers, coming out again, and pedaling on. And yet, when he finally rode by, Molkho saw, he was not a boy at all, but rather a heavily dressed woman, her head wrapped in scarves and the cuffs of her pants clipped with clothespins. Though passing quite near him, she failed to notice him; her eyeglasses glinting beneath the streetlights, she rode on as far as his own house, entering it with an armful of newspapers to stuff into the mailboxes. Soon she emerged and straightened her bicycle—but now Molkho saw she was a man after all, varicose and heavyset, who threw him a resentful glance, remounted the sagging bike, and rode off.

But the taxi was coming down the street too, chuffing and billowing exhaust. Preceded by the cane that for some obscure reason she had taken to carrying in the past month, his mother-in-law stepped briskly out of it, paid the driver, and stood there talking to him. There was something about her that inspired confidence in people, with whom she knew how to get along. Had she told the man where she was going so early in the morning or would she have thought that undignified? The taxi departed, leaving her standing by herself on the opposite curb. Deftly slipping her change into her



TIKKUN . . .
The Perfect Chanukah or Christmas Gift . . . at a specially low gift rate: $12.00 for 6 issues!

You have friends & relatives who would love **Tikkun.** Take advantage of this specially reduced rate.

If you already subscribe, buy gift subscriptions at $12 each. If not, subscribe for $25 and then buy as many gift subscriptions as you want at $12 each.

We will send an announcement of your gift. Allow several weeks for delivery of the magazine itself.

Fill out the card below or call toll-free 1-800-825-0061.

☐ Yes, I want to subscribe to **Tikkun.** $25.00 ☐
☐ I already subscribe.

_____
NAME

_____
ADDRESS CITY/STATE/ZIP

Gifts: [Note: You must already be a subscriber or subscribe now in order to buy gift subscriptions at the special low rate.]

1. _____ $12.00 ☐
NAME ADDRESS CITY/STATE/ZIP

2. _____ $12.00 ☐
NAME ADDRESS CITY/STATE/ZIP

3. _____ $12.00 ☐
NAME ADDRESS CITY/STATE/ZIP

$7.00 extra per subscription for foreign subscriptions $_____ ☐

☐ I enclose a check to **Tikkun** for a total of $_____
☐ Please bill me. ☐ Charge my Visa acct #_____
☐ Charge my Master Card acct #_____
Expiration Date _____

TKBI13

So you haven't given up on changing the world?

But you know that a real healing and transforming requires understanding, wisdom, and careful analysis.

Read **Tikkun** . . .
Something deeper than you can get in a weekly newspaper or magazine

Why not share it with other people you care about—buy them a Chanukah or Christmas gift at our special low price.

NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY LABEL
FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO. 920 OAKLAND, CA
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

TIKKUN
P.O. Box 6406
Syracuse, NY 13217

purse, she glanced in both directions, as if waiting for an invisible flow of traffic to stop, before crossing the street. She was, he noticed, warmly dressed in a raincoat, boots, and gloves, and she was wearing for the first time the red woolen cap they had bought her in Paris two years ago. He stepped toward her, wary of the cane that advanced through the air as if tracking an unseen target, careful not to scare her—and in fact, head bent in sorrow, she took him at first for a stranger and sought to make a detour around him. Gently he blocked her way and held out his hand. Though she had shrunken in recent years, she still held herself upright, and her skin, despite its wrinkled, slightly liverish patina that gave off a faint smell of old scent, had a morning freshness.

"The driver lost his way; he misunderstood," she said in her German accent, which was always strongest in the morning, after a night of German dreams. "I hope you weren't too worried," she added, looking away from him. He stared down without answering, surprised by her matter-of-factness, seeking to help her by the elbow down the garden stairs. But she did not want to be helped. Her ancient body was alive and agile beneath its layers of clothing as she shone her little flashlight on the wet stone stairs of the garden that were strewn with autumn leaves, descending them with her cane hooked over one arm, then transferring it to the other while ascending the house stairs with him hurrying after her, plucking a wet newspaper from the mailbox as he passed it. She all but ran to the bedroom when he opened the front door, her face hard and pale, her lips trembling. "Just a minute," he whispered while she struggled with the doorknob, taking the key from his pocket and trying to explain. But he saw she wasn't listening. Without removing her large coat and hat, and holding her cane and lit flashlight, she burst inside as if she still might not be too late. The room itself had grown quite stuffy, and the face of the limp-handed woman actually seemed flushed. Yet, poignantly, everything was just as he had left it. He remained standing in the doorway, returning his wife of thirty years to her mother, detachedly watching the old woman throw herself without a word on the corpse, fondle it, kiss it, cross its two arms on its chest, lie a while beside it, and emit a piercing sob like the blast of a distant, sinking ship, so that Molkho, whose newspaper was still under his arm, felt the lump in his throat again and wished the strange sound might sweep him away on a wave of wished-for tears, though he knew that it wouldn't, that it was only, after all, a sob.

His mother-in-law was a cultured, educated woman who read books and went to concerts. In Israel, to which she had come shortly before World War II, she had run an orphanage, and during her daughter's illness she and Molkho had become quite close. Despite all the hired nursing help, the real burden of caring for his wife had been shouldered by the two of them, and while they never had talked about Death itself, only about practical things, he felt sure she held the same opinion of it as she did—namely, that it was the absolute end of everything and that the two of them, he and she, were alone by themselves now in this room. And so, going over to her, he laid a light hand on her shoulder, which was something he had never done before, helped her out of her coat, took her hat, and led her to the small armchair in which she had spent so much time in recent days.

She sank into it, her old face deeply creased beneath its shock of gray hair, her heavy glasses misted over, so like and unlike her dead daughter, while he, seeing her stricken and bewildered, began to pace up and down, choking back his emotion. "The end was very peaceful," he said. "I don't think she suffered at all. I'm sure she wasn't in pain, and I know what pain is. I'm quite sure she wasn't," he repeated, carried away by his own conviction as if it were he, rather than she, who had died an hour ago, the old woman hanging on every word and nodding all the time. "Yes, she'll be quiet now," she said, as if the deceased were a troublesome child who had finally fallen asleep, and he felt so touched by her flushed, bewildered face with its glasses halfway down its nose that he burst into tears himself, feeling equally sorry for the two of them, while she regarded him with quiet sympathy until, finishing crying, he went to the bathroom to wash, taking off his shirt and jacket and deciding this time to shave.

When Molkho emerged from the bathroom he found his daughter wide-awake and tearful, her arms around her grandmother, and he nodded to her across the room as if to say, "Yes, now you know too," as though the knowledge were an object that could be passed from hand to hand. Glancing again at the dead body, he felt as overwhelmed by its immobility as if the earth's very orbit had stopped. And yet, the morning paper, lying forgotten at the foot of the bed, reminded him with a pang that it hadn't, and looking out at the sky, he saw a soft white streak that was the dawn. □

I Went to the Movie of Life

Allen Ginsberg

In the mud, in the night, in Mississippi Delta roads
outside Clarksdale I slogged along, Lights flashed
under trees, my black companion motioned "Here they are,
your company."—Like giant rhinoceri with painted faces
splashed all over side and snout, headlights glaring in rain,
one after another buses rolled past us toward Book Hotel
Boarding House, up the hill, town ahead.
Accompanying me, two girls
pitched in the dark slush garbaged road, slipping in deep ruts
wheels'd left behind sucking at their high heels, staining granny
dresses sequined magic marked with astral signs, Head groupies
who knew the way to this Grateful Dead half-century heroes'
caravan pit stop for the night. I climbed mid-road, a toad
hopped before my foot, I shrank aside, unthinking'd kicked it off
with leather shoe, animal feet scurried back at my sight—
a little monster on his back bled red, nearby this prey a lizard
with large eyes retreated, and a rat curled tail and slithered
in mud wet to the dirt gutter, repelled. A long climb ahead, the girls'd
make it or not, I moved ahead, eager to rejoin old company,
Merry Pranksters with aged pride in peacock-feathered beds,
shining mylar mirror-paper walls, acid mothers with strobe-lit radios,
long haired men, gaunt 60's Diggers emerged from the night
to rest, bathe, cook spaghetti, nurse their kids,
smoke pipes and squat with Indian sages round charcoal
braziers in their cars; profound American dreamers,
I was in their company again after long years, byways
alone looking for lovers in bar street country towns
and sunlit cities, rain & shine, snow & spring-bud backyard
brick walls, ominous adventures behind the Iron Curtain.
Were we all grown old? I looked for my late boyfriends,
dancing to Electric Blues with their guns and smoke round jukebox walls
the smell of hash and country ham, old newspaper media stars
wandering room after room: pentagon refugee Ellsberg, old dove Dellinger
bathing in an iron tub with a patch in his stomach wall
Abbie Hoffman explaining the natural strategy of city political saint
works, Quicksilver Messenger musicians, Berkeley orators
with half-grown children in their sox, dirty faces, alcohol
Uncles who played chess & strummed banjos frayed by broken fingernails,
where's Ken Kesey, away tonite in another megalopolis hosting
hypnosis parties for Hell's Angels, maybe nail them down on stage
or radio, Neal must be tending his daughters in Los Gatos,
pacifying his wife, coming down amphetamines in his bedroom,
or downers to sleep this night away & wake for work
in the great Bay Carnival tented among smokestacks, railroad



tracks and freeways under box house urban hills..
Young movie stars with grizzled beards passed thru bus corridors
looking for Dylan in the movie office, re-swaggering old roles,
recorded words now sung in Leningrad and Shanghai,
their wives in tortoise shell glasses & paisley shawls & towels tending
cauldrons bubbling with spaghetti sauce, & racks of venison,
squirrel or lamb; ovens open with hot rhubarb pies—
Who should I love? Here one with leather hat, blond hair
strong body middle age, face frowned in awful thought,
beer in hand by the bathroom wall? That Digger boy I knew
with giant phallos, bald head studying medicine walked by,
preoccupied with anatomy homework, rolling a joint, his
think fingers at his chest, eyes downcast on paper & tobacco.
One by one I checked out love companions, none
whose beauty stayed my heart, this place was tired
of my adoration, they knew my eyes too well. No one I could find
to give me bed tonite and wake me grinning naked, with eggs
scrambled for breakfast ready, oatmeal, grits, or hot spicy sausages
at noon assembly when I opened my eyelids out of dream. I
wandered, walking room to room thru psychedelic buses
wanting to meet someone new, younger than this crowd of wily
wrinkled wanderers with their booze and families, Electronic
Arts & Crafts, woe line brows of chemical genius music
producers, adventurous politicians, singing ladies & earthy paramours
playing rare parts in the final movie of a generation.
The cameras rolled and followed me, was I the central figure
in this film? We'd passed dark starred crossroads & risen over bridges,

the ghost-lit caravan party of gypsy intellects had passed thru USA in
front of an eye recording visual tape better'n celluloid—
I'd known most faces and guided the inevitable cameras room to room,
pausing at candle lit bus windows on flooded cotton fields
we'd seen by daylight, familiar stars whispering by coal stoves,
public headline artists known from Rolling Stone & NY Times,
actors & actresses from Living Theater, gaunt faced and eloquent
with lifted hands & bony fingers greeting me on my way
to the bus driver's wheel, tattered dirty gloves on Neal's seat
waiting his return from working the National Railroad, young kids
I'd taught saluting me wearily from worn couches as I passed
bus to bus, cameras moving behind me. What was my role?
I hardly knew these faded heroes, friendly strangers
so long on the road, I'd been out teaching in Boulder, Manhattan,
Budapest, London, Brooklyn so long, why follow me thru
these amazing Further bus party reunion corridors tonite?
or is this movie, or real, if I turn to face the camera I'd break
the scene, dissolve the plot illusion, or is't illusion
art, or just my life? Were cameras ever there, the picture
flowed so evenly before my eyes, how could a crew follow
me invisible still and smoothly noiseless bus to bus
from room to room along the caravan's
painted labyrinth. This wasn't cinema, and I no hero
spokesman documenting friendship scenes,
only myself alone lost in the cabin with familiar strangers still looking
for some sexual angel for mortal delights
no different from haunting St. Mark's Boys Bar again solitary in a tie
jacket and grey beard, wallet in my pocket full of
cash and cards, useless.

A glimmer of lights
in the curtained doorway before me! my heart leapt
forward to the Orgy Room, all youths! Lithe and
hairless, smooth skinned, white buttocks ankles, young men's
nippled chests lit behind the curtain, thighs entwined
in the male area, place I was looking for behind
my closed eyelids all this night—I pushed my hand
into the room, moving aside the curtain that shimmered
within bright with naked knees and shoulders pale
in candlelight—entered the pleasure chamber's empty door
glimmering silver shadows reflected on the silver curtained veil,
eyelids still dazzling as their adolescent limbs
intangible dissolved where I put by hand into a vacant room,
lay down on its dark floor to watch the lights of phantom arms
pulsing across closed eyelids conscious as I woke in bed
returned at dawn to New York wood slatted Venetian blinds over the
windows on E. 12th St. in my white painted room

4:30–6:25 AM
4/30/87 NYC

A member of the American Institute of Arts and Letters, Distinguished Professor of English at Brooklyn College, Vice President of American P.E.N. Chapter, poet, member of the Beat Generation literary community, active in San Francisco Poetry Renaissance, Mr. Ginsberg authored the June P.E.N. club critique of Israeli censorship of Palestinian press and literature. Recent books: White Shroud Poems 1980-85 *(Harper and Row, 1986) and* Annotated Howl *(Harper and Row, 1986).*

Current Debate: The Good Old Days?

Finding the "Lost" Community: Facts and Fictions

Claude S. Fischer

This and other journals' pages have been filled recently by discussions of how liberals might recapture the issue of "community" from conservatives. The conversation has often been couched as philosophy, moral debate, or political theory. But underneath lies a set of crucial but unexamined assumptions about the historical reality of community in America.

Discussants have taken for granted a communitarian American past, a "city upon a hill," where residents of small communities were bound together by common history, faith, and fellowship. The skeptics, often those sensitive to the histories of women or minorities, point to the dark side of such communities, to their coercion and constraint. But they still accept the general outline of the past. The task before us, so the common argument goes, is to *re*-create the best aspects of this community, to find modern substitutes for what was lost long ago.

An irony of this discussion is the tacit agreement among participants from both the political right and left about the broad outlines of America's past communities. Robert Nisbet and Peter Berger, among the former; Harry Boyte, Alan Wolfe, and Robert Bellah, among the latter; and Christopher Lasch, in his own third dimension, all describe implicitly if not explicitly a common lost community. While those on the left tend to blame capitalism for the Fall and those on the right tend to blame cultural modernism, none of these writers questions that the Fall has occurred. Michael J. Sandel, in his recent *New Republic* manifesto for "Democrats and Community," writes in this vein, calling on us to "*re*juvenate communities" (emphasis added).

The factual assumptions of this discourse are suspect. While there may be occasions when we should not permit mere fact to disturb good theory, this is not one of them. Misunderstandings about America's past can misguide both our rhetoric and our practice.

One wearies of having Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, or some other civil saint represent the American past and a stereotyped "Joe Six-pack" represent the present.

The literature of lost community is itself problematic. Cultural analyst Raymond Williams once pointed out the tendency in English pastoralism to locate Arcadia ever further back in the misty bogs of history. American historian Darret Rutman noted a similar tendency among his colleagues to place the loss of American community in many eras—at the turn of the twentieth century, at the beginning of the eighteenth, or earlier ("Some have said we lost it when we disembarked John Winthrop from the *Arbella*")—all of which "has made us appear to be classic absentminded professors regularly losing our valuables."

The problems are deeper than the elusiveness of history's singular turning point. Which *then* is to be compared to which *now*? History is not linear; most social changes wax and wane. Many have noted the fallacy of using the 1950s as the model of the past, for that decade was aberrant, an era of greater emphasis on the family and of lower crime, an era of faster economic growth and more powerful American hegemony than existed for decades before or since. But what other American era can serve as a benchmark, when they were all atypical (Tocqueville's Jacksonian period no less than others)? Historians seem to suffer from the occupational disease of discovering the fulcrum of history in the very decade they happen to have researched; but not all decades can be turning points, lest history be a loop-the-loop.

Which *there* is to be compared to which *here*? The typical contrast is between some metropolitan here and the New England village there. But how can we assume that the paths taken by different communities—Boston and an Appalachian hamlet, a Southern plantation county and a Pacific entrepôt—have been parallel?

And *who* is to be compared to *whom*? One wearies of having Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, or some other civil saint represent the American past and a stereotyped "Joe Six-pack" represent the present. Too often, writers on community contrast the "typical" modern American—or more accurately, their imagined modern American—to those ancestors whom we have, with hindsight's wisdom, canonized. And too often, culture critics contrast what their contemporaries *do* with what the ancient elders *said*—a comparison "as fundamentally naive," writes Marilynne Robinson, "as supposing that our dwarfed and poxy forebears looked like paintings and statuary." Where in these discussions do we note our ancestors who were passed out drunk on the streets, the illiterate, the drifting hoboes, and the like? This selective vision also permits its viewers to condescend to their modern peers, encouraging, in Robinson's words, "scorn for one's fellows—

Claude S. Fischer is a professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, and is currently completing a book on the social history of the telephone.

poor souls, they care for nothing but money.... To see so profoundly into the shallowness of one's kind is to enjoy the headiest of pleasures, the hauteur of *dandyisme* and the righteousness of Grundyism."

If we avoid these intellectuals' bad habits and look closely at the real past of American communities, what do we see? We see a history far more complex than political theory or moral sermons depict. Take two examples: the social character of the colonial town and the patterns of residential mobility in America.

One of the most common models of the lost community is the New England village on the eve of the Revolution—a religious fellowship, an orderly society, a town-hall democracy, the Grace from which we have Fallen. Some have challenged the value of such a community, objecting to its authoritarianism, patriarchy, and constrictiveness, but they still accept it as the model of a lost past.

Modern scholarship challenges the myth of the Puritan village, depicting it more as a religious cult than as a "natural" community. Puritan societies were built around the elite-ruled church and excluded those who were not "saved"—many if not most of the nearby residents. Since the excluded were uncounted as well as unchurched and disenfranchised, we cannot easily guess their numbers; but they were the poor, the vagrant, bonded servants, and, of course, heretics of all persuasions. The fellowship was not always amicable; Puritan towns were frequently rent by disputes, and the Puritans were highly litigious. Even the Golden Age of the Puritan village, such as it was, lasted barely two or three generations. As the settlers were fruitful and multiplied, many moved away from the village centers, became delinquent in their church attendance and support, and formed secessionist cliques. Many of their sons, facing insufficient inheritances, moved westward. And, in short order, the attractions of the commercial world and the ideas of liberal democracy opened forever the closed doors of the Puritan collective.

As the study of "local history" has grown beyond the hinterland of Massachusetts Bay, its practitioners have pointed out how exceptional the Puritan towns were. Michael Zuckerman, for example, writes: "Of all the colonial regions, only New England began with a measure of medieval community." Many more colonial Americans lived in heterodox, diverse, commercial, and tumultuous hamlets, towns, and cities. Like many of the Western frontier towns of the following century, eighteenth-century communities were tolerant of differences but often unable to act collectively.

The *idea* of the Puritan community dominates our imagery of an earlier America, and the Fall from it "is our preeminent—almost our only—account of western modernization," in Zuckerman's words. But we must sharply distinguish America's ideological history, governed by the Puritan Fathers, from its lived history, better typified by the dirt scrabblers of North Carolina and the dockhands of New York.

Modern rootlessness is another powerful motif in the lost community thesis. The phrase "in our ever more mobile society" must by now be programmed into the word processors of most journalists and culture critics. Residential mobility is important to communities because turnover undermines camaraderie, cooperation, and cultural continuity. But the problem with this mobility motif is that it is plain wrong.

True, Americans are and probably have always been more mobile than comparable Europeans. But Americans have not increased the rate at which they change residences; indeed, they are probably much less mobile now than they were a century ago.

The only "hard" evidence we have covers the period since World War II. It shows a slow but certain decline in the proportion of Americans changing homes in any given year. For earlier eras, historians study changes in censuses and city directories from one year to another. The best estimates are that the rates of turnover were higher in the nineteenth (and perhaps eighteenth) century than they are now. The *distance* Americans move has probably increased; more of those who change residence move across state borders than did a century ago. But the rate at which they leave neighborhoods or towns has not increased.

This conclusion seems startling, but our surprise only reflects our failure to



Thinking About
AMERICA
The United States in the 1990s

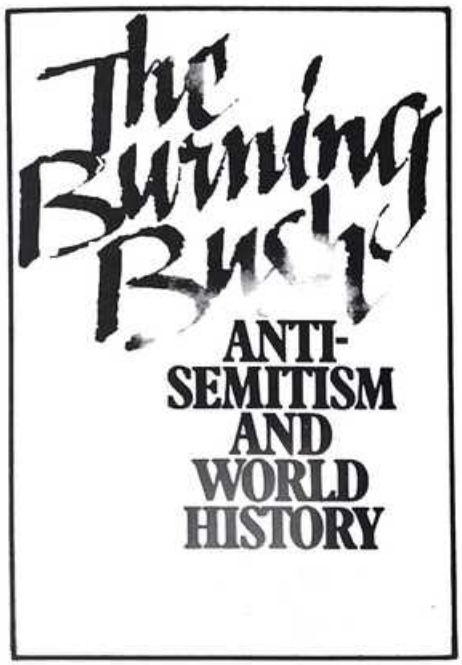
". . . ideas that will change the world in the 1990s."
—Michael Novak

Mikhail Gorbachev called Hoover's book, *The United States in the 1980s,* a blueprint for the Reagan administration. Now Hoover offers a book for the 1990s. Scholars and statesmen, Democrats and Republicans, the four living U.S. presidents, four Nobel Laureates—all independent thinkers—give us the best of their wisdom and experience in 47 essays on public policy for the coming decade.

Annelise Anderson & Dennis L. Bark
editors
Foreword by W. Glenn Campbell

The Hoover Institution Press

Cloth $24.95 At booksellers now Paper $14.95
Distributed by National Book Network (301) 459-8696



THE BURNING BUSH by Barnet Litvinoff is an enlightening, comprehensive work which explores anti-Semitism within the context of social history: in effect, a history of the Jews and the people among whom they lived. Litvinoff draws upon sources not previously available, coming up with some surprising and provocative conclusions.

ISBN: 0-525-24602-9 $22.50

A *William Abrahams Book*

- **A *selection of the Jewish Book Club***
- **A *selection of the Judaica Book Club***



DUTTON
2 Park Ave.
New York, NY 10016
(212) 725-1818

answer the question I mentioned earlier: Who shall we compare to whom? Our idealized pictures of the American past do not account for the millions of failed farmers, unemployed craftsmen, freed slaves, itinerant laborers, widows and orphans moving from place to place in search of jobs and shelter in the nineteenth century. Unlike the scions of town elites, these people left us few memoirs, novels, or learned commentaries on the decline of community.

Patterns of mobility and the history of the Puritan village are but two examples of the dubious empirical assumptions underlying many discussions of community. Others include the downfall of the extended family household (not so—American families have always been predominantly nuclear); the decline of the church (not so—church membership is much higher now than in the colonial period and probably as high as ever); the disintegration of neighborhoods (not so simple—the idea of organized neighborhoods is itself a creation of the twentieth century); and the usurpation of voluntary charity by bureaucracy (also not so simple—voluntarism never succeeded in helping the distressed).

The point of this debunking exercise is not to deny that there have been significant changes that have altered American communities. The size of families and of households, for example, has decreased severely, notwithstanding the baby boom and its current echo; the proportion of married women working away from home has steadily increased in this century; the distances people travel in their daily rounds has grown; broadcast media have brought information to all from far away; and of course disposable wealth has grown vastly. But we need to separate fact from myth, to sort out what really has happened from what we imagine has happened.

Why? Why be concerned with the grubby details of long-dead, insignificant people? One reason is simple intellectual honesty—to tell the story of our past as it was lived, not as it was romanticized. Another reason is practicality—to learn the concrete lessons that the past provides for the future. A third is rhetorical strategy, since history is one of the key weapons in political battles.

When the left argues in terms of *re*-creating a lost community, it cedes the rhetorical high ground to the reactionary right. If we had *communitas* before, does it not make sense to rebuild the conditions of the past? Ronald Reagan has used this rhetorical tactic well for most of his term. He scored when he argued that the voluntarism of the past cared for the destitute better than today's government does, and that therefore we should reduce government programs in favor of neighborly initiatives. But his claim is a canard, for the local voluntarism of the pre-New Deal years almost never coped with poverty, was usually delivered with paternalism, if not meanness, and forcefully excluded strangers and other "undeserving" poor. Similarly, conservatives usually interpret rising illegitimacy rates as the product of increasing sexual freedom, to be cured by reestablishing sexual constraint. Instead, rising illegitimacy is largely the result of pregnant teenagers'

increasing reluctance to undergo shotgun marriages—a different issue with a different diagnosis.

It is tempting, common, and often effective to make rhetorical claims against present conditions by charging that they represent a usurpation of past rights and virtues (see the Declaration of Independence). Sometimes they do. Often, however, this style of contention is both factually incorrect and politically self-defeating. We ought to free ourselves of illusions and argue straightforwardly for the *creation* of rights and conditions that Americans deserve—whether a clean environment, safety on the streets, or collective responsibility for the unfortunate—not because they once had it, for they probably did not, but because they *ought* to have it. □

A Response to Fischer

Christopher Lasch

"Because they *ought* to have it," Claude Fischer writes. But there is no end to the list of good things people "deserve" and no theoretical limit, therefore, to the powers of any regime that claims to provide them. Fischer demands the "*creation* of rights," but that can become a bloody business, as Edmund Burke pointed out in his critique of the French Revolution. The attempt to remodel society according to abstract principles of justice and to uproot established ways of life, overthrow ancient beliefs, and "free ourselves of illusions" leads more easily to a reign of terror than to a reign of universal love and brotherhood.

In opposition to those who presumed to govern by reason alone, Burke upheld the value of habits, customs, and reverence for the past. The "sole authority" of the English constitution, he insisted, was that it had "existed time out of mind." The attempt to install reason in place of custom would mean that men were governed by their passions alone. Like his enemies, Burke accepted the antithesis between reason and tradition. But while they saw tradition as a prison, he saw it as a nursery, which "forms our manners, our opinions, our lives."

The debate between custom and innovation, habit and reason, nostalgia and progress, *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society) has persisted with surprisingly little modification ever since the eighteenth century. In a world in which everything is in motion, this is the one thing that never seems to change. By this time we should regard the debate itself—not the dominance of either position—as one of the constitutive elements in our culture.

The image of progress is compelling only insofar as it can be played off against the image of the narrow, repressive, conformist village life from which we have presumably escaped.

Since both parties share the same premise—the opposition between reason and tradition—the controversy can never be resolved. The cult of the past is a mirror image of the cult of progress. One requires the other. The image of progress is compelling only insofar as it can be played off against the image of the narrow, repressive, conformist village life from which we have presumably escaped. The image of the close-knit community held together by "correspondence in ... customs, manners, and habits of life," as Burke put it, remains attractive only because it provides a poignant contrast with the image of modern rootlessness and anomie.

These stereotypes are so familiar that it is tempting to read recent attacks on liberalism as Fischer does—as a reassertion of romanticism's critique of the Enlightenment. As I read them, however, writers like Hans-Georg Gadamer, Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, and Robert Bellah are saying something new. It is true that they sometimes fall into the old ways of speaking—not surprisingly, since the old terms of debate are so much a part of our culture. But if we listen carefully, we can hear something that tends to dissolve these terms of discourse. Together with other writers less closely identified with a "communitarian" position in politics—and such a list might include, among others, Clifford Geertz, Richard Rorty, Richard Bernstein, Michael Walzer, and John Pocock—these writers have launched a reexamination of tradition that challenges the assumption that it rests on unreflective, habitual agreement. This new work suggests that tradition is the precondition of thought rather than a set of constraints from which thought must liberate itself. It casts doubt on the notion that knowledge becomes reliable only as it approximates the timeless, universal truths supposedly revealed by science. It refuses to condemn the knowledge that is embedded in the historical experience of a given people as an inferior kind of knowledge—as "ideology," in contradistinction to science. But neither

Christopher Lasch, a professor of history at the University of Rochester, is a contributing editor to Tikkun.

does it extol tradition as an "organic" antidote to scientific rationality.

The political implications of this rehabilitation of tradition are still ambiguous. It can lead to a defense of liberalism (as in the case of Rorty) as well as to attacks on liberalism. One thing is clear, however: Tradition can no longer be equated with consensus or unanimity, unthinking or otherwise. On the contrary, according to the new view controversy turns out to be the very essence of tradition.

One of the most important implications of this discovery, it seems to me, is that traditionalists—communitarians, if you want to call them that, though the label is seriously misleading—have less to fear from controversy than do their opponents. The belief that social order requires agreement about basic "values" is another assumption that unites liberals and romantics. Romantics believe that "men ... are led to associate by resemblances, by conformities, by sympathies"—to quote Burke again—and that "the secret, unseen, but irrefragable bond of habitual intercourse holds them together." Liberals, on the other hand, inherit a tradition of thought according to which only science can lead to indubitable truths. But they too assume that social order depends on a general acceptance of propositions not subject to debate. According to one school of liberal thought, since propositions about politics and morality are irretrievably ideological, divisive controversies should be treated as matters of opinion and kept out of public life. According to another school, politics and morality can themselves become a science, and the political order can be remodeled in accordance with the principles of universal reason. The first position drains public discussion of anything that would make it interesting or important; the second imposes a dictatorship of enlightened social engineers and thus brings us back to the Burkean counter-Enlightenment, which calls attention to the dangers of social engineering.

Traditionalism, as I understand it, does not call for a restoration of the past. It calls for public debate about the past. It holds that shared memories—not shared values—are what constitute a community, even if those memories are often divisive. Without a sense of our collective past, transmitted in stories, myths, and rituals, we can achieve little understanding of ourselves even as individuals.

"The meaning and place of that which is called 'tradition' in political discourse stands in need of clarification," writes Bruce James Smith in *Politics and Remembrance*. Smith argues that traditions owe more to memory than to custom. The distinction is crucial. Custom concerns the ordinary and unexceptional, memory the extraordinary and unexpected. Custom surrounds itself with silence, a hushed air of veneration; memory with oratory, disputation, dialectic. Societies that set a high value on custom take little interest in their own origins, whereas societies unified (and divided) by memories cultivate a founding myth that remains a point of moral reference and recalls men and women to an awareness of their civic obligations.

This is the significance of the American jeremiad, which sought to revive the sense of lofty moral purpose attributed to the founders. The point of the jeremiad, which was once the prevalent form of social criticism in America, was not to celebrate an arcadia lost in the "misty bogs of history," as Fischer puts it. It was to remind Americans of a specific historical event, the founding covenant by which they had agreed, for all time, to submit to an unusually demanding set of ethical standards and to be judged accordingly. "One wearies," no doubt, of hearing our "civil saints" extolled (although one is more likely, these days, to hear them debunked, reduced to pint size); but at least their story gives one something to live up to. It is not clear that a story (if one can call it that) dominated by "our ancestors who were passed out drunk on the streets, the illiterate, the drifting hoboes, and the like" serves the same purpose.

"Once a fabric of stories," Smith writes at the end of his book, "America increasingly finds itself simply a place. ... If there is a teaching [in this consideration], it is not that we should restore the past, but that we must have one." An admirable formulation: Think about it. □

Prometheus Books



Back to the Ghetto
Zionism in Retreat
Uri Huppert

Noted Jerusalem attorney Uri Huppert chronicles the growth of religious intolerance and extremism in Israel, implicating "moderate" Orthodox Zionists as well as ultra-Orthodox *haredi* extremists in a state that has become a house divided against itself.

200 pages • ISBN 0-87975-467-2 • Cloth $19.95



Celebration
Sherwin T. Wine

A ceremonial and philosophic guide for those whose experience of Judaism is ethnic but secular. Rabbi Wine fuses the intellectual and emotional elements of Jewish heritage into an illuminating resource for personal reflection and community celebration.

300 pages • ISBN 0-87975-442-7 • Cloth $19.95

At better bookstores, or order direct:
Toll free (800) 421-0351
In N.Y. State, call (716) 837-2475
Mail to: Prometheus Books
700 East Amherst St., Buffalo, NY 14215
Please send ___ copies of *Back to the Ghetto* and ___ copies of *Celebration*. (Add $2.25 P & H for first book, $.85 for each additional book. N.Y. State residents add sales tax). Order total: $_____ ☐ Payment enclosed/Charge my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard
CARD # _____ EXP. __/__
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____
ZIP _____ TEL. _____
TK11-12/88

Fourteen Koans by a Levite on Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*

Phillip Lopate

1. Preface: What Is Truth?

The first time I saw Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* I thought it was an impressive, ambitious, noble, and powerful film with a slow middle section. The second time around I thought it was silly and forced, and didn't believe a minute of it. Must the truth lie in between?

2. Apologia

There is no point in writing a straight review of *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Everything has already been said; the movie has been picked clean by intelligent daily and weekly reviewers. All that remains for me, the laggard bimonthly film critic, are scraps, digressions, asides.

3. The Controversy

In the brouhaha over the film, both sides have engaged in ritualistic oratory: The Fundamentalists have seized the situation as a fund-raising opportunity and a distraction from the Bakker and Swaggart scandals; the liberals have had a self-righteous field day, patting themselves on the back for defending free artistic expression. Naturally I throw in my lot with the liberals, but after listening to their elitist mocking of the other side as cretinous Flannery O'Connor characters, I begin to get perverse twinges of contrariety. For instance, a colleague of mine was ridiculing the Fundamentalists' logic, which asserts that they don't need to see the movie to know it is bad for them, just as they don't need to take cocaine to know it will harm them. "As if seeing a movie were the same as taking drugs," sneered my colleague. But, in fact, to a Fundamentalist Christian it might seem that the media are a kind of drug capturing the minds of the young and filling them with immoral images. Furthermore, every intelligent person makes conscious decisions to avoid certain experiences based on knowledge of his or her tastes and values. In short, the Fundamentalists' argument does not seem as internally illogical as the liberals make it out to be.

On the other hand, I am at a loss to know what to make of the Fundamentalists' claim that the true, "historical Jesus" has been distorted. What historical Jesus are they talking about?

4. The Greatest Story Ever Told

I may as well admit that the Jesus story has always made me uneasy. I am bothered by the endless privileging of one man's bodily anguish when so many millions have suffered at least as much. There are Jews who have the capacity and imagination to be deeply moved by the figure of Jesus on a moral or mythic level, but I seem to be unable to join them in this empathetic adventure. The fact that the Jesus story is so anti-Semitic—or has been misconstrued toward that end throughout Christian history, to the detriment of the Jewish population—may be part of the problem, but not all of it. For even without considering the Inquisitional violence which, like a Jungian shadow, seems inextricably tied to the doctrine of Christian meekness, I am put off by the whole idea of perfect human goodness. How can I sympathize with a man totally without sin? Jesus seems too humorless and solemn—already too goyish. The story has beautiful language, yes; wisdom, yes; but no comic spark. Perhaps this fact is more the fault of later iconography than of the Jesus of the Gospels. Still, it is the iconography that we must live with, all that self-satisfied moaning over one lucky victim. I think I understand that he (He?) is supposed to stand for all human suffering, but the idea that this guy's death has somehow redeemed the whole world, on whatever symbolic or literal terms you care to take it, makes no sense to me. The world is unredeemed, *n'est-ce pas*?

Given this old grudge against the story, I tend to like those passages in *Last Temptation* that stray farthest from the Gospels. In particular, I like the tension of the first part, where Jesus is trying to resist the onus of godhead; I admire his honest insistence that fear is his essential nature: "My mother and father are fear." Nevertheless, as soon as he accepts his destiny as the Christ—for reasons never made entirely clear—and begins to deliver sermons and make miracles, I lose all interest. It's like going down a checklist—water into wine, dead into living, expulsion of the money changers. Giotto and Nick Ray did it better.

5. Questions of Genre

The biblical epic is characterized by spectacle and excess. A much maligned genre, due any minute for scholarly upgrading, its main virtues lie in the areas of art direction, costumes, special effects, and *mise-en-scène*. Where else can you find those shamelessly entertaining long shots teeming with masses

Phillip Lopate is the author of the novel The Rug Merchant *(Viking Press, 1987) and a member of the N.Y. Film Festival selection committee. His new book of essays,* Against Joie de Vivre, *will appear in May of 1989 (Poseidon Press).*

of background extras scurrying over architectural fantasias—whole cities, on a scale demanded previously only by pharaohs and tyrants—composed of endless plaster, like world's-fair pavilions redolent with temporary grandeur?

The biblical epic's vision of the Past as readily available to the art director's imagination, in mix-and-match forms, necessarily rests on questionable universalist, ahistorical assumptions, which downplay the influence of specific conditions, in honor of the cliché that people have always been the same. The biblical epic tends toward a flattened psychology: Its huge expenses have necessitated attracting mass audiences and orienting them quickly to stereotyped narrative patterns, while the distractions of lavish sets, special effects, and tumult hinder subtle character development.

Silent biblical epics at least had the advantage of being unfettered by dialogue, except for an occasional intertitle. Sound epics encountered the further problem of developing a dialogue style that could be spoken naturally and yet seem sufficiently elevated to escape contemporary anachronism. This problem led to all sorts of quasi-Shakespearean and Shavian locutions (and put a premium on British actors). Critics of the biblical epic have been quick to poke fun at the acting, which often ran the gamut from wooden to hammy; a babel of international accents delivering lines in togas or Roman armor further eroded credibility.

Nevertheless, biblical epics were widely successful in the period after World War II and throughout the fifties. The world war itself had been a vast staging of gruesome spectacle, accustoming the public to movements of armies and matèriel, and the new wide-screen technologies cried out for historical panoramas. The postwar era also saw America in a victorious mood, looking about for earlier models of chosen peoples that would justify its new hegemonic destiny.

Finally, the Bible offered a feast of narratives that combined sin and piety (David and Bathsheba, Salome, Sodom and Gomorrah, etc.). As one critic noted about DeMille's *Samson and Delilah* (1949): "Its huge popularity demonstrated once again that the Bible is the picture-maker's best friend, a never-failing source of spectacle, sex and sadism that no censor could dare to suppress and no movie-goer could afford to miss." But with the softening of censorship in the sixties, it no longer was necessary to add religion to one's sex and sadism. The public's taste "sophisticated" away from the biblical epic, which had acquired the odor of hokum.

How can I sympathize with a man totally without sin? Jesus seems too humorless and solemn.

With *Last Temptation,* Scorsese does everything in his power to evade the passé aspects of the biblical epic—its Taj Mahal tackiness, its costumed pomp, its scrolled or intoned preambles, its inflated language, its lack of psychology, its imperialistic presumptions. But in ducking that genre's clichés, he falls headlong into the arms of another: the "metamorphosis" or "alien possession" movie. Originally a horror/sci-fi staple in the radioactive-anxious fifties (*Incredible Shrinking Man, The Fly*), the "metamorphosis" genre was renovated in the late seventies and eighties, most elegantly by David Cronenberg (*They Came From Within, Rabid, Scanners, The Brood, The Fly* remake) and Ridley Scott (*Alien*), to reflect a new set of technological and ecological anxieties. Most recently, this horror film idea of being invaded by a foreign body or persona has migrated into comedy (*All of Me, Eighteen Again,* etc.), as the crossing of genders or generations in the same body is exploited for "hilarious" confusion. I have no doubt that some future doctoral student will write a thesis arguing how this dybbuk fad was the result of a) demographic shifts in the work force; b) AIDS and the corresponding need to believe that the soul is eternal; c) the greenhouse effect; d) the temporary halting of the space program, which channeled fantasies of travel from interplanetary to intercorporeal.... While Scorsese may have changed the script from demonic to divine possession, his hero is often made to writhe on the ground from unwelcome alien implosions. *The Last Temptation* is less biblical epic than horror movie.

6. The Source

The Nikos Kazantzakis novel on which the movie is based is overwrought, Raskolnikovian-feverish, good for adolescents searching for Big Answers. Supposedly, Barbara Hershey, the actress who would later be cast as Mary Magdalene, gave a copy to Scorsese years ago, and ever since then he had been dreaming of making a film of it. (This is the same Barbara Hershey who not long before giving this gift had changed her name to Barbara Seagull in a fit of creature-identification.) Many of the problems and hyperventilating tendencies of the film can be traced directly to the Kazantzakis novel. Scorsese has struggled stalwartly with its pseudo-Nietzschean mysteries and general portentousness. My advice is that in the future he think twice about accepting any books from Barbara Hershey.

7. The Screenplay

Paul Schrader adapted Kazantzakis's novel into screenplay form. Later, some revisions were made by Scorsese and writer Jay Cocks, but, according to Schrader (*New York Times,* Sept. 1, 1988): "That first script, with the exception of two scenes, is exactly, scene for scene, the movie that's on the screen." Schrader has been criticized for flattening the eloquent speech of the Gospels into stammering Americanese. In principle, if one grants that the story is important enough to retell in any number of garbs and variations in order to make it more relevant for our times, then Schrader's adaptation seems perfectly legitimate. Indeed, often it achieves a touching simplicity. (Judas: "Do you love mankind?" Jesus: "I see men and I feel sorry for them, that's all.") Still, Schrader may have gone too far in depriving Jesus of any rhetorical powers, reducing his capacity to clumsy plain speech.

Schrader once wrote a book called *Transcendental Style in Film,* which focused on such great filmmakers as Ozu, Dreyer, Rossellini, and Bresson. The transcendental style was developed, according to Schrader, "to express the Holy": It is characterized by an austere, formalist rigor; a deep

respect for objects and light; and a reflective pace and silence-gathering, indwelling calm, often in the face of narratives about intense suffering. Schrader himself has directed seven feature films, which, while fascinating, generally suffer from an unresolved tension between his transcendental-cinema formal leanings and his penchant for sensationalist content.

In the same *Times* interview, it is reported that Schrader had a clause in his *Last Temptation* contract that would have given him the next shot at directing the film in the event that Scorsese did not direct it. One suspects Schrader's version would have had a more distanced, stylized, "transcendental cinema" air—and probably would have been better for it.

8. The Style

In *Last Temptation,* Scorsese alternates between tense psychological close-ups and overhead shots (suggesting fate or heaven's point of view). For movement he resorts to rough handheld tracks, lurching right into the middle of knots of people and grabbing onto their torsos. It is a hot style intended to keep the pressure up, but there is very little allowance for perspective, or detachment. The film, in fact, does not feel spiritual at all in the transcendental-cinema sense, but only in the way of an unrelenting agon, Jacob wrestling with the angel. In *Raging Bull,* Scorsese reveled in the opportunity for physical action, but here his problem is different: He must render cinematic an interior, religious conflict; and his tendency is to physicalize too much, to sweat blood, to make Jesus fall to the ground like an epileptic.

The style is at once punched-up and tentative. Scorsese seems to be casting about restlessly throughout the film for a technique to suit his intended masterpiece. There are echoes of Pasolini's *Gospel According to St. Matthew* (of which more later). A horizon shot of Christ and his disciples advancing toward us dissolves into a much larger flock, the music swells, and suddenly we are in a Sergio Leone spaghetti western. At times a minimalist, Straubian vocabulary is invoked. The casting-out-of-devils sequence is choreographed like the Living Theater; the wrapped mummies seem like something out of Robert Wilson's experimental pieces. Painting references also abound: The lion advancing into the circle is pure Henri Rousseau; the taunting of Christ is slo-mo Brueghel.

Scorsese has always been an eclectic director, changing his visual style to suit the project: from the ragged neorealism of *Mean Streets* to the elegant long takes and tracking shots of *New York, New York,* to the furious montage of *Raging Bull,* to the cool classicism of *The Color of Money.* He does not have a "signature" shot or a consistent cinematic vocabulary. Not that this is necessarily bad, but it should be kept in mind when people speak of Scorsese's "style"; I think they mean more his edgy intensity and recurring themes. In *Last Temptation,* he films many of the dialogue scenes in the boringly standard American studio Ping-Pong of close-up/reaction shot/close-up/close-up, while improvising one new shtick after another for the visual transition sequences. These devices leave an impression of gratuitous invention—perhaps a futile, last-ditch defense on Scorsese's part against the intractability of the Kazantzakis/Gospels material, which seems persistently on the verge of crushing his spirit.

In the actual "last temptation" sequence, when Christ imagines himself getting off the cross and leading a normal life, Scorsese changes his style yet again—fittingly this time, I think. Suddenly the camera pulls back and we no longer see Christ in anguished close-ups, but in flowing long shots. It is as though we were inside Christ's dream, and in a dream one tends to see oneself objectified, full-figure. Meanwhile the landscape has turned temperate, lushly wooded, and the light is more benign. Many observers have complained that this fantasy sequence is overlong, but I found it a welcome relief. The editing slows down and catches its breath. The change of pace is analogous to that lovely sequence in Scorsese's *After Hours,* when the headlong chase comes to rest in a deserted disco for a slow dance to Peggy Lee's "Is That All There Is?"

Emotionality remains both the strength and limitation of Scorsese's approach. Keen on pushing the audience through a visceral experience, he leaps from climax to climax, sometimes losing the point of the story in the process. So *Taxi Driver* tries to bludgeon its way through the muddled loose ends of Travis's character with a storm of gunfire, while *New York, New York,* after seeming to want to chart the path of a relationship, dissolves into a set of production numbers. *Last Temptation* is no different: It picks up stray nail-filings of Hebrew politics, theological contradictions, and psychological conflicts without resolving them in a thoughtful, intellectually responsible manner. Along the way, however, Scorsese manages to create some stunning images: the sunlit loft in which David Bowie (the Roman administrator) questions Willem Dafoe, the burning of Jerusalem sequence near the end, and Jesus taking his dripping heart out and offering it to his disciples.

9. My Favorite Scene

My favorite scene in the movie is the one in which Jesus visits the brothel of Mary Magdalene. It is intoxicated filmmaking, a largely silent scene in which Jesus, first pulled almost against his will to her house, sits in her outer room with the other waiting clients, watching Magdalene make love to one customer after another. We see her through a veiled curtain, sweating under the weight of men of all colors and touching them tenderly or consolingly. At one point, a coal-black man indicates to Jesus that it is his turn next (such politeness!), and Jesus morosely declines. The light changes, the hours pass, night comes on, and at last Jesus is the only one left. The actual dialogue that follows, between Jesus and Magdalene, is less interesting—overly dramatic, shrill—but the memory of that hypnotic, hallucinogenic passage lingers tantalizingly: if only more of the film had been that way.

Kazantzakis has Jesus sitting in Magdalene's outer courtyard, in front of her closed door. Scorsese, by upping the ante so that Jesus must witness Magdalene's carnal acts directly, shows that he is not just the innocent adapter of Kazantzakis, but intentionally provocative—a bit of a "bad boy." If the Fundamentalists keep harping on this brothel scene and the later one of Jesus copulating with Magdalene, it is partly because Scorsese has planted the image of Barbara Hershey's naked, painted body in the viewer's mind far more graphically than that of the crucifixion.

10. Cousin Pasolini, Father Rossellini

"Peering in the glass of vision, contemporary poets confront their too-recent giant precursors staring back at them, inducing a profound anxiety that hides itself, but cannot be evaded totally." (Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, 1975.) Pasolini's *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (1964) is Scorsese's immediate precursor, and Scorsese seems much influenced by the earlier film's North African setting, slightly demented Jesus, and stark *cinema povera* quality. (It is questionable how much *Last Temptation*'s stylized reductions are a product of aesthetic intention or of making a virtue of necessity; even at a slashed budget of six million dollars, however, the film still has the polished look of a Hollywood studio picture, compared to the Pasolini film, which is sandpaper-rough.) In return for this penury, the Pasolini film retains the infinite richness of the Gospel language, while Scorsese's features the comparatively impoverished Schrader dialogue. The Pasolini version also displays a much more effortless access to the culture of the New Testament and the imagery of Italian Renaissance painting; it is the difference perhaps between growing up Italian and growing up Italian-American.

Pasolini's *Gospel,* beautiful and severe as it is, already suffers from a *faux-naif* air that we might attribute, with Bloom, to its "belatedness." The musical score (Bach, Blind Willie Johnson, *Kol Nidre*, African Chants) tips off the fact that it is a pastiche. Visually, it practically plagiarizes from (or is a tribute to) Dreyer's technique of facial close-ups in *Passion of Joan of Arc*, and the sacred-figures-in-craggy-landscape look of Rossellini's *Little Flowers of St. Francis.*

In considering Scorsese's precursors one must look past Pasolini to Rossellini, the last confident classicist and synthesist in the Renaissance mode. Rossellini's educational history series, which occupied him for the last fifteen years of his life, included a three-part *Acts of the Apostles* and concluded with a film about Jesus, *The Messiah*. (*The Messiah*, Rossellini's last film, was never released in this country, but rumor has it that Scorsese himself is trying to arrange for new prints and distribution.) Given Scorsese's longtime passion for Rossellini (which included marrying his daughter, Isabella—though one would not have to be a Rossellini fan to do that), my guess is that *Last Temptation* is as much an act of piety to Rossellini the Father as to Jesus the Son.

11. Orientalism

Last Temptation is steeped in a background of Islamic details: The women all have Berber markings, the instruments are Berber, the wedding is Arabic. There are frequent cutaway shots of gnarled, turbaned *fellaheen*, as though Scorsese could not resist lending a semidocumentary air to his tale: Since we're shooting in Morocco, why not a bit of local color? Of course, the fact that there were no Arabs at the time of Christ poses a problem. Peter Gabriel's minimalist musical score has many hints of Middle Eastern dirge; meanwhile, elements of Hebraic culture are few and far between (as are Jewish actors). Why is this? Is it some sort of subterranean gesture of support for the Palestinians' political struggle, or a sense that the ancient, the unchanging, and the eternal are better represented by weathered contemporary Arabic faces than Jewish ones? I see a species here of what Edward Said has diagnosed as "Orientalism"—the tendency of Westerners to romanticize the Arabic Middle East as exotic and static.

12. A Buddy Movie

Much of the warmth in *Last Temptation* comes from the relationship between Jesus and Judas, which is central to the film. In part because Harvey Keitel is such a pungent, over-the-top actor, in part because his character is written to be so much more articulate and steady than the disturbed, mutating Jesus, Judas becomes the audience's representative. We sympathize with Judas's nationalist efforts to free his people—to the extent that he seems at times the secret, real hero of the film. When Judas demands, "Could *you* betray your Master?" and Jesus answers, "No, that's why God gave me the easier job: to be crucified," we are inclined to agree. This Judas does seem the stronger of the two, temperamentally: Jesus frequently expresses his dependence on him. "Judas, I'm afraid; stay with me," he says, and Judas spends the night cradling him in his arms. These campfire scenes between the two, beautifully lit, have the air of something out of *Viva Zapata,* or a buddy movie. Jesus and Judas are Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, getting the jitters the night before a bank robbery.

13. The Star

Willem Dafoe plays Jesus like a sixties dropout carpenter from Taos on a spiritual quest. Dafoe is a compelling, gifted actor, trained in experimental theater, and he does as well as anyone could with the physical aspects of the role. According to the press, Scorsese cast him not on the basis of his (slightly sappy) saintly performance in *Platoon,* but only after seeing him in William Friedkin's *To Live And Die in L.A.*, where he played a demonic gang leader. Oddly enough, Dafoe spun a much more mysteriously spiritual aura around himself while playing a villain in *To Live And Die In L.A.* (which, by the way, is one of the best, and most underrated, American films of the 1980s), than he was able to do in *Last Temptation.* Friedkin filmed him in long shot, emphasizing his impenetrable scowl, waxy complexion, and Amerindian cheekbones at a discreet distance, whereas Scorsese was all over him in close-up, trying to crawl into his head; and this X-ray treatment backfired with such a remote, spooky actor, who would probably do better playing Frankenstein than Jesus.

In any case, Dafoe brought to both roles a purified air of dedication to Higher Powers, combined with an almost-menacing self-disgust. In *Last Temptation,* his most convincing scenes lie in the first third of the movie, when this Jesus still hates himself. But as soon as Dafoe is called upon to represent the Jesus whose doubts have disappeared, who speechifies and performs miracles, he seems embarrassed, projecting a shrinking pariah loneliness—the opposite of charisma. It is impossible to understand why crowds are following this platitudinous mumbler.

14. Two Endings

Scorsese shows a penchant for multiple endings. *The King of Comedy,* brilliant in other respects, had one too many endings tacked on. In *Last*

Temptation, Scorsese is legitimately able to indulge this tendency: Christ gets down off the cross and lives a normal life; Christ gets back on the cross and sacrifices himself for the sins of the world. He handles it so well that the audience roots for both alternatives in turn. This double-jointed narrative approach does, however, raise in my mind a theological question: If Jesus has already enjoyed a normal full life, including the pleasures of the flesh, *even if only in his imagination*—remember, we have already seen how detailed and somatic that imagination is—can he be said to be sacrificing quite so much in going back to the cross? Hasn't he, as much as the audience, had his cake and eaten it too? □

BOOK REVIEW

Feminists and Liberals: Can They Meet?

Ruth Rosen

On Account of Sex: The Politics of Women's Issues, 1945–1968 by Cynthia Harrison. University of California Press, 1988, 337 pp.

For most of my adult life, liberalism has been the "L" word, first discredited and then silenced. During the mid-1960s, I contributed to that outcome by blaming liberals for their belated support for the civil rights movement and their shameless reluctance to end the war in Vietnam. As a young and enthusiastic convert to the women's movement, I—like so many of my generation—described myself as a *radical* feminist, thus distinguishing myself from *liberal* feminists who, I argued, simply wanted a piece of the pie (formal equality based on individual rights) rather than fresh ingredients.

The Reagan era successfully sent bona fide liberals scurrying about in search of acceptable euphemisms. As the political chill begins to thaw, however, it is time to reassess the uneasy, necessary, even symbiotic relationship feminism bears to liberalism. However much I have distrusted liberals, a certain cranky maturity insists that American feminists must reconsider the important historical role liberalism has played in the cyclical revival of feminist consciousness.

One of the ironies of history is that liberal and radical men frequently incite feminist revolt. During periods of liberal reform or revolutionary fervor, they promote lofty ideals of egalitarianism. But when they fail to extend these principles to women, they dampen women's expectations, deepen their disappointment, and incite the fury that fuels feminist movements. Examples are legion. The French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions all ignited female demands for greater economic and social freedom. In the United States, every major reform era has sparked feminist agitation.

Until recently, historians knew very little about what happened to feminism between the passage of suffrage and the reemergence of feminism in the late 1960s. In the absence of a mass movement, what did feminists do during the so-called forty-year lull? What is the relationship between feminism and American politics? These are some of the questions that feminist scholars have been asking during the bleak years of the Reagan regime. In her recent study, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism,* Nancy Cott described how women activists spent the 1920s trying to implement their many social programs. In *Surviving the Doldrums,* Leila Rupp and Verta Taylor told how a small band of ardent former suffragists preserved a barren, conservative—even racist and anti-Semitic—feminism as these suffragists stubbornly lobbied for the Equal Rights Amendment during the 1950s.

Now Cynthia Harrison, in *On Account of Sex*, reveals how women in the trade unions, the Women's Bureau, the American Association of University Women, and the National Woman's party pushed government leaders during the 1950s and 1960s to recognize the changing reality of women's lives. Harrison provides a well-researched, serviceably written, blow-by-blow account of some of the major political events in recent women's history. But, even more important, her study implicitly raises two questions that deserve serious consideration: What is the historical relationship between feminism and liberalism? And how can feminists define women's needs in a society in which women remain, politically and culturally, the "other"?

* * *

In 1957, Senator John F. Kennedy wrote, "There is still, I humbly acknowledge, some question in my mind as to the most appropriate method of ensuring real equality for women." He

Ruth Rosen teaches history at the University of California at Davis. She is working on a history of contemporary American feminism to be published by Viking/Penguin.

ON ISRAEL'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

A superb evocation of the land and its people.

This magnificent book is the result of the collaboration of two brilliant artists. A.B. Yehoshua, a sixth-generation Israeli Jew is one of his country's most distinguished authors. Frederic Brenner, a Parisian of Sephardic and Ashkenazic ancestry, is an award-winning photographer of international renown.

Among Brenner's 107 color and duotone photographs are seventeen two-page panoramic landscapes of breathtaking clarity, as well as dozens of unforgettable portraits. Yehoshua's text is both historical survey and personal reflection on Jewish identity and the trauma of a divided homeland. *Israel* is a book truly worthy of its title.



An Edward Burlingame Book
Harper & Row

was not alone. Throughout the nation's history, Americans have debated how best to protect women's interests. But what *are* women's interests? Are women—like men—simply individuals whose inalienable rights must be protected? Or does their biological role as mothers mean that society must legally protect their relationship to the family? The Equal Rights Amendment, first introduced in Congress in 1923, embraced the first view. But female reformers and trade union women, determined to prevent the industrial exploitation of women, generally sought to protect women's maternal role. Nevertheless, since 1944, both the Democratic and Republican parties have included the ERA in their party platforms. The Democratic exception was John F. Kennedy's campaign for the presidency. While his rival Richard Nixon supported the ERA, Kennedy bowed to his union supporters and opposed it. Kennedy also had the dubious honor of being the first president since Herbert Hoover to appoint no woman to his cabinet. To the shock of Democratic feminists, he named no more women to jobs than had either Truman or Eisenhower. So much for the automatic assumption that liberalism entails advocacy of the ERA and women's rights. As Harrison demonstrates, such an alliance is relatively new, forged by women who pushed Kennedy to expiate his sins.

The story may not be so familiar. Prodded by key women in the Democratic party, trade unions, the Women's Bureau, and other women's organizations, first Kennedy and then his successor, Lyndon Johnson, could not legitimately exclude women from the liberal dream of equal opportunity. By creating commissions and laws that publicized sex discrimination, they raised expectations that women, too, might participate in the great American dream. But when liberal officials refused to enforce the government's own sex discrimination laws, networks of women—ironically created by the very same government—set out to create an autonomous feminist civil rights organization.

Despite Kennedy's lack of concern for women's issues, in 1961 he did succumb to pressure to convene a presidential commission on the status of women. Chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, the commission filed its final report, *American Women*, in 1963. Reflecting the period's profound ambivalence about women's appropriate role, the report exposed the many inequities women faced in daily life, at the workplace, and at home, but it presumed that most women would remain housewives. The report also came out against the ERA.

Whatever its limitations—and there were many—the commission did help end the conspiracy of silence surrounding women's changing lives. Declining fertility, increased divorce, and an expanded life span practically guaranteed that most women would spend some portion of their adult lives in the labor force. In recognition of that fact, the Women's Bureau helped push through the Equal Pay Act in 1963, granting women equal pay for equal work.

One year later the omnibus Civil Rights Bill of 1964, to the surprise and consternation of many civil rights advocates, ended up prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of sex. The story is complicated, but basically a coalition of feminist supporters joined Southern archconservatives in adding sex discrimination to the bill. The Southern legislators had hoped such a move would encourage their Northern counterparts to oppose the entire act. Instead of dooming the legislation, sex discrimination became illegal, due in no small part to the persistent lobbying of women both in and out of government. Liberal lawmakers realized they could not appear to be voting for sex discrimination. Victory was short-lived, however. Women soon faced the humiliating fact that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), created to monitor the Civil Rights Act, considered sex discrimination a bad joke and had little intention of being distracted from the important business of protecting black men.

From such humiliating moments movements are born. The presidential commission on the status of women had stimulated the creation of similar state commissions across the nation. National conferences of commission members created networks of knowledgeable women who, by sharing their data, began to realize the full extent of women's subordinate status. In effect, the government created, in its very own backyard, a small army of expert dissidents, women who could challenge the EEOC's unwillingness to enforce the 1964 Civil Rights Bill. And they did. In 1966, at the third annual conference of state commissions, weary and angered members collided with a recalcitrant government, bumped up against the limits of liberalism, and founded the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Harrison's story is not entirely new, but her detailed and inside account is a significant contribution to recent women's history. At a time when feminism was still an "F" word, better left unsaid, a few well-placed women managed to push liberalism's egalitarian ideology toward its logical conclusion. Though many of these women never considered themselves feminists, their efforts forced women's issues onto the liberal agenda. In the absence of a women's movement, they accomplished a great deal. But, as Harrison is quick to point out, "If the fate of women's issues in the Kennedy administration demonstrates that representatives of interest groups can initiate significant policy change, it also indicates the limits of such a course of action."

One of those limits, of course, was that the government, rather than feminists, established the agenda for an emerging women's movement. Harrison neglects to explore the intellectual and cultural implications of her political account. At first, women defined their freedom largely in terms of individual rights, but as they discovered the limits of liberalism, they gradually tried to expand the meaning of freedom to include. new rights in family and reproductive life. In its Statement of Purpose, for example, NOW argued that both men and women should be responsible for the financial support of the family as well as for the care of the children. Soon after, NOW also embraced women's right to abortion and freedom to choose one's sexual preference.

* * *

During every revival of feminist activism, women inevitably confront the ontological problem of defining themselves by how much they resemble or differ from men. By custom and law, men remain the frame of reference for what it means to be human. Feminist litigators, for example, face the eternal problem of deciding

whether to stress women's "sameness" or "difference." Is pregnancy just another medical liability? Does maternity leave discriminate against male workers? These are some of the distorted formulations that arise from a system of law and custom that defines women in relation to a normative ideal of maleness.

In the late 1960s, a majority of feminists, both young and old, stressed their similarity to men. In response to the Feminine Mystique, which stressed women's exclusive role as mothers and wives, feminists argued that difference could be used as a basis for exclusion. When women began entering male occupations, they scrupulously hid incapacitating menstrual cramps, debilitating pregnancy nausea, or the fact that the baby-sitter never arrived that morning. Somehow they managed, but often at great personal cost. By the late 1970s, many feminists gradually began to reconsider, even to celebrate, their "difference." A small army of feminist scholars and activists began to provide ammunition for proclamations of women's moral superiority, stemming from maternal experience.

In the midst of all the shouting, however, only a handful of feminists seemed to note that, whether women stressed their similarity or glorified their difference, men still retained the power, by law and by custom, to define maleness as the cultural and social norm.

The unfinished business of one wave of feminism creates the agenda for the next upsurge of feminist revolt. Despite enormous changes during the last twenty years, women still experience widespread sex discrimination and cultural marginality. The women's movement brought this truth home—to the legislature, to the Supreme Court, even to the kitchen and the bedroom. What women have never gained is the power to define an equality that honors, incorporates, and normalizes their "difference."

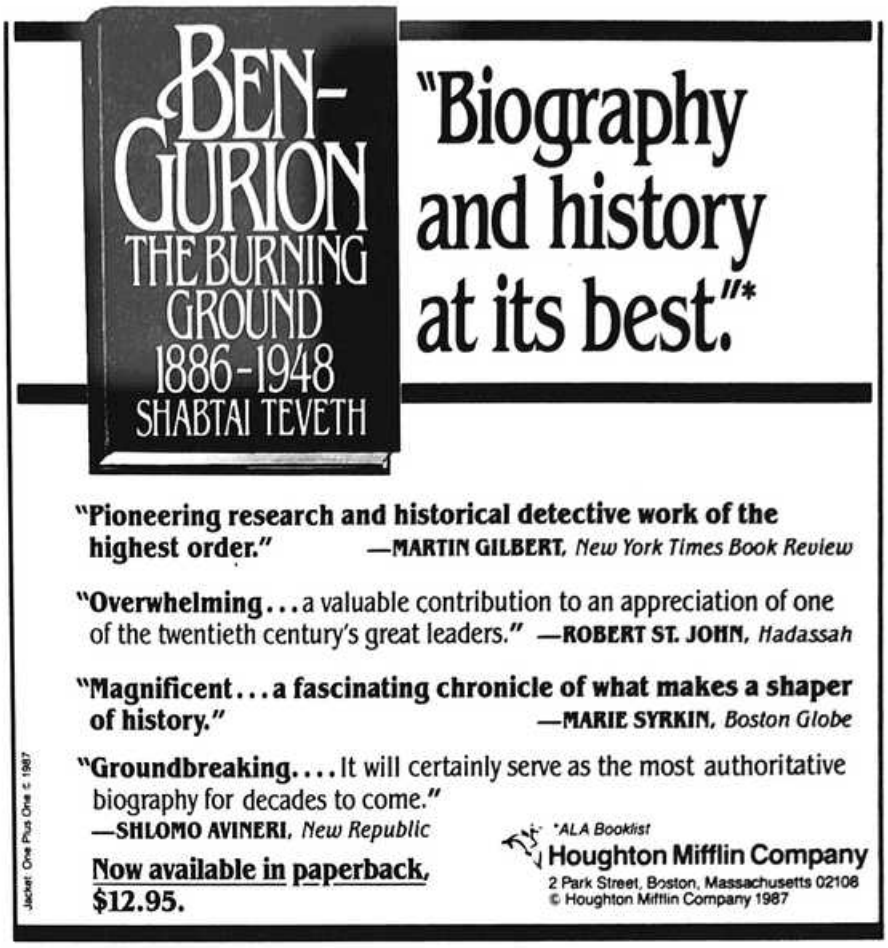
Does anyone know what such an equality would look like? Traditional liberalism, with its emphasis on individual rights, has historically favored stressing women's similarity to men. That need not continue. What is needed now, more than ever, is a "woman-centered" expansion of the meaning of liberalism that both protects women's *individual* rights and recognizes their connectedness to family life. A civilized society that purports to educate and nurture its young must recognize the cultural and economic value of bearing and rearing children—and, yes, the right to do so as well.

The fact is—obvious though it should be—that women are both similar to and different from men. The Second Wave of feminism made considerable headway in striking down barriers. But making headway is not the same thing as constructing a new vision of sexual equality, one that honors rather than devalues difference. NOW's recent announcement calling for a renewed effort to pass the ERA hardly seems an adequate response to the problems facing American women.

Try to imagine a different future. At present, society still pays homage to the "traditional" family, a male breadwinner with a wife/mother at home. But now that a majority of women work outside the home, something must yield besides women. Public life is no longer the domain of men only, though it is still arranged around men's biological experience and traditional social roles. We need a bifocal vision, one that incorporates the biological experience of both women and men.

I would modestly suggest that we ask the question this way: If women had the power to design the workplace, housing, government, business, education, and leisure to meet their maternal and individual needs, how would society be changed? If the answer seems too costly, consider what men have spent creating an illusory "security" apparatus capable of annihilating human civilization.

In a society as deeply conservative as the United States, without a multiparty parliamentary system, liberal government is the best we are likely to get. The Second Wave of feminism successfully publicized women's private agonies and needs. Formal equality for women, however, does not recognize that women bear special responsibility and liability as childbearers. Across the country, feminist scholars, theorists, and activists are searching for a vision that goes beyond a vocabulary of rights. This is the great task at hand. Next time—and there will be a next time—feminists need to redefine liberalism rather than allow liberalism to define feminism. □



Book Review

The Last Socialist Hero

Maurice Isserman

The Long-Distance Runner, An Autobiography by Michael Harrington. Henry Holt and Co., 1988, 260 pp.

In any normal country—that is to say, one that had a left as well as a right and center represented within its political spectrum—Michael Harrington would, by his current age of sixty, have probably been (choose any two or more) editor of a major national newspaper, leader of a trade union federation, spokesman for the parliamentary opposition, cabinet minister, perhaps even prime minister or president. Instead, having had the ill luck to be converted to socialism as a citizen of the United States, he has had to settle for a career as a Major Social Critic, or as he describes himself toward the end of *The Long-Distance Runner*, "a lesser Norman Thomas."

Such honorifics are not without their perquisites in American political culture. Since the publication in 1962 of *The Other America*, his first, most influential, and most enduring work, Harrington is apt to be cited (if sometimes only to be refuted) whenever the topic of poverty in the United States comes up in serious debate. His subsequent books have been reviewed respectfully in the right places; he has served as a regular commentator on National Public Radio and as an occasional contributor to the op-ed page of the *New York Times* and when he sends round a petition for one or another good cause, prominent liberals are likely to sign on.

A talented speaker and prolific writer, Harrington has a public manner that is at once rational, reassuring, and uplifting. This combination of gifts has given him the ability to take ideas ordinarily stigmatized as dangerous or utopian and rework them into a form palatable to a wider audience. (As a former comrade of his once told me—with perhaps a trace more self-mockery than cynicism—Harrington proved "a good person to present our ideas to the unwashed masses.") Despite such success, the real passion of Harrington's life—building an American socialist movement—has been regarded by the mainstream media and politicians as a kind of harmless personal foible, something to be politely ignored or treated with mild derision. ("Writing little-read leaflets about socialism's contemporary relevance," is the way a recent *Boston Globe* article summarized Harrington's responsibilities as cochair of Democratic Socialists of America [DSA].)

All of which helps to account for the title of Harrington's autobiography, *The Long-Distance Runner.* There is something about the word "long" that appeals to leftist memoirists—*A Long View from the Left, A Long Journey*—because it illustrates the necessity of durable commitment in the face of disaster and discouragement. This is actually the second volume of Harrington's memoirs, and it concentrates on the decade and a half just passed; the first volume, *Fragments of the Century,* was published in 1973, and, not surprisingly, it is the better of the two books. Autobiographers almost inevitably do a better job retelling the story of childhood through early adulthood than they do writing about their later years. Though more distant, youthful memories are somehow sharper, the transitions more dramatic, and the "tone" easier to get right. (Harrington, like many other memoirists, chose a kind of affectionate ironic detachment in *Fragments* to describe his younger days. Thus his description of his participation in a pacifist demonstration in the early 1950s: "I saw myself shuffling along in that pathetic little parade and I thought I looked like one of those cartoon figures with a placard announcing the end of the world.")

By contrast, *The Long-Distance Runner* tells no particularly stirring stories of conversion, reassessment, or disillusionment (with the exception of Harrington's mildly bruising first encounter with feminism). Its tone runs a little too much to the elegiac and the testimonial, with many no doubt sincere but predictable tributes to the contributions of this and that long-time associate. And, it must be said, *Fragments* was a better book because it was not written, as was this one, unfortunately, in a race with death. Thus it avoided the repetitions and other signs of hasty writing that mar *The Long-Distance Runner.* (As he reports in one of the more affecting chapters in the book, Harrington was diagnosed with cancer in 1985 and has since endured surgery and chemotherapy—treatments that have delayed but not reversed the progress of the disease.)

Finally, *Fragments* is a more compelling book because it was written at what was for Harrington a more hopeful moment politically. He finished it just after the founding convention of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), a group formed out of the ruins of the old American Socialist party. The sixties were not long past, the Nixon administration was foundering, and the notion of Ronald Reagan's ever being elected president of the United States seemed utterly absurd. There is a genuine ring of conviction in *Fragments'* concluding sentence: "Precluded from ever knowing whether we were right or wrong, we must begin the fight again, even if in a seedy room in a decaying hotel."

Fifteen years later, Harrington is still fighting to breathe life into a tiny (if not quite as tiny) socialist movement, still loyal to the convictions

Maurice Isserman is a historian at Mount Holyoke College, the author of If I had a Hammer ... The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left *(Basic Books, 1987), and a card-carrying member of DSA.*

that have led him to a lifetime acquaintance with seedy meeting rooms. Whatever its problems, *The Long-Distance Runner* does enjoy the distinction of being the first book to trace the organizational history of the American left in the 1970s and 1980s, concentrating on the two groups Harrington has been most intimately associated with, DSOC and DSA.

The central event in this organizational history was the merger in 1982 of Harrington's DSOC with a group called the New American Movement (NAM), which had its own roots in the disintegration of the New Left in the early 1970s. The merger of DSOC and NAM to form DSA was thus fraught with symbolic as well as practical import: It was intended not only to assemble the largest democratic socialist organization since the 1930s but also to dispel the generational animosities that had divided Harrington's segment of the Old Left from its 1960s counterparts. Harrington's behavior at the 1962 Port Huron conference of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) has taken on mythic proportions in recent years, retold in each new history and memoir that appears about SDS; and Harrington himself has apologized for it in no less than three of his books, including his comment in *The Long-Distance Runner* that at Port Huron "I had distinguished myself by a rude insensitivity to young people struggling to define a new identity." The notion that the whole subsequent history of SDS and the sixties would have been substantially different had Harrington been a little more patient at Port Huron seems unlikely. What doesn't seem foreordained was the nearly two decades it took to effect a reconciliation.

The much-publicized example of Jerry Rubin to the contrary, Harrington always understood that "a solid majority of the people who had been really committed to the movement of the sixties became trade union staffers, community activists and organizers, radical academics, and the like, in the seventies." But after the collapse of SDS, most showed little if any interest in joining the available nationally organized radical groups. The great hope of the 1982 merger was that it would combine the strengths of DSOC (organizational sophistication, contacts with the labor movement, and some nationally prominent leaders including Harrington and Irving Howe), with those of NAM (strong local chapters in some key cities, contacts with the new citizen action groups, and credibility in the eyes of that amorphous floating mass of ex-New Leftists). But things didn't work out quite the way they were expected to.

I once had an enlightening talk with Gordon Haskell (a knowledgeable veteran of the ideological wars of the thirties, forties, and fifties, who played an important behind-the-scenes role in DSOC's internal operations) about the "takeoff" point necessary for a nationwide socialist organization. Gordon pointed out that an organization of five thousand dues-paying members has almost the same overhead requirements as does an organization of twenty-five thousand (rent for an office in New York City, salaries for office staff and field organizers, bills for the WATS line, letterhead stationary, etc.)—with one-fifth the resources to draw upon. Once a socialist organization gets to the range of twenty to twenty-five thousand members (something that has not been seen in the United States since the 1930s), it can "take off" and concentrate on the fun stuff—political strategy and further growth. But as long as it has to piddle along with five to seven thousand, it remains doomed to an endless, soul-wearying round of fund-raising and cost-cutting just to ensure its own survival. Thanks to the merger, DSA managed to attract the initial five thousand, but it never got much beyond that point.

DSA failed to take off for reasons circumstantial, ideological, and demographic. Circumstantial: It was launched at just the moment that Reagan's great economic gamble began (at least in the short run) to pay off; massive deficit spending lifted the economy out of the trough of the 1982-83 recession in time to guarantee Reagan's landslide in 1984, with the consequent demoralization of the liberal (or "progressive") camp in the Democratic party. Ideological: Socialism, however inspired or diluted by feminist, green and/or Gramscian insights, failed to capture the imagination of DSA's wished-for constituencies; even in those quarters where it didn't automatically inspire fear and loathing, the word sounded clunky, outmoded, irrelevant. And demographic: As Harrington notes in *The Long-Distance Runner*, members of the sixties generation, who were expected to be the core around which DSA would attract its initial twenty-five thousand, "turned into parents, union and public-interest staffers, tenured professors, mortgage holders." The trouble with adulthood is that it takes up too many evenings. Which is perhaps the reason why the most lively issues of DSA's ordinarily staid publication, *Democratic Left*, have been devoted to such themes as "socialist parenting." To paraphrase turn-of-the-century left-wing intellectual Werner Sombart: This latest socialist utopia has come to grief on the shoals of disposable diapers.

Whatever DSA's future—and Harrington says he is convinced that better things are coming in the 1990s—Harrington's own historical reputation seems secure. He is and will continue to be justly celebrated for his achievements as social critic—and in that category, I think, he has proven to be a *greater* rather than a lesser Norman Thomas. (A quarter century after its initial publication, *The Other America* is still being read as a classic of social criticism, a book that shaped an era of reform; the same cannot be said of anything written by Thomas.)

Harrington may also come to be remembered as a figure symbolizing the end of an era. At a talk he gave at Princeton University in 1984 on the occasion of the centennial of Norman Thomas's birth, he reflected on the changes that had taken place in American politics since the days of the Socialist party's greatest influence:

> The radical republican notion of "citizenship," which both Debs and Thomas incarnated, is disappearing.... The grandchildren of men and women who once stayed late into the night at the Grange hall or the union hall, talking intensely with each other about what kind of society they wanted to build, now stay home watching TV. If they participate at all in shaping their collective future, it is most likely by opening a computer-generated envelope from some committee in New York or Washington....

Harrington's notion of politics is one he shared with and learned from

the Debs-Thomas tradition: In order to awaken the conscience or change the consciousness of a nation, one has to build an organization, start a publication, speak on a thousand street corners to crowds of hundreds (or tens, if necessary), recruiting one's followers from those converted by the unamplified sound of one's voice and the strength of one's arguments. It is an honorable, even a heroic conception of politics, for which there may prove to be little room left in the United States. □

BOOK REVIEW

What's Left After Reagan?

David Plotke

The Radical Renewal: The Politics of Ideas in Modern America by Norman Birnbaum. Pantheon, 1988, 265 pp.

Making History: The Radical Tradition in American Life by Richard Flacks. Columbia University Press, 1988, 313 pp.

In American politics, the 1980s will be remembered as Ronald Reagan's decade. Yet many on the left deny what the president they loathe has achieved. To summarize their case:

- Since Reagan didn't achieve the maximum goals of the far right, he really didn't practice Reaganism, which was a media creation.
- Because many voters disagreed with aspects of Reagan's agenda, Reaganism never really gained popular approval and was in fact supported only by elites.
- Since electoral restrictions and increasing apathy reduced voting rates drastically, Reagan was never supported by more than a minority of the population.
- Reagan's policies failed, and his presidency avoided a spectacular collapse only because of public affection for the man himself.

Such views reflect a refusal to view the left as a real participant in the national political conflicts of the 1970s and 1980s. Perhaps a new administration will move away from Reaganism. Even so, we need to look at our own role in what happened: Reagan achieved considerable counterreform—far more than if he had been a purist. There was substantial popular support for his overall approach to foreign and economic policy. In fights to mobilize new voters, Republicans held their own against Democrats.

Reagan will likely leave office with the economy in better shape than it was when he found it, with tensions with the Soviet Union dramatically reduced, and with several ferocious regional struggles (Afghanistan, Namibia, Iran-Iraq) notably cooled. Politics has shifted well to the right on many fronts. No mere telegenic idiot savant, Reagan has made political ideology more central to his campaigns and programs than has any recent president, and that ideology challenges the left in terms of its conception of the proper role of the state, its approach to the market and economic growth, and its view of how to gain international peace.

Given these challenges, treating Reaganism as a bad dream or a media mirage is mainly a means of avoiding tough questions. Which positions need basic revision?

In *The Radical Renewal* and *Making History,* Norman Birnbaum and Richard Flacks respectively have trouble placing their arguments in the real context of recent political history. Reaganism seems not to have existed in ways that seriously influence their analyses and proposals.

Birnbaum asks if there is "in the American social sciences systematic insight into character, culture, and society that would help us see ourselves, visualize our historical situation, more clearly." Parts of an answer appear in recent radical thought, fruits of a renewal under way in the United States. Birnbaum's valuable guide makes clear that, in American intellectual life, there is a substantial left presence. No other book matches Birnbaum's in the breadth of its coverage and the astuteness of its individual judgments, though there are times when Birnbaum moves too quickly from one sphere to another.

But does it make sense to claim a "renewal" of radical thought? There is little dramatically new about most of the work Birnbaum surveys, from psychology to economics. Beyond the neo-Marxist claims staked out in the late 1960s and early 1970s, few reasons are given for thinking that new solutions have appeared. Instead, Birnbaum's survey shows that a major left current has existed for at least twenty years. But this fact has been widely noted in tirades by the far right, laments from neoconservatives, and parodies by hostile liberals.

So claims about renewed radicalism should now reveal a new substantive understanding. But Birnbaum provides little evidence of major breakthroughs, and this absence lends his book a tone in which the intellectual left congratulates itself for existing. The praise is no longer deserved. After all, aren't these the radical ideas that have not had more than limited influence in academic disciplines, that have failed to grab the public imagination as a framework for policy, and that Republicans have campaigned against zestfully for two decades to the point that

David Plotke teaches political science at Yale. He is completing a book on the Democratic party from the New Deal to the 1970s.

many Democratic liberals will not even call themselves liberals?

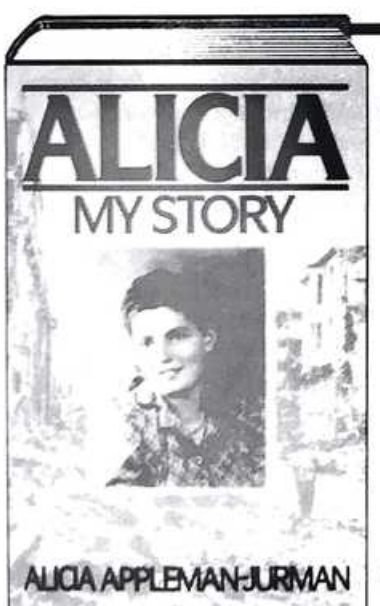
Birnbaum admits that the work he surveys has not yet generated a new synthesis: "Critical social thought in the United States, then, suffers from the absence of a counterproject, an alternative view of historical possibility." In fact, the actual visions of feminists, social democrats, ecologists, and others have not been expressed in politically compelling ways. Do we need better expressions, or different visions? Or a different citizenry?

To gauge whether there might be a significant renewal of radical thought, we need to locate the best recent work amidst conflicting intellectual currents inside and outside academia. Here Birnbaum barely ventures. For example, his account of critical tendencies in contemporary legal thought finds "post-Marxist" critical legal studies, rights-based left-liberalism, feminist legal theory, and more. Yet such schools of thought guarantee little in themselves. In the noisy fights of the last ten or fifteen years, vigorous currents on the right (often relying on the application of neoclassical economic models) have opposed new and old formulations on the left. And "centrist" liberalism continues to survive despite its lack of novelty.

Unfortunately, the premise of Birnbaum's book—that anyone looking at American intellectual life is basically right to see a desert, with the exception of radical efforts—encourages an intellectual equivalent of the denial of Reaganism. If Reagan is a fool, then his intellectual allies are irrelevant, clownish, or corrupt. And since befuddled voters gave us Reagan, little more than corruption or stupidity can account for the failure of a majority of legal scholars to sign up with one or another left. The idea that these scholars might have reasons not to join, reasons the legal left(s) ought to take seriously, seems off Birnbaum's agenda.

It's not easy to assess theoretical debates still in progress, to do justice to the claims of diverse perspectives while linking an intellectual field to the broader political scene. One can find few good examples of such analysis. Perry Anderson's work on English and French intellectual life is probably the best the left has recently managed, though it is marred by his orthodox Marxist punch lines.

On the other hand, there is a ready standard offered by the right. Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* has achieved extraordinary success. Bloom surveys current tendencies in political theory and cultural and literary studies, denounces much of what he finds as ethically relativist and overly influenced by democratic sentiment, and argues for an elitist reorientation of intellectual life. Arrogant and petulant as it is, Bloom's book takes direct, sustained aim at several lefts; and, while dispensing its share of insults, it tries to show why the lefts' positions are wrong and dangerous. Bloom may not be persuasive about the relativism and romanticism he identifies as the diseases of the contemporary left, but he takes on the overall shape of intellectual life and tries to persuade. In contrast, Birnbaum offers glib criticism of orthodoxy alongside cautious and inadequate criticism of the left. He asks, for example, why the



Chaim Potok says,
"Powerful, intimate, searingly impressive."

In 1943, when Alicia Jurman was thirteen, she fled the Nazis through the forests and fields of Poland, rescuing other Jews along the way. At the end of the war, Alicia, whose parents and four brothers had perished in the Holocaust, risked her life again, leading survivors from Poland to Palestine.

"The marvel of ALICIA is that the author is unaware of the magnitude of her own heroism. She tells her story unselfconsciously, with burning honesty."
—Francine Klagsbrun

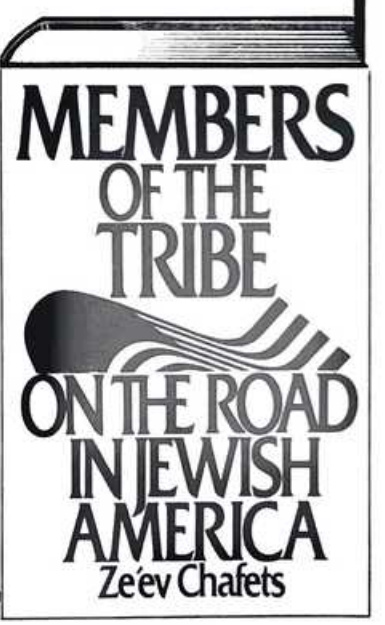
"This memoir is heartbreaking." —Elie Wiesel

The New York Times calls him
"A 1980s de Tocqueville."

After two decades in Israel, Ze'ev Chafets returns to his native USA on a six-month, thirty-state odyssey. He meets Jewish cowboys, Jewish convicts, gay Jews, black Jews, and even Cajun Jews. "The result: a funny, frank, and opinionated book that offers thoughtful insights into Jewish lives."
—Kirkus Reviews

"Chafets holds a mirror before our eyes and what we see makes us laugh—and cry." —Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, Union of American Hebrew Congregations

BANTAM HARDCOVERS



protagonists of critical social thinkers lack a "concrete utopia, a social project, a vision of society," and answers that the problems are fragmentation and lack of strategy—not even considering the possibility that the left's programs have substantive problems that limit their appeal.

It only underlines the left's insularity when Bloom can manage more respect for Herbert Marcuse than Birnbaum can manage for conservative and even liberal theorists of similar or greater stature. If, as Birnbaum shows, Marxism has no exclusive role as the source of radical and democratic thought, much is up for debate. Thus, conservative or liberal positions that would seem without value from one left position (say, neo-Marxism) might be suggestive and fruitful from others (say, feminism). When Birnbaum's book is translated, what will its German readers make of his dismissal of systems theories in sociology, or Italian readers of his quick rejection of economic theories of social and political choice, when theorists in both countries are trying to employ aspects of such theories to remedy perceived defects in the left traditions within which they have worked?

An intellectual left certainly exists in the U.S., but what prospects does it have? Interesting fights are now more prevalent than are promising resolutions. From literary to feminist to legal studies, sharp conflicts about the merit of poststructuralist critiques of subjectivity may contribute to the long-standing debate on the relation between structure and agency in social action. In political theory, left communitarians and neo-Marxists differ about what to criticize in modern liberalism and how to criticize it. And in sociology and political science many different lefts (black, feminist, social democratic) debate about the relations among race, poverty, economic change, and family structure. However these debates turn out, we can be sure that not a single one will be settled purely within the left.

Toward Politics

Birnbaum's intellectual critique leads him only to the edge of a new politics. But Flacks's ambitious and more successful book focuses directly on the fate of the activist left. Flacks begins with the distinction between "making life" and "making history." The first term means the routine, daily efforts at self-maintenance that occupy most people. The second means both the normal activities of members of elite groups, whose decisions shape the lives of others, and collective efforts by those outside the elite to reshape social relations.

While Flacks argues that most people are preoccupied with "making life," he takes issue with critics of American culture and politics who denounce such concerns as a privatism that signals political decay and cultural barrenness. In fact, people nourish substantial moral commitments in their daily activities, and they often choose not to engage in politics in order to meet these commitments.

Treating popular consciousness as deserving of political respect leads Flacks to regard social movements as the motor of change. Social movements arise in two ways, both rooted in commitments made in the "private" lives often disparaged by the left. Movements of resistance (like Alinskyite community groups) seek to preserve customary ways of life and the moral and political commitments they express. Movements for liberation, such as the modern feminist movement, aim to achieve new rights and social conditions. Some movements, such as the civil rights movement, combine elements of both.

Flacks argues that social movements are the core of the left (which he defines as those who want "to replace decision-making controlled by private profit and elite domination with processes based on popular voice").But he also examines the ideological left, which has had mainly a socialist orientation.

Both lefts, Flacks argues, can claim some successes. The popular left has helped expand opportunities and entitlement—as with organized labor in the 1930s and the civil rights movement three decades later. The ideological left, although it has not achieved national political power, has provided educational and other opportunities to members of community-based groups who otherwise would have had great difficulty obtaining them. And it has sustained an ethic of social responsibility.

But, according to Flacks, today's ideological left should recognize that it is involved in an essentially cultural project. Efforts to form a party are bound to fail politically and to rely on an elitist conception of politics at odds with the democratic self-organization the left ought to favor. Flacks advocates a politics rooted in communities and respectful of the normal lives of those it seeks to involve. The contemporary left, he writes, should reject all forms of "vanguardism" and combine social democratic reforms at the national level with pacifist conceptions of exemplary individual action.

Flacks's book is impressive in its sweep and provocative in its central claims. Yet it is often maddeningly insular. To advocate social democracy and pacifism in the United States today is to take little account of the recent past. The appeal of pacifism is uncertain, and the demands of civil disobedience are not easily incorporated into "making life." Urging social democratic reforms makes sense—but not without considerable rethinking about how to engage the predominant forms of liberalism. The striking thing about what Flacks advocates is its similarity to what many leftists have been doing for at least the last decade—community organizing, engaging in intermittent acts of civil disobedience, and making occasional efforts to articulate reform programs that lean on the experience of European social democratic parties. Yet he devotes so little attention to how these efforts have fared in American political history that he seems to make hopeful claims that avoid any practical evaluation.

Further, if "normal" Americans are committed to "making life" but still retain some interest in national politics, what type of political leadership will they recognize as legitimate? For the left, problems of practical leadership and the question of the role of individuals and organizations should be on the agenda today—not in irrelevant debates about Leninism or a separate party, but in the confusing setting of the Democratic party. Flacks recognizes the need to be involved in shaping the course of Democratic politics, but he has little to say about such relevant recent experiences as Jesse Jackson's campaign for president.

The pitfalls of a cultural approach to left organization emerge in Flacks's discussion of the Communist party (CP) of the thirties and forties. He

refrains from straightforward political approval, but he bestows what amounts to almost the same thing when he defends the CP as a means of self-education and self-development for many people from marginalized social groups. But how can an antielitist praise a severely hierarchical organization that claimed authority on the basis of knowing the logic of world history? What kind of democratic growth is possible in such a setting?

Flacks argues that people who remained in the Communist party for a long time, however critical they were of its policies, treasured the experience as one of commitment and engagement. This is certainly true, but what of the contrary judgment by the large numbers of Communists who soon became ex-Communists, or the millions of people critical of American society who never joined the party because they disliked its form of organization and mode of operation?

Whatever the left's history, treating its future in purely cultural terms leads to a massive problem. If the left is mainly about education and self-development, rather than about programmatic direction and the use of political power, why should anyone join it? Why would a reasonable person, committed to "making life," choose the political left rather than a religious, social, or professional association committed to the same functions? Only the intellectual pleasures of politics or the desire to attain substantive national goals would be persuasive.

Ironically, Birnbaum's and Flacks's books are complementary: the weaknesses of one are the strengths of the other. Flacks redefines the left as a culture, mainly an intellectual culture, which can be the alternative to the left's failed efforts in national politics. Birnbaum's account of that culture reveals its drift and political dislocation, stressing the need for a way out of the left's isolation.

Despite their insistence on politics, both books are hurt by their refusal to confront political reality. They both imply that Reaganism requires no substantive or even strategic rethinking of positions. This view leaves unanswered the question that lurks behind contemporary calls for greater citizen participation: What should we discuss and what should we propose in these discussions? What would we say about how the state should be organized, how markets should be ordered, how social services should be deployed? And why should we be believed? For example, everyone, save parts of the Republican far right, recognizes that child care is now a serious public policy issue. But it has still been possible to stigmatize the Democratic left for again advocating elaborate federal regulations and a new bureaucratic force to oversee them. In Reagan's typically sharp summary of the issue, Democrats are demanding that government "license grandmothers."

Why would a reasonable person, committed to "making life," choose the political left rather than a religious, social, or professional association committed to the same functions?

How can this now predictable result be avoided? The best reform programs may prove to be fruitless without a rebirth of political participation. But such a rebirth seems impossible to elicit in the abstract, no matter how many references to "community" and "public spirit" are made. The democratic left often seems to demand that a moral renewal occur, which would be certified by a popular willingness to debate proposals for a democratic expansion of public life.

Breaking out of this circular reasoning requires rethinking some basic commitments because resistance to political participation is now intertwined with popular suspicion of government intervention in social and economic life. Domestically, the central problem is to reconstruct a contemporary version of what the left often disparagingly calls "growth politics"—an account of what kind of socioeconomic development we want and why. This is a necessary area for bringing together the two major components of a new governing coalition, so that neoprogressive concerns about efficiency and prosperity can be linked to populist and democratic impulses for equity. As the 1988 campaign has shown, it is no easy matter to link the concerns of a Dukakis with those of a Gephardt or a Jackson. Still, the political goal is clear enough as the basis for a durable shift away from Reaganism.

Attaining this goal now requires intellectual innovation on a broader scale than at any earlier point in this century. We must find new ways of addressing the choice between market and state methods of allocation and decision-making. This isn't a matter of relabeling but of imagining—of finding new ways to link state agencies and market institutions. For example, there are not enough child care providers to fill the growing demand. But public support for expanding the supply isn't automatic. It requires a model of service provision that would specify the respective roles of government (as funder, enforcer of standards, and occasional provider), the market, and such institutions as families and churches. It's likely that feasible models will allot a larger role to the market and a narrower one to government regulation than the left usually prefers. Can we imagine a modern version of democratic control in such a context?

* * *

While the new left is still better than the old left or any brand of the right, it is not so new anymore and deserves little credit for continuing to exist. People on the left are reticent when it comes to facing difficulties squarely, as though examining how they have often been blocked and defeated might be devastating.

Perhaps they (we) fear discovering that Americans really disagree deeply with the left, that they were not simply duped by Reagan's charm. If that is the case, are our hopes ridiculous? Only if we reject the faith in democratic dialogue and the sense of politics as potentially creative, which both authors seek to affirm. Disagreements can be overcome, but the denial of difficult realities makes such realities all the more powerful. □

however, would regard it as vain and even dangerous to assume that the descendants of those messengers have any comparable mission today. Littell thinks otherwise. Though he eschews any claim on Jewish conduct, implicit in his thought is the notion that Jews have a heavy responsibility. It is theirs by default. Implicit in his assertion of the present "incredibility of Christianity" is the urgent value of the remaining authenticity of Judaism.

Littell explicitly disavows the idea that Christianity supersedes Judaism and that the Jews are responsible for and must suffer for the death of Jesus. He also suggests, without elaboration, that Jesus was not the true Messiah. He accepts this as a consequence of his belief that the Holocaust overshadows Jesus' death.

This capitulation is phrased in the form of an apparent Christian imperialism: Jewish events are defined in Christian terms. Yet the capitulation is real because Littell is conceding that the Jewish events now define the Christian terms. He starts by saying that the Holocaust was a crucifixion, but he ends by granting that the true Crucifixion was the Holocaust, not the death of Jesus on the cross.

Historically, for Christians, crucifixion and resurrection have been dogmatic terms. But now for all of us, they can be valid exegetic terms. Exegetically they can illumine the Jewish experience as well. In truth, Littell is exegetically challenging the adequacy of exile and return as metaphors for this century's Jewish experience. The Jews need Christian language to adequately honor and dignify their own experience. Only crucifixion begins to adequately describe the Holocaust. Only resurrection, the rebirth of Israel. The Christians now need the Jewish experience in order to understand their own language. The Crucifixion and the Resurrection have now become transformed by the Jewish experience.

Littell speaks as the witness for a damned people. Christians have damned themselves with their rejection of the Jews. The Christians have become the crucifiers and the Jews the lamb of God. Implicit in acknowledging the resurrection of the Jews is the humbling of Christianity.

Perhaps out of the Holocaust a new Jewish-Christian relationship can be born. Such a relationship would, in some measure, redeem the Holocaust. As siblings in spiritual life, we need to strive together with our history and our texts so that one day we will have a common tradition to remember.

Littell includes as an appendix to his book a liturgy for atoning Christians. Plainly, the Jews he longs for do not stand aloof saying, "Leave us alone." He and other Christians like him need the Jews to forgive them and call them brothers and sisters. □

BOOK REVIEW

The Fundamentalist Challenge

Robert Wistrich

Semites and Anti-Semites by Bernard Lewis. W.W. Norton and Co., 1986, 283 pp.

Anti-Zionism as Anti-Judaism in Egypt by Rivka Yadlin. Zalman Shazar Center, 1988.

Past Trials and Present Tribulations: A Muslim Fundamentalist's View of the Jews by Ronald L. Nettler. Pergamon Press, 1987, 92pp.

In his timely and important study, *Semites and anti-Semites,* the historian Bernard Lewis reasserts the conventional wisdom that the Arab-Israeli conflict is essentially *political*—"a clash between states and peoples over real issues, not a matter of prejudice and persecution." On the other hand, he concludes that if the conflict is not quickly resolved there may be no escape "from the unending downward spiral of mutual hate that will embitter the lives of Arabs and Jews alike." The conflict, he observes, has engendered a growing corpus of myths, prejudice, and hatred, to the point that extremism is rampant on both sides. Classical anti-Semitism (which Lewis regards as distinctively Christian and European in origin) has unmistakably infected Arab political and intellectual elites. Indeed, Lewis argues, contemporary Arab anti-Semitism is becoming increasingly reminiscent of the Nazi model in its vehemence, ubiquity, and obsessiveness. Anti-Semitism is no longer simply a matter of government initiative. Rivka Yadlin argues in *Anti-Zionism as Anti-Judaism in Egypt* that, in Mubarak's Egypt, opposition groups ranging from the Muslim Brotherhood to the Socialist Action party have consistently used anti-Semitic expressions, motifs, and slogans as part of their political activity. In Cairo, books with titles like *The War of Survival between the Koran and the Talmud* are in demand. Christian and Islamic motifs intertwine, and Muslim writers do not hesitate to spread the medieval Christian blood libel. Indeed, the current defense minister of Syria, Mustafa Tlass, published a book called *The Matzah of Zion,* which attempts to vindicate the notorious Damascus blood libel of 1840—when native Christians accused the local Jews of murdering a friar and his assistant in order to obtain blood for the coming Passover.

Robert Wistrich is a professor of modern Jewish history at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and is the author of the forthcoming The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph *(Oxford University Press, 1988).*

The new Arab anti-Semitism cannot of course be divorced from the Arab-Israeli conflict. In Egypt, Syria, and other Arab countries, anti-Jewish attitudes are an integral part of the effort to *delegitimize* Israel—not on the basis of its policies, but rather because it has an intrinsically evil or *demonic essence*. In that sense, there is no real distinction between Israel and the Jews, between politics and theology. Israel simply embodies all those nefarious Jewish characteristics—egoism, envy, perfidy, fanaticism, racism, and malevolence—that supposedly manifested themselves in the first Jewish encounter with Islam and have remained unchanged over the centuries. There is plenty of material in classical Muslim sources that can be used to vindicate the current image of the Jew as an enemy of Islam and an agent of the darkest forces of evil. No doubt the trauma of Western colonialism (which also led to the adoption of European anti-Semitic stereotypes) and the even greater shock of Israel's emergence as a nation were necessary in order to galvanize these indigenous sentiments. But the roots of this anti-Semitism lie in much older Muslim archetypes of the Jews as persecutors of the Islamic prophets, perverters of Allah's truth, deniers of the Islamic revelation, and conspirators against its holy mission.

These anti-Semitic roots are explored in Ronald Nettler's *Past Trials and Present Tribulations,* a valuable work on modern Islamic Fundamentalist doctrine as it relates to the Jews. Nettler translates and comments on the text of the leading ideologue of Muslim Fundamentalism, Sayyid Qutb, which is entitled "Our Struggle with the Jews." This text portrays Jews as the most dangerous conspirators against the heritage of the Muslim community. Sowing doubt, confusion, deception, and apostasy, the Jews, according to Qutb, have sought to shatter the unity of the Islamic creed and the integrity of the believers. From the time that the first Islamic community was established in seventh-century Medina, Qutb continues, the Jews have plotted to undermine and destroy the Islamic community with "every weapon and all means which the scheming Jewish genius could devise..." First they gathered together the poly-

New. Significant. **Basic.**

ALL CONSUMING IMAGES
The Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture
STUART EWEN
"Ewen's best book so far. In it, he succeeds in making us ask ourselves why we are impelled to buy and how buying became self-defining."—SIDNEY MINTZ, author of *Sweetness and Power* A graphic and witty look at the marriage of image and power in our society. $19.95

THE COMPANY OF CRITICS
Social Criticism and Political Commitment in the Twentieth Century
MICHAEL WALZER
Ours has been called the century of the critic and indeed there has been much to criticize. But what exactly is the critic's role within his or her society? A leading political thinker answers by examining the lives and work of eleven prominent social critics, including Julien Benda, Randolph Bourne, George Orwell, and Simone de Beauvoir. $19.95

THE GREAT U-TURN
Corporate Restructuring and the Polarizing of America
BENNETT HARRISON & BARRY BLUESTONE
"For the last decade, America and Americans have been getting poorer. *The Great U-Turn* explains why. How well we respond to the challenges the authors raise will substantially determine our economic future." —SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY This devastating critique reveals how Reagan's economic policies have damaged the American standard of living and how this trend can be reversed. $19.95

HOMEWARD BOUND
American Families in the Cold War Era
ELAINE TYLER MAY
"Sets a new standard for social history by linking the intimate family life of the fifties with the larger imperatives of the Cold War....A fascinating look at family life in this unique, even aberrant, decade." —BARBARA EHRENREICH $20.95

MINDS AT WAR
Nuclear Reality and the Inner Conflicts of Defense Policymakers
STEVEN KULL
"Steven Kull probes the contradictions in the mind-sets of nuclear strategists in ways that permit the perceptive reader to recognize the fundamental absurdity of the entire nuclear weapons universe." —ROBERT JAY LIFTON, co-author of *Indefensible Weapons* A psychologist and arms policy analyst goes beyond official statements and public posturing to reveal the motivations and justifications of key defense strategists. $19.95

THE NEW AMERICAN POLITICIAN
Ambition, Entrepreneurship, and the Changing Face of Political Life
BURDETT LOOMIS
"*The* authoritative treatment of the much talked about 'new breed' of congressional politician. It is also an exemplary blend of political science conceptualization and first hand observation."—RICHARD FENNO How a new generation of issue-oriented and publicity-conscious politicians has come to dominate the political landscape. $19.95

Available at your bookstore or direct from the publisher.
Call toll-free 1-800-638-3030.

BASIC BOOKS, INC. 10 E. 53rd St., New York 10022

theistic tribes of Arabia; then they incited civil disturbances and encouraged the Sunni-Shi'a split within Islam. They have also constantly used Christianity and idolatry in their war against the Muslims—a tactic that in modern times has culminated in the "Crusader-Zionist" assault on Palestine. The Jews, Qutb argues, also use communism, atheistic materialism, and revolution as part of their campaign against the true faith; all forms of secularism—including secular Arab nationalism—ultimately become instruments in the hands of "world Zionism" in its fight against the Muslim community and its creed.

Qutb's views, which clearly reflect prevailing Fundamentalist doctrine, express more than just an emotionalized Islamic variant of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This ideology closely links hatred of Zionism and of the Jews with the sense of a *civilizational* crisis, a deep suspicion of modernity, and a desire for revenge against the West. The return to early Islam and the ethos of *jihad* (holy war) are part of the Fundamentalists' attempt to revitalize what they perceive as a Muslim culture and a way of life that are threatened by decline and even collapse. A combination of sociopolitical activism, militant faith, and struggle against both internal and external enemies may yet restore past glories. Thus, Muslims must wage the *jihad* not only against Zionism and the West, but also against their own secular rulers who have betrayed Islam.

For the Fundamentalists, the establishment of a Jewish State on Muslim land is of course the ultimate heresy, and the Jews' victory over the Muslims on the field of battle remains the ultimate disgrace. By satanizing the enemy, many Muslims who are otherwise unable to deal with Allah's abandonment of the faithful are able to find some comfort. The Zionist and the Jew, it must never be forgotten, are not only a concrete foe but, just as important, a metaphor for the general threat to Islam's destiny. Hence, the struggle with Israel tends to take on, in much of Islamic and Arabic writing, the character of an apocalyptic conflict with no room for concession or compromise. The redemption of Islam and of the Arabs necessarily involves the destruction of Zionism and the Jews. No doubt the Islamic Revolution of 1979, which successfully overthrew the reactionary pro-American "Zionist agent," the Shah of Iran, provided a source of hope for many Muslim radicals. Subsequently, however, Ayatollah Khomeini's war against the secular, heretical Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein became hopelessly bogged down in the marshlands of the Shatt-el-Arab. The pan-Islamic dream of unity now seems as far away as ever. Far from liberating Jerusalem, Khomeini has been reduced to dealing with the American and Israeli "Satan" in order to ensure the continuation of his fanatical *jihad*.

For the Islamic Fundamentalists, the liberation of Jerusalem depends on the overcoming of apostasy—on the return to the Koran and to the principles of Islam. The Arabs will not be saved until they uproot the source of their decline—secularism, modernism, and Westernization. Precisely for this reason, however, there can be no peace agreement, no compromise, and no normalized relations with Israel. Such normalized relations, according to Fundamentalists, would simply facilitate the further spread of the poisons of "racist-imperialist culture" into the heart of the Muslim world.

In recent years, Islamic Fundamentalist views of Zionism and the Jews have increasingly taken root in the Middle East. Israel already began to feel the practical implications of these views in the aftermath of the Lebanon war in 1982. The Shiite Hizbullah of Lebanon, which sprung up at that time as a militant arm of Iranian revolutionary strategy (the attempt to reestablish Islamic rule in Iraq, then in Lebanon, and finally in Palestine) have been implacably hostile to Israel. They no doubt see themselves as the vanguard of a great Iranian-led *jihad* that could liberate Jerusalem if victory were ever achieved in the Gulf War. This war of redemption in the name of Allah, it was hoped, would provide the climactic chapter to Lebanon's drawn-out agony. The Hizbullah officially reject both Iranian and Arab nationalism, clinging instead to the myth of a single Muslim community. In reality, their ties are much closer to Iran, and their attitudes toward the Arabs bear more than a trace of patronizing contempt. Only the war against Israel provides a vague common ground among them, the Sunni Muslim clergy, the Druze, and the Palestinians.

In recent months, Islamic Fundamentalism has begun to impinge more directly on the Arab-Israeli conflict from inside the borders of Israel itself. The anger, bitterness, and disappointment of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation have shown certain marks of Fundamentalist influence. One indicator of this influence is the growing contempt that the younger generation (the *shabab*) has not only for the Israelis, but also for the Arab states and even the PLO leadership outside the territories. This contempt has been particularly evident in the Gaza Strip, whose teeming refugee camps are a fertile breeding ground for Fundamentalist sentiment. The pressure of socioeconomic hardship, the traditionally religious and conservative character of the local population, the proximity to Egypt (and Egyptian Fundamentalism), and the impact of the Iranian Revolution have all played a part in the rising Fundamentalism. So, too, has the shortsightedness of Israeli policy makers, who encouraged Fundamentalists to bring in money from abroad in order to establish kindergartens, youth clubs, sports organizations, mosques, and Islamic colleges in Gaza and parts of the West Bank. The Israeli military evidently hoped that Fundamentalism might wean the youth of the territories away from the PLO. True, the Islamic sheikhs reject the nationalist ideology of the PLO and insist that Palestinian aspirations can be realized only by creating an Islamic state. But both in ideology and in practice, their opposition to Israel is even more intransigent than that of the Palestinian nationalists. For the ideologues of Islamic *jihad,* Israel is the spearhead of satanic forces aiming to create a Zionist empire from the Nile to the Euphrates. One of the main Islamic spiritual leaders in Gaza, Sheikh Rajab al-Tamimi, declared early during the Palestinian uprising that Israel sprang up "on the dead bodies of the Moslem Palestinian people" and was "doomed to destruction," "born to die."

During the uprising Israel has borne the brunt of Fundamentalist hatred. Islamic teachers have been among the

main choirleaders of the rioting, making calls for resistance from loudspeakers attached to mosques in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. Islamic calls to martyrdom—cries of "Palestine is our Holy Land" and "Allah helps those who help themselves"—have vied with the more familiar slogans of the PLO throughout the uprising. There can be little doubt that a renewed belief in God and in Islam has provided a powerful emotional framework for the rebels, and has motivated younger Palestinians to die for their cause.

The appeal of Fundamentalism among the Palestinians thrives on the despair engendered by an occupation that seems endless. It also gains strength from its roots in Islamic history and popular culture, from the impotence of surrounding Arab regimes and their indifference to the fate of the Palestinians, and from the failures of the PLO and of secular Arab nationalism to address the traumas of modernization. Above all, it offers a seductively simple solution to the personal and collective suffering that the Palestinians have undergone over the past four decades. Islam has always provided effective symbols for the Arab world; it is a central source of inspiration for Arab ideals, social norms, laws, and future aspirations—a system that not only provides legitimate authority, but also encourages the revolt of the oppressed. Much more than Judaism, Christianity, or other world religions, it is supremely *political* in character. Indeed, as Ayatollah Khomeini has stated: "Islam is politics or it is nothing."

What contemporary Islam has yet to demonstrate is whether it can rise above the politics of hatred and fanaticism to regain the authentic universalism and tolerance that characterized medieval Islamic civilization at its height. In concrete terms, this means accepting that Palestinian national self-determination can come only through the recognition of a Jewish state's right to exist with secure boundaries. The alternative is a downward spiral toward Armageddon which will not only reduce to ashes all prospects for human and social liberation in the region, but will also turn the redemptive visions of both Islam and Judaism into a hollow mockery. □

All They Are Saying

Milton Mankoff

For the first time ever, opinion polls have shown drugs to be Americans' primary concern. Accordingly, George Bush and Michael Dukakis act as if militant declarations of war on drugs will prove as politically fruitful as the cold war and domestic witch-hunting once did, with cocaine dealers substituting for Communists as the subverters of our way of life.

Both candidates call for increased drug education and treatment, but neither is willing to criticize the dominant supply-side policies directed against producers and dealers (for example, military interdiction and stiffer criminal penalties). These policies, which have widespread public support, have proven as counterproductive as the anti-Communist crusade.

Ironically, me-tooism and fist-waving on the campaign trail coincide with growing criticism of supply-side strategies by analysts who believe it wiser to legalize and regulate illicit drugs. Timothy Leary, hippies, and liberals concerned with upholding civil liberties and with not legislating against victimless crimes once monopolized the legalization stance; now William Buckley, Milton Friedman, and the editors of the *Economist* have come aboard.

A provocative debate on drug policy recently appeared in the neoconservative magazine the *Public Interest* (Summer 1988). Ethan Nadelmann s "The Case for Legalization" is based on the premise that supply-side strategies cannot succeed. Trafficking is an extraordinarily lucrative and relatively low-risk activity. Confiscations and lengthy jail terms may inhibit particular individuals from plying their trade, but, as was true during Prohibition, others will take their place.

Nadelmann argues that because the drug supply (especially of cocaine, the most profitable and easily hidden contraband) cannot be halted, the drug war wastes four billion tax dollars. In addition, criminalization is inadvertently responsible for violence and for inflated prices which subsidize organized crime.

Writing in the same issue, John Kaplan ("Taking Drugs Seriously") accepts Nadelmann's assessment of supply-side strategies but believes analogies to Prohibition are inappropriate. Alcohol use was more prevalent and socially accepted during Prohibition than drug use is now. Therefore, enforcing Prohibition was more burdensome than fighting today's war against drugs.

Kaplan does not view marijuana as a public health problem, and he notes that while heroin is dangerous, its use has declined dramatically. Cocaine use has also decreased recently, but it still is a far more popular drug than heroin. Kaplan is most concerned about whether the legalization of cocaine would cause a dramatic increase in its abuse. Although most psychopharmacologists feel that it poses more serious health dangers than heroin, cocaine enjoys a more benign image. Cheap and legal cocaine

Milton Mankoff is an associate professor of sociology at Queens College, City University of New York.

could greatly increase in popularity because, as double-blind experiments have shown, it is more pleasurable than heroin, it improves short-term mental and physical performance, and its use can readily be integrated into daily routines.

Nadelmann recognizes these problems but cites evidence showing that only 3 percent of eighteen to twenty-five-year-old cocaine users indulge weekly. Another study found that only 3.8 percent of high school seniors tried to stop their cocaine use and couldn't, compared to 7 percent of marijuana users and 18 percent of cigarette smokers.

Ultimately, Nadelmann supports the legal sale of government-produced, low-potency drugs to adults only. Tax revenues from sales would be used to expand treatment programs and promote credible educational programs.

Kaplan opts instead for demand-side enforcement measures that increase the user's social costs (for example, continued negative urinalysis results as a precondition for remaining out on bail, probation, or parole; and seizing autos of buyers). This strategy depends on the unproven ability of police to prevent mass-scale drug transactions. It also raises troubling questions about whether it is fair to punish nondealing users with jail, or to confiscate cars driven by users and their family members for legitimate activities. Moreover, as Kaplan admits, urinalysis is notoriously unreliable.

Bush and Dukakis oppose legalization. Only 16 percent of Americans approve of it. Nevertheless, the continuing failure of drug policies might create an atmosphere conducive to rethinking this stance. If so, the support of legalization by prominent conservatives could be critical in allaying public fears of radical policy changes, as was true in the case of détente with China and the Soviet Union.

Both for practical reasons and for the protection of civil liberties, those on the left should sympathize with legalization efforts. But they must also address a vital aspect of the drug problem that participants in the current debate have neglected: the social and cultural sources of America's romance with licit and illicit drugs. Our society's obsession with material success, performance, competition, and self-reliance has meant neglect of affiliative and spiritual needs. A mass psychology of self-blaming and self-denigration, coupled with frantic attempts to reassure ourselves the we are "OK," is the predictable outcome of a society that claims to allocate power, prestige, money, and human satisfactions according to a principle of merit. No wonder millions of Americans feel they require tobacco, caffeine, tranquilizers, and cocaine in order to function; or alcohol and heroin in order to escape from alienating social circumstances and to avoid self-reproach. Marijuana and alcohol use allows for deeper expressions of intimacy than are ordinarily socially sanctioned, and powerful psychedelics appeal to spiritual yearnings that often go unfulfilled by the contemporary forms of organized religion. To endorse legalization while ignoring these reasons for drug use is to give up on the possibility of creating a society in which people do not have to rely upon drugs to satisfy their fundamental psychological needs. □

LETTERS

(Continued from p. 6)

when history in the U.S. became a far more diverse enterprise. Handlin, however, rose to esteem and rank at a time when Jewish-American historians of stature were the rare exception. Hence Handlin has all the more reason to feel proud of his many accomplishments. The transformation of the profession of history in the United States during the past twenty-five years is a subject that awaits its scholar. I, for one, can think of no one better qualified to analyze the place and role of Jewish historians in that process than Moses Rischin. I would learn much if my dear friend chose to write an essay on the subject.

Israel

To the Editor:

Thank you for the comforting clarity of your recent editorials about the Palestinian rebellion. A few anecdotes may serve to substantiate the "deep personal crisis" you ascribe to many Jews in this country:

At my weekly Talmud class the other night, one of the men in the class threw into a discussion a remark about "the *brucha* you say for killing an Arab." It was a "joke," of course.

A friend recounted an exasperating conversation with someone who spoke to her of the rights of the Palestinian Arabs. "The Palestinians don't *have* any rights," she told me irritably, closing the book on them. She wasn't kidding.

An elderly relative said with a half laugh, "They should just kill them *all*." She may have been kidding, but a synagogue brother who said to me exactly the same words definitely wasn't.

A young Orthodox Jew, always a supporter of Israel, remarked with apathetic despair, "If Israel acts like this, I wouldn't much care if the country went down the drain."

Enough. Anecdotes are even easier to lie with than statistics. Nonetheless, the accumulation suggests to me that the corruption attendant on the occupation of the West Bank, of which *Tikkun* and many Israeli commentators have spoken, has now come home to roost on our far-flung shores as well. We are One, the Federation, for purposes of fund-raising, likes to remind us. For what other purposes, and with what more sinister consequences, are we also One?

How distressing it is to see so many Jews in thrall now to the Revisionist ideal of sovereignty over all of Eretz Israel, by force if necessary, *no matter what the cost*. Since the ascent of Begin to the Prime Minister's chair, many Jews have adopted his politics, choosing sides, without realizing it, in the old conflict between mainstream Zionism and Revisionism. Maybe they think that Jewish "loyalty" requires it of them, now that the Revisionists are in power.

I too believe that all of Eretz Israel, from the sea to the Jordan, belongs to the Jews. But I have also come to believe, like *Tikkun*, that we are going to have to give up part of the land (bitter though that tastes) and allow the Palestinians self-determination in order to preserve democracy and humane values in Israel.

I don't like it. It is sickening indeed to contemplate a gloating Yassir Arafat at the head of a Palestinian state. And yet that seems to me the price we will have to pay for our own survival.

But no great loss without some small gain, as the saying goes. After settling with the Palestinians, we can turn to the *really* hard work that challenges our generation: dealing with the hatred that exists between Jews. I sometimes wonder, in fact, if we have unconsciously allowed the Palestinian problem to fester for so long precisely in order to avoid facing ourselves and learning to live together.

David Margolis
Contributing Editor
Los Angeles Jewish Journal
Los Angeles, California

To the Editor:

American Jews do have a special responsibility, more than that of the whole world, "to tell Israel unequivocally that the occupation cannot continue." There are two reasons for this, and both of them are economic. One is that the American Jewish community has been a mainstay of Israel for its entire existence. We've planted trees and bought Israel bonds. The other is that the Israeli occupation could not continue for one more week—maybe not for one more day—without U.S. military aid (which makes Shultz's "peacemaking" efforts cynical to say the least). Certainly all U.S. taxpayers should write to their senators and representatives demanding an end to military aid to Israel until the occupation ends—but because policymakers so often claim to have the support of the American Jewish community for *all* aid to any Israeli government, Jews who oppose this policy have an even more special responsibility to speak out.

This does not absolve us of the same responsibility with regard to South Africa, Central America, and other areas where the U.S. government's role has been to subvert peace and justice—but rather means that we must apply the same standards to Israel that we do to the rest of the world and show the interconnections between the atrocities of the occupation and the injustices and threats to world peace.

Millea Kenin
Oakland, California

Peace & Democracy News

The Bulletin of the Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West

IN THE CURRENT ISSUE:

Cathy Fitzpatrick on Independent Movements in the USSR

Anne Manuel on El Salvador

Gays in Eastern Europe by Doug Ireland

Ben Webb on Post-INF Europe

Judith Hempfling on the Break-up of "Prague 88"

Changes from Above and from Below in the Soviet Union by Daniel Singer

plus features on Israel and the Palestinians, Rumania and more.

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Annually: $5.00 Individual, $10.00 Institution

Campaign for Peace and Democracy/ East and West
P.O. Box 1640, Cathedral Station
New York, N.Y. 10025
Telephone (212) 724-1157

ADDICTIONS

(Continued from p. 16)

A *psychological* theory about the deforming effects of society is not obligated, of course, to account also for the underlying social factors themselves. Nevertheless, a psychological theory should not be *incompatible* with such a broader analysis. Modern medicine can valuably study the effects of a virus on a particular cell, but its theories of how and why the cell is changed shouldn't be incompatible with what we know about the immune system. Similarly, one's psychological explanatory concepts should elucidate the subjective dimension of a problem in a way that complements and enriches the social dimension—and vice versa. The addiction model fails to play this role, since a disease model is intrinsically ahistorical and asocial. The dialectical tension between one's inner desires and needs and the social world is lost in a theory that views problems such as masochism and dependency simply as symptoms of an illness.

The explanatory account of addictive relationships is superficial and flawed not only in its social dimension, but also in its psychological understanding. A deeper analysis of the so-called ACA or WWL2M profile reveals a more complex picture than the one presented by Norwood and Woititz. It has become clear to me from my clinical experience with patients who fit the profile of relationship addicts that the kind of self-sacrifice that the ACA and relationship-addict literature highlights can and usually does have numerous etiologies. The child may mother her mother in order not to experience her hatred for her mother, her wish to separate from her mother, or her profound disappointment in her mother's weakness. She may feel guilty about a secret and selfish wish that her mother die so that she, the daughter, can get on with her life; and she may deal with this wish through an overcompensating solicitousness or self-denial. She may, as Norwood herself admits, "parent" the mother in order to defend against uncomfortable sexual feelings. She may settle for being needed because being loved represents a triumph of symbolic parricide, about which she feels guilty, or a threatening separation. The point is that there are many layers of desire and fantasy, many sentiments that the traits described are designed to deny, repress, or otherwise ward off. We have darker sides for which we feel deeply culpable, ways of being or desiring that we unconsciously associate with danger—to ourselves and/or our loved ones—and for which we feel profound responsibility.

The ACA and WWL2M literature has a way of flattening out childhood experience, of referring to vague "needs" for love, nurturance, and respect that then somehow get perverted. It doesn't address childhood passions, primitive aggressions, grandiosity, exhibitionism, con-

tempt, and the urge to separate—feelings that the ACA and WWL2M may feel guilty about and that often lie at the heart of the self-destructive behavior that we as clinicians see. For instance, at some point in early development, the child confronts the limits of her or his own power and influence. S/he becomes aware of the fact that others have lives of their own that s/he cannot completely control. Such a discovery, though it marks a developmental achievement, can be traumatic for the child, constituting what in psychoanalytic theory is called a narcissistic injury. Commonly, the child reacts with rage, among other emotions. Eventually the child comes to confront the imperfection of the parents as well, which can also be traumatic. The child may react to this disappointment with contempt, and s/he may devalue the parents. These feelings—rage, disappointment, contempt, and devaluation—are frequently so extreme that the child worries that they might damage or disrupt the relationship with the parents.

When the feelings and danger are great enough, symptoms result. So, for example, the patient might become self-abnegating in order to protect the loved one from her or his own disappointment and contempt. The child—and later the adult—*knows* that s/he has secret wishes to enslave the other, to get revenge for feeling helpless, to devalue others so as not to be disappointed in them. Patients unconsciously "know" what they feel, even though they don't always know why they feel it; and being told that they *really* desire quite reasonable and valid things can offer only a temporary respite from guilt and anxiety. The addiction-model literature too quickly and superficially exonerates the child within us without appreciating the deeper ways that we feel like criminals. It is simply not enough to tell people that feeling responsible and guilty is unnecessary or destructive. The childhood theories of cause and effect, the early experiences of guilt for powerful passions and fantasies, and the absolute dependence of the child on the parent cannot be corrected by cognitive rehearsal, injunctions to take care of oneself, or group permission and encouragement to be autonomous. Instead, these interventions often run up against the wall of deeply unconscious guilt, which is frequently exacerbated by a demonstration of support and kindness. Every clinician knows that simply telling a masochist that s/he is good and not bad often only heightens the masochist's inner feelings of unworthiness. Such encouragement misses the boat because it doesn't connect with the person's actual subjective experience. After all, the principal sentiment underlying unconscious guilt is that one doesn't *deserve* to be loved or told that one is essentially normal and good. The addiction models are not able to comprehend this resistance because their analysis of the cause of the problem is at the level of behavior, habit, and conscious thought patterns.

Just as the addiction model inappropriately exonerates the child, thereby offering short-term relief from guilt while leaving untouched deeper feelings of badness, it also, ironically, exonerates the parents and again offers its devotees a superficial and easy way out of an intolerable psychological dilemma. The parents, after all, are victims of a disease themselves; and, although the WWL2M and the ACA are taught on the one hand to put the blame back on the parents, they are told on the other hand that no one in the family can be blamed since the entire system is in the grips of a pathological process that nobody can control. It is easiest for the child to believe that the parents were ultimately helpless in their sadism, neglect, or extreme narcissism, since the most frightening reality the child may be frantically trying to deny is that the parental hatred, neglect, or narcissism were real and intentional. Saying "of course your father beat you; he was an alcoholic," or "of course your mother seemed to barely know you were alive; she was drunk half the time and during the other half was denying it," has the subtle effect of suggesting that somehow the child's parents couldn't "help" it and therefore, in their heart of hearts, couldn't have really meant it. Such a claim is extremely relieving to the "child-within" for whom the reality of the parental hatred or egocentrism was intolerable. The addiction literature thus supports our defensive need to distort certain realities.

But the relief that this literature provides is not the same as really curing us. It rarely does the trick because we unconsciously know better. We unconsciously "know" that our injuries as children were often intended by parents who *really* used or abused us, however much we might labor to deny it.

A more subtle version of the same maneuver runs something like this: "Your parents hated you, not because you were really bad or because they were intrinsically evil, but because they were victims of a destructive social order." I would argue that this message also reinforces denial. At the hypothetical moment when one would have to face the terror and pain of remembering and experiencing one's parents' real hatred, one conveniently "understands" the parent as a cipher expressing a social and thus more anonymous form of attack or neglect. The switch to a social analysis, much like the switch to a view of parent-as-addict, might be factually or theoretically correct, but it is still *used* as a way to get someone off the hook. Placing responsibility on the social order can at certain moments be as pathological as falsely blaming oneself for what is really a social problem. After all, our parents were no more imprisoned

by their social world or their addictions than we are. They had at least some small area of choice and freedom within which they could have resisted their conditioning. And we as children intuitively understand this fact, and therefore we secretly resist, even while manifestly welcoming, any theory that makes our families—or ourselves—completely innocent.

Only a theory that views people as simultaneously responsible agents and socially powerless, as intentional yet conditioned, as making their own history but not under conditions of their own choosing—only such a theory can adequately analyze the causes of problems that the addiction literature addresses. The disease model eventually exonerates everyone, but the cost is theoretical and therapeutic superficiality.

Given this broader and more complex understanding of how and why we feel responsible for our disabled parents, we can see that we repeat this behavior in adult life not simply in order to master it, as Norwood suggests, or merely because it's "learned behavior," as Woititz argues. Rather, ACAs pick alcoholic mates and WWL2M find men with whom they can repeat their childhood "parenting" roles in order to continue to avoid experiencing dangerous childhood feelings and coming to terms with traumatic truths about their loved ones. They feel guilt and responsibility in order *not* to feel rage, contempt, disappointment, loss, and separation—all of which are imagined to be (because they once were) overwhelming and intolerable. They sometimes even feel guilty about superficial inadequacies in order *not* to feel *really* guilty about deeper crimes.

One can see, then, how the messages of these books can both facilitate and retard psychological growth. On the one hand, the reader is exonerated from any wrongdoing; permission is given for the emergence of "some" of the warded-off feelings and desires ("It's OK to put yourself number one and to be selfish"). Group support for these changes further dilutes the burdensome sense of individual responsibility. On the other hand, many feelings and wishes for which we feel pathologically responsible either are *not* addressed or are glossed over by this literature. Sadistic wishes to turn the tables on our addicted parents and the realization that our parents might have hated us regardless of their alcoholism are examples of feelings and perceptions that are *not* addressed but that can have powerful psychological impact. People who are dimly aware of such feelings might be temporarily relieved by the focus on the child's and parents' helplessness as well as by the attack on self-blaming contained in this paradigm, but they also often feel misunderstood—or else they eventually reject this approach altogether. The message of this model has to be continually reinforced because often it is secretly not believed.

AGADA
אגדה

Illustrated Jewish Literary Magazine
presents issue *Kaf*/"Memory"



Stories, poetry, midrash, memoir, art
Subscription $12 Single copy $7.50
AGADA/Dept. T
2020 Essex Street, Berkeley, CA 94703

Finally, the message often can't be fully internalized because it doesn't and can't address the deep *attachment* that people have to their guilt and self-destructiveness. Masochism always involves an attachment to a frustrating or destructive figure and a corresponding compulsion to deny real feelings and perceptions. The explanatory power of psychoanalytic theory comes from its recognition that the child's unique prolonged period of one-sided dependence and attachment to the parent means that all of the child's passions, drives, and fantasies must be shaped in such a way as to maintain this relationship. The danger of losing the other is catastrophic, and all the psychological symptoms that are described by the addiction literature—including masochism, guilt, and distortions of responsibility—must ultimately be understood as compromised ways of maintaining a psychological relationship with the other. For this reason, "giving up" one's addiction is like giving up a friend or a loved one, with the exact same danger—of being alone—looming ominously. The fact that relationship "addicts" feel that they are in the grips of compulsion is often taken at face value by the addiction theorists and not recognized as disguised desire and attachment.

In terms of providing therapy, the effect of this literature and of increased consciousness about addiction has been to create the illusion that a therapist must somehow have special training in treating addicts in order to treat someone with a relationship addiction. Since, according to this model, almost everyone seems to suffer from a "relationship addiction," the implication is that this "specialized" knowledge base should be standard fare in the training of all psychotherapists. Thus, we have an explosion of training seminars, conferences, and workshops that purport to teach the

"special" skills needed to work with someone with these kinds of symptoms. Further, since the ACA and WWL2M models encourage the group approach and shorter-term focused therapy, this movement dovetails nicely with the current emphasis in mental health—created primarily by fiscal constraints and by requirements of third-party payers, insurance companies, and the like—on treatment that requires less time and money.

The costs of such an approach are profound, even if they are not instantly obvious. Therapists lose confidence in their ability to treat people they used to think they knew how to treat since they become convinced that these more focused problems require a "specialist." As a result, we see an increase in specialization where the patient is steered to this "expert" on ACAs or that "expert" on relationship addictions.

This therapeutic approach splits off parts of the self as if these parts were curable without treating the whole person, and it invites the person seeking help to have magical expectations of the therapy. In the process, various forms of collusion develop that enable the patient and therapist to avoid really investigating the patient's unique inner experience. Finally, since many clients feel confused about their "identities," being labeled can prove comforting.

As this new language of addictions becomes part of our daily discourse, including the discourse of psychotherapy, labels and catchphrases substitute for real understanding and analysis. A patient will say, "That's my ACA stuff," and invite the therapist to collude under the reassuring pretense that this phrase explains something important, when in actuality it reflects the patient's desire *not* to analyze what s/he is really feeling. Once again, short-term relief is purchased at the cost of long-term cure and insight.

Granted, many people have felt understood and helped by the addiction-model books and by the educational and therapeutic interventions that these books have spawned. As a result of this literature and this new awareness, many people have come out of the closet of personal suffering and self-destructive relationships—which should be seen as a positive step.

My purpose here has not been to argue that individual depth psychotherapy is the "correct" alternative to the addiction model therapy, but simply to articulate the latter's limitations. While psychoanalytic theory has a great deal to say about the intrapsychic and interpersonal causes of self-destructive behavior and compulsions, I am not advocating undergoing psychoanalysis as the ultimate or only "real" cure. Nevertheless, we must recognize that even if self-help groups and therapies based on addiction models sometimes work to help people feel better, it does not necessarily follow that their understanding of the cause of the problem or of the treatment process is correct. My purpose has been to use both psychoanalytic and critical social theory to explore the limited psychological and social *meanings* of the addiction model. Sometimes the consequences of this model may be therapeutic change that is superficial or deadlocked, but this is not the crux of my concern. More important, this model mystifies the client, the therapist, and the psychological and social theorist, ignoring the depth and complexity of the real problem. The broader social world is made opaque, the family becomes one-dimensional, and intrapsychic conflict is flattened out.

Psychological traits, neurotic suffering, and relationship conflicts reflect the influence of social and historical processes. At the same time, the changes in family and social structure and in relations between the sexes—changes that have shaped Norwood's and Woititz's dysfunctional families—have to be described in conjunction with a parallel exploration of the internal and subjective dimension of people's lives. This process involves asking questions about the relationship between subjective experience and broader social change. Why, for example, do we respond to changes in the social, economic, and psychological status of men and women, of mothers and fathers, by developing so-called relationship addictions? Psychoanalytic theory is best equipped to answer such questions, since it is a theory of the subject—of a desiring, wishing, feeling individual—and as such it is able to sketch this internal landscape richly and in depth. We need to have a model for understanding behavior that can expand in both directions, inside and outside. The addiction model blocks both movements. It renders both the internal and the social world ultimately mysterious, and therefore it is inadequate. □

BEING ONLY HUMAN

(Continued from p. 18)

> B. Important exercise for strengthening your vocabulary: Try to use the words "sin," "vice," or "virtue" at least once a day *in some other context than diet or exercise.*

We need to stop trashing ourselves and apologizing for the best things we have ever done or tried to do. Instead, we must accept ourselves as imperfect but nonetheless worthy and potentially effective people who have the right to be judged and—if we choose—rewarded by the same standards as anybody else. We have to stop denigrating ourselves and one another for imperfections we would never even notice in a sinner or a Republican. That way lies burnout. Above all, we need to recognize the lesson of Shabbat: that we—all of us struggling human beings who are trying in one

way or another to bring the messianic age to our homes, our families, our communities, our nations, our planet—have the right to a regularly experienced foretaste, in our ordinary lives, of what we are ultimately struggling for. □

THE NEW HISTORIOGRAPHY

(Continued from p. 23)

came about has been the subject of heated controversy between Israeli and Arab propagandists for the past four decades. The controversy is as much about the nature of Zionism as it is about what exactly happened in 1948. If the Arab contention is true—that the Yishuv had always intended "transfer" and that in 1948 it systematically and forcibly expelled the Arab population from the areas that became the Jewish state—then Israel is a robber state that, like young Jacob, has won the sympathy and support of its elders in the West by trickery and connivance, and the Palestinians are more or less innocent victims. If, on the other hand, the Israeli propaganda line is accepted—that the Palestinians fled "voluntarily" or at the behest of their own and other Arab leaders—then Israel is free of original sin.

As I have set out in great detail in *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949,* the truth lies somewhere in between. While from the mid-1930s most of the Yishuv's leaders, including Ben-Gurion, wanted to establish a Jewish state without an Arab minority, or with as small an Arab minority as possible, and supported a "transfer solution" to this minority problem, the Yishuv did not enter the 1948 war with a master plan for expelling the Arabs, nor did its political and military leaders ever adopt such a master plan. There were Haganah/IDF expulsions of Arab communities, some of them with Haganah/IDF General Staff and/or cabinet-level sanction—such as at Miska and Ad-Dumeira in April 1948; at Zarnuqa, Al-Qubeiba, and Huj in May; in Lydda and Ramle in July; and along the Lebanese border (Bir'im, Iqrit, Tarbikha, Suruh, Al-Mansura, and Nabi Rubin) in early November. But there was no grand or blanket policy of expulsions.

On the other hand, at no point during the war did Arab leaders issue a blanket call for Palestine's Arabs to leave their homes and villages and wander into exile. Nor was there an Arab radio or press campaign urging or ordering the Palestinians to flee. Indeed, I have found no trace of any such broadcasts—and throughout the war the Arab radio stations and other press were monitored by the Israeli intelligence services and Foreign Ministry, and by Western diplomatic stations and agencies (such as the BBC). No contemporary reference to or citation from such a broadcast, let alone from a series of such broadcasts, has ever surfaced.

Indeed, in early May 1948 when, according to Israeli propaganda and some of the old histories, such a campaign of broadcasts should have been at its height, in preparation for the pan-Arab invasion, Arab radio stations and leaders (Radio Ramallah, King Abdullah, and Arab Liberation Army commander Qawuqji) all issued broadcasts calling upon the Palestinians to stay put and, if already in exile, to return to their homes in Palestine. References to these broadcasts exist in Haganah, Mapam, and British records.

Occasionally, local Arab commanders and/or politicians ordered the evacuation of women and children from war zones. Less frequently, as in Haifa on April 22, 1948, local Arab leaders advised or instructed their communities to leave rather than stay in a potential or actual war zone or "treacherously" remain under Jewish rule. But there were no Arab blanket orders or campaigns to leave.

Rather, in order to understand the exodus of the 600,000 to 760,000 Arabs from the areas that became the post-1948 Jewish state, one must look to a variety of related processes and causes. What happened in Haifa is illustrative of the complexity of the exodus (though it too does not convey the full complexity of what transpired in the various regions of Palestine at the time).

The exodus from Haifa (which initially had an Arab population of seventy thousand), as from the other main Arab Palestinian centers, Jaffa and Jerusalem, began in December 1947 with the start of sporadic hostilities between the various Jewish and Arab neighborhoods. The exodus slowly gained momentum during the following months as the British Mandate administration moved toward dissolution and final withdrawal. The first to go were the rich and the educated—the middle classes with second homes on the Beirut beachfront, in Nablus or Amman, or those who had either relatives abroad with large homes or enough money to stay in hotels for long periods. The Palestinians' political and economic leadership disappeared. By mid-May 1948, only one member of the Arab Higher Committee, the Palestinians' shadow government, was still in the country.

The flight of the professionals, the civil servants, the traders, and the businessmen had a harsh impact on the Haifa Arab masses, who already were demoralized by the continual sniping and bomb attacks, by the feeling that the Jews were stronger, and by the sense that their own ragtag militia would fail when the test came (as, indeed, it did). The Arabs felt terribly isolated and insecure—Arab Haifa was far from other major Arab population centers and was easily cut off by Jewish settlements along the approach roads. Businesses and

workshops closed, policemen shed their uniforms and left their posts, Arab workers could no longer commute to jobs in Jewish areas, and agricultural produce was interdicted in ambushes on the approach roads to the city. Unemployment and prices soared. Thousands of people left.

Then came the Haganah attack of April 21 to April 22 on the Arab districts. Several companies of Carmeli Brigade troops, under cover of constant mortar fire, drove down the Carmel mountain slopes into the Arab downtown areas. Arab militia resistance collapsed. Thousands of Arabs fled from the outlying Arab neighborhoods (such as Wadi Rushmiya and Hailssa) into the British-controlled port area, piled into boats, and fled northward to Acre. The leaders who remained sued for a cease-fire. Under British mediation, the Haganah agreed, offering what the British regarded as generous terms. But then, when faced with Moslem pressure, the Arab leaders, most of them Christian Arabs, got cold feet; a cease-fire meant surrender and implied agreement to live under Jewish rule. They would be open to charges of collaboration and treachery. So, to the astonishment of the British officers and the Jewish military and political leaders gathered on the afternoon of April 22 at the Haifa town hall, the Arab delegation announced that its community would evacuate the city.

The Jewish mayor, Shabtai Levy, and the British commander, Maj. Gen. Hugh Stockwell, pleaded with the Arabs to reconsider. The Haganah representative, Mordechai Makleff, declined to voice an opinion. But the Arabs were unmoved, and the mass exodus, which had begun under the impact of the Haganah mortars and ground assault, moved into top gear, with the British supplying boats and armored car escorts to the departing Arab convoys. From April 22 to May 1, almost all the Arab population departed. The rough treatment—temporary evictions, house-to-house searches, detentions, the occasional beating—meted out to the remaining population during those days by the Haganah and the IZL (Irgun Zvai Leumi) troops who occupied the downtown areas led many of the undecided also to opt for evacuation. By early May, the city's Arab population had dwindled to three or four thousand.

The bulk of the Palestinian refugees—some 250,000 to 300,000—went into exile during those weeks between April and mid-June 1948, with the major precipitant being Jewish (Haganah/IZL) military attack or fears of such attack. In most cases, the Jewish commanders, who wanted to occupy empty villages (occupying populated villages meant leaving behind a garrison, which the units could not afford to do), were hardly ever confronted with deciding whether or not to expel an overrun community: Most villages and towns simply emptied at the first whiff of grapeshot.

In conformity with Tokhnit Dalet (Plan D), the Haganah's master plan, formulated in March 1948, for securing the Jewish state areas in preparation for the expected declaration of statehood and the prospective Arab invasion, the Haganah cleared various areas completely of Arab villages—in the Jerusalem corridor, around Kibbutz Mishmar Ha'emek, and along the coast road. But in most cases, expulsion orders were not necessary; the inhabitants had already fled, out of fear or as a result of Jewish attack. In several areas, Israeli commanders successfully used psychological warfare ploys ("Here's some friendly advice. You better get out now, before the Jews come and rape your daughters.") to obtain Arab evacuation.

The prewar basic structural weaknesses of Palestinian society led to the dissolution of that society when the test of battle came. Lack of administrative structures, as well as weak leaders, poor or nonexistent military organization beyond the single-village level, and faulty or nonexistent taxation mechanisms, all caused the main towns to fall apart in April and May 1948. The fall of the towns and the exodus from them, in turn, brought a sense of fear and despondency to the rural hinterlands. Traditionally, the villages, though economically autarchic, had looked to the towns for political leadership and guidance. The evacuation by the middle classes and the leaders, as well as the fall of the towns, provided the Palestinians in the hinterlands with an example to emulate. Safad's fall and evacuation on May 10 and May 11, for example, triggered an immediate evacuation of the surrounding Arab villages; so, earlier, did the fall of Haifa and the IZL assault on Jaffa.

Seen from the Jewish side, the spectacle of mass Arab evacuation certainly triggered appetites for more of the same: Everyone, at every level of military and political decision-making, understood that a Jewish state without a large Arab minority would be stronger and more viable both militarily and politically. Therefore, the tendency of local military commanders to "nudge" Palestinians into flight increased as the war went on. Jewish atrocities—far more widespread than the old historians have indicated (there were massacres of Arabs at Ad-Dawayima, Eilaboun, Jish, Safsaf, Hule, Saliha, and Sasa besides Deir Yassin and Lydda)—and the drive to avenge past Arab wrongs also contributed significantly to the exodus.

The last major fallacy tackled incidentally or directly by the new historians concerns an Israel that in 1948 to 1949 was bent on making peace with its neighbors, and an Arab world that monolithically rejected all such peace efforts. The evidence that Israel's leaders were not desperate to make peace and

were unwilling to make the large concessions necessary to give peace a chance is overwhelming. In Tel Aviv, there was a sense of triumph and drunkenness that accompanied victory—a feeling that the Arabs would "soon" or "eventually" sue for peace, that there was no need to rush things or make concessions, that ultimately military victory and dominance would translate into diplomatic-political success.

As Ben-Gurion told an American journalist in mid-July 1949: "I am prepared to get up in the middle of the night in order to sign a peace agreement—but I am not in a hurry and I can wait ten years. We are under no pressure whatsoever." Or, as Ben-Gurion records Abba Eban's telling him: "[Eban] sees no need to run after peace. The armistice is sufficient for us; if we run after peace, the Arabs will demand a price of us—borders [i.e., in terms of territory] or refugees [i.e., repatriation] or both. Let us wait a few years."

As Pappe puts it in *Britain:* "... Abdullah's eagerness [to make peace] was not reciprocated by the Israelis. The priorities of the state of Israel had changed during 1949. The armistice agreements brought relative calm to the borders, and peace was no longer the first priority. The government was preoccupied with absorbing new immigrants and overcoming economic difficulties."

Israel's lack of emphasis on achieving peace was manifested most clearly in the protracted (1949–51) secret negotiations with Abdullah. Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett described his meeting with Transjordan's king at the palace in Shuneh on May 5, 1949, in the following way: "Transjordan said—we are ready for peace immediately. We said—certainly, we too want peace but one shouldn't rush, one should walk." Israel and Jordan signed an armistice agreement, after much arm-twisting by Israel, which British and American diplomats compared to Hitler's treatment of the Czechs in 1938 to 1939. (As Abdullah put it, quoting an old Turkish saying: "If you meet a bear when crossing a rotten bridge, call her 'dear Auntie'.") But the two sides never signed a peace treaty or a nonbelligerence agreement—something that was proposed at one point by Abdullah.

Shlaim—who in *Collusion* expands the description of the secret Israeli-Jordanian negotiations first provided in Dan Schueftan's *Ha'Optziya Ha'Yardenit* (The Jordanian option), published in Hebrew in Israel in 1986—more or less lays the blame for the failed negotiations squarely on Israel's shoulders. A more generous, less anti-Israeli interpretation of the evidence would blame the Israelis and the Jordanians equally.

Israel refused to offer major concessions in terms of refugee repatriation or territory (Abdullah was particularly keen on getting back Lydda and Ramle) and was for too long unwilling to offer Jordan a sovereign corridor through its territory to the sea at Gaza. Throughout, Israel was prodded if not guided by the "blatant expansionism" of some of Ben-Gurion's aides, such as Moshe Dayan. As Yehoshafat Harkabi, one of Dayan's military colleagues, put it (according to Shlaim): "The existential mission of the State of Israel led us to be demanding and acquisitive, and mindful of the value of every square metre of land." In any case, Ben-Gurion refused to meet Abdullah, and the Israeli leaders often spoke of Abdullah with undeserved contempt.

Shlaim writes that "two principal factors were responsible for the failure of the postwar negotiations: Israel's strength and Abdullah's weakness." Nevertheless, Shlaim seems to attribute too much weight to the first and too little to the second. Shlaim does not sufficiently acknowledge the importance of the "Palestinization" of Jordan following the Hashemite annexation of the West Bank, which quickly resulted in a curtailment of Abdullah's autonomy and his freedom of political movement both within Jordan and in the Arab world in general. The twin pressures exercised by the Arab world outside and by his successive cabinets inside the kingdom successfully impeded Abdullah's ability to make a separate peace with Israel. He almost did so a number of times, but he always held back at the last moment and refused to take the plunge. It is possible, Shlaim argues, that more generous concessions by Tel Aviv at certain critical points in the negotiations would have given Abdullah greater motivation to pursue peace as well as the ammunition he needed to silence his anti-peace critics, but the truth of such a claim is uncertain. What is clear is that Abdullah, though showing remarkable courage throughout, simply felt unable in those last years to go against the unanimous or near-unanimous wishes of his ministers and against the unanimous anti-peace stand of the surrounding Arab world.

What happened with Abdullah occurred in miniature and more briefly with Egypt and with Syria. In September to October 1948, Egypt's King Farouk, knowing that the war was lost, secretly sent a senior court official to Paris to sound out Israel on the possibility of a peace based on Israeli cession of parts of the Negev and the Gaza Strip to Egypt. Sharett and the senior staff at the Foreign Ministry favored continued negotiations, but Ben-Gurion—bent on a further round of hostilities to drive the Egyptian army out of the Negev—flatly rejected the overture. Shlaim summarizes: "[Ben-Gurion] may have been right in thinking that nothing of substance would come out of these talks. But he surely owed his cabinet colleagues at least a report on what had taken place so that they could review their decision to go [again] to war against Egypt on the basis of all the relevant information." New Egyptian peace overtures

in November, after Israel's Operation Yoav, again came to naught.

As for Syria, in May 1949, its new ruler, Husni Za'im, made major peace proposals which included recognition of Israel as well as Syrian readiness to absorb hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. Za'im wanted Israel to concede a sliver of territory along the Jordan River. He asked to meet with Ben-Gurion or Sharett. Again, Ben-Gurion rejected the proposal, writing on May 12: "I am quite prepared to meet Colonel Za'im in order to promote peace ... but I see no purpose in any such meeting as long as the representatives of Syria in the armistice negotiations do not declare in an unequivocal manner that their forces are prepared to withdraw to their prewar territory [i.e., withdraw from the small Syrian-occupied Mishmar Ha'yarden salient, west of the Jordan]."

Continued feelers by Za'im resulted again in Israeli refusal. As Sharett put it on May 25: "It is clear that we ... won't agree that any bit of the Land of Israel be transferred to Syria, because this is a question of control over the water sources [i.e., of the Jordan River]." Shabtai Rosenne, the legal adviser at the Foreign Ministry, put it simply: "I feel that the need for an agreement between Israel and Syria pressed more heavily on the Syrians." Therefore, why rush toward peace? A few weeks later Za'im was overthrown and executed, and the Syrian peace initiative died with him. Whether the overture was serious or merely tactical—to obtain Western sympathy and funds, for example—is unclear. What is certain is that Israel failed to pursue it.

What was true of Israel's one-to-one contacts with each of the Arab states was true also of its negotiations with the Arabs under UN auspices at Lausanne in the spring and summer of 1949. There, too, Israel was ungenerous (though, needless to say, the Arabs were equally obdurate). For months, UN officials and the U.S. pressed Israel to make what they felt might be the redemptive gesture: to proclaim its willingness to take back several hundred thousand refugees. As the months dragged on and Israel remained inflexible, the Arabs became just as obstinate. When, at last, Israel offered to take back "one hundred thousand" which, in reality, as Sharett explained to his colleagues, was only sixty-five thousand (Sharett told his colleagues in Mapai that some thirty-five thousand refugees had already returned to Israel illegally or were about to return as part of the family reunification scheme, and these refugees would be deducted from the one hundred thousand), it was a case of too little too late. And Israel's more realistic offer—to take the Gaza Strip with its resident and refugee populations—was never seriously entertained by Egypt. Lausanne was probably the last chance for a comprehensive Israeli-Arab peace.

In Pirkei Avot it is written: "Rabbi Shimon Ben Gamliel was wont to say: On three things the world rests: On justice, on truth and on peace" (1:18). And he would quote Zechariah: "... execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates" (8:16). Telling the truth thus seems to be an injunction anchored in Jewish tradition, and the scriptures apparently link truth to peace in some indeterminate manner.

The new history is one of the signs of a maturing Israel (though, no doubt, there are those who say it is a symptom of decay and degeneration). What is now being written about Israel's past seems to offer us a more balanced and a more "truthful" view of that country's history than what has been offered hitherto. It may also in some obscure way serve the purposes of peace and reconciliation between the warring tribes of that land. □

BERURIAH

(Continued from p. 32)

sexual one. Women could create great disorder with their rampant sexuality. Not only did this sexuality function as a metaphor for the disequilibrating potential of female power, but it represented to the rabbis all that is untamable, unpredictable, and lawless in human beings.

Two closely related stories about Beruriah address the problem of sexuality—one, a talmudic narrative; the other, an addendum by the eleventh-century commentator Rashi, recounting the scandal of Beruriah's death. An analysis of these two stories will show both how the rabbis tried to break context and how they failed.

The talmudic narrative begins by recounting the martyrdom of Hananyah ben Teradyon at the hands of the Romans. Hananyah himself is burned, his wife is exiled, and his daughter is sentenced to serve as a prostitute. But when the talmudic evolution of the legend fused Hananyah's daughter with Beruriah, identified as the wife of Meir, the story of her consignment to a brothel required major adjustments.

The motif of the virgin in the brothel (generally treated with lip-smacking salaciousness lightly overlaid with pathos) was a popular theme in Latin literature and was easily accessible to Jewish writers. It did, however, both from the Roman and from the Jewish point of view, require a virgin. Were Rabbi Meir's wife to sojourn in a brothel, however briefly, the legal questions about the status of her marriage would be no laughing matter. Hence, Tractate Avoda Zara endows Beruriah with a sister who is sentenced to the brothel and rescued by Rabbi Meir in the course of a picaresque narration that explores the connections between sexuality and power.

The narrative is set in motion by Beruriah. "I am ashamed that my sister sits in a brothel," she tells her husband. So Meir goes to Rome and, disguised as a Roman legionnaire, tests the chastity of his imprisoned sister-in-law. Because she passes the test, he redeems her from the apprehensive procurer, teaching him the magic plea "O God of Meir, answer me!" which ultimately saves the procurer from execution.

Meir evades his pursuers more farcically. In one version, he darts into a pagan temple, where he pretends to eat from the idolatrous feast ("He dipped in one finger and sucked another"). In a second version, Meir enters a brothel where Elijah the Prophet, conveniently disguised as a whore, appears to him and embraces him in order to throw the pursuers off the track. They see Rabbi Meir but are convinced it is not he. "Heaven forbid that Rabbi Meir would act like this!" they exclaim.

After her removal from the brothel, Beruriah's sister disappears from the narrative. She is never mentioned again in this or any other text. The story ends with Meir's flight to Babylonia because of an unspecified incident about Beruriah.

What have we here? The fugue-like structure with its dissolves and transformations reminds us of a dream, but if it is a dream, it is a political one—a dream about power and the presentation of the self. Both the woman in the brothel and her rescuer are endangered because they are Jews allied with or related to other Jews in resistance to the empire that governs them. Both are faced with situations where, to preserve their lives, they must pretend to be what they are not; while to preserve their integrity, they must not be what they pretend. The captive in the brothel must seem to be a whore, but she must also defend her chastity against her clients. The fugitive must evade his pursuers' attempts to unmask him as an outlawed Jew, but he must behave like a saintly rabbi.

The pretense inherent in the experience of oppression is dramatically expressed in the setting of the brothel. Only the metaphor of the sexual embrace between whore and client can convey so powerfully the sense of intrusion and humiliation, of involuntary collusion with the oppressor, of merger. To be in the oppressor's power but not yet to have yielded to his will is to be a virgin in a brothel.

At the outset of the story, Rabbi Meir has gone to rescue a virgin from a brothel. Disguised as his own oppressor, a Roman legionnaire, he tries to conquer a trapped woman. Under the disguise is Jewish power. Meir the wonder-rabbi can provide a terrified procurer with an incantation that will shield him from all attack.

But as the story progresses, power is stripped away. Meir the sham Roman must flee the real Romans. Transformed from oppressor to oppressed, and unable to save himself with miracles, he must appear to compromise himself, but resist internally. Meir, too, becomes a virgin in a brothel.

The rules in Rabbi Meir's brothel are less stringent than those in his sister-in-law's, however. Unlike the woman whose chastity he tested so rigorously, Rabbi Meir can actually participate in the forbidden act and emerge innocent: In his brothel, the sexual aggressor is, providentially, Elijah. Moreover, Meir is allowed to contrive his own escape. The loopholes reflect a context in which male sexual temptations are more sympathetically viewed, and in which men have greater freedom of action and mobility.

What can such a story reflect if not an attempt by the sages to draw an analogy between their own experience of marginality and stigma in an often hostile empire, and women's vulnerability and powerlessness under patriarchal institutions?

The episode breaks off with both Rabbi Meir and his sister-in-law in limbo. Escape brings neither security nor relief. Meir is forced into a new flight, a new exile. The fragmentary structure of the episode mirrors the failure of the story's transmitters to reach some resolution, to bring it home. And, they hint, something to do with Beruriah has made "home" proscribed.

The eleventh-century commentator Rashi offers the following explanation for Rabbi Meir's exile to Babylonia:

> Once Beruriah mocked the rabbinic dictum, "Women are flighty" [i.e., easily seduceable]. Meir said, "By your life! You will end by affirming their words." He commanded one of his students to tempt her to immorality. The student urged her for many days before she agreed. When it [the plot] became known to her, she strangled herself. Rabbi Meir fled because of the disgrace.

It is no coincidence that Rashi juxtaposes his story to the story of Meir's adventure in Rome. The two stories share several motifs. In both, Meir conducts a chastity test. In both, female sexuality brings shame and causes Meir to leave home. In both, women are assumed to be solely responsible for sexual behavior, even when pressured, deceived, or entrapped by men. Chastity is the measure of women's worth, and there are no extenuating circumstances.

But are there extenuating circumstances for rabbis? Is Beruriah judged by a different standard? While there exists both in Talmud and Midrash an extensive literature of temptation stories about scholars, the ideal comparison to Beruriah's temptation would be the temptation of her own husband. In Tractate Kiddushin the following

story is told:

> Rabbi Meir used to mock sexual sinners. One day, as Meir was walking by the river, Satan, in the guise of a seductive woman, appeared to him on the opposite bank. Finding no ferry, the inflamed Meir grabbed the rope and began pulling himself across. When Meir was halfway across the river, Satan stopped tempting him and said, "Had they not proclaimed in Heaven: 'Take heed of Rabbi Meir and his learning,' your chastity would not be worth two pennies."

Similar stories are recounted of Rabbi Akiva and of Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba. Having a place in the rabbinic authority structure, then, entitles one to the help of Heaven when one's own defenses against temptation have proven inadequate. Hence, the rabbis are rescued. By contrast, no heavenly voice protects Beruriah by proclaiming, "Take heed of Beruriah and her learning." Like the virgin in the brothel, she is judged by more stringent standards, but unlike the virgin, Beruriah will fail the chastity test.

The analogy has even richer implications. Like the virgin in the brothel, Beruriah is an anomaly, a person wildly out of place in her context, a paradox that may at any moment be violently resolved. A virgin in a brothel cannot expect to withstand any concentrated attempt to violate her. Her exemption from molestation lasts exactly as long as men's respect for her integrity outweighs their resentment of her autonomy and separateness. Beruriah among the scholars is an anomaly only as long as the scholars permit her to be. It is easier in an androcentric universe if there are no anomalies, if women are all alike—and men can easily make them alike by treating them in the same way.

What is attacked in Rashi's story, therefore, is Beruriah's specialness. As in the brothel story, male superiority and patriarchal power are reinforced by reducing women to their sexual function. It is precisely a sexual humiliation that cuts Beruriah down to size.

Rashi's story is also thematically contiguous with the earlier portions of the Beruriah legend. Like many other Beruriah stories, it focuses on the irresolvable dissonance between the character and her context. Had not the author pushed on to prove Beruriah wrong and to punish her for challenging the rabbinic dictum, this could have been a sister story to Beruriah's ironic encounter with Rabbi Yose the Galilean.

Twentieth-century readers have been extremely uncomfortable with this final Beruriah story. They have baselessly attacked its unity with the rest of the legend and have objected that, in literary terms, the behavior of Meir and Beruriah is out of character. In a legend, however, new units are admissible if they succeed in adhering to the legend. If people believe them, to put it simplistically, their integration with the rest of the legend is accomplished.

We might question how it is that sophisticated readers have expended a great deal of energy attempting to discredit this story without succeeding in budging it from its place in the legend. If Beruriah and Meir's behavior were truly inconceivable, the story wouldn't work for us; it would simply be one of the many bizarre or incoherent rabbinic legends that do not speak to us in our context. The ugliness of this story haunts us precisely because it is credible, because we can imagine not only Beruriah's rage and rebellion against the tradition, but also the great scholar and miracle-worker, the charismatic Rabbi Meir, playing the pimp for his own wife in order to vindicate the Torah.

This is the story through which our teachers truly break our hearts. For at what price is the Torah vindicated? Once our teachers had brought into being the Beruriah of the legend, this outrageous hypothesis, the woman with a moral life like a man's, they could not imagine her initiating an affair or falling into casual promiscuity. The only way they could envision Beruriah's adultery was by imagining the guardians of the Torah entrapping her into violating the Torah with them.

The discrediting of Beruriah, then, is accomplished only by means of a betrayal that profanes every relationship that rabbinic Judaism holds to be holy: the bond of marriage, the bond between teacher and student, the very covenant with God that the commandments of the Torah express. The cost of discrediting Beruriah is cosmic.

Ironically, this disreputable tale, often dismissed as a fabrication, testifies to the ultimate truthfulness of the legend. The answer to the question the rabbis posed—*What if there were a woman who was just like us?*—is that the institutionalized denigration, subordination, and exclusion of women would destroy her, and that in the process the keepers of the tradition would besmirch themselves and profane the Torah they sought to protect.

I would like to believe, because of the violence done to the Torah in that final story, that the tellers broke their own hearts as well as their students', but I doubt it. The curse of scholars is the delusion of transcending context, all the while being trapped in a frame to which they are oblivious.

The story of Beruriah is not without comforts, although they are sober comforts. To imagine and transmit a legend about a female scholar through a thousand years of patriarchal culture is nothing if not a transcendence of context. But such insights are precious and fragile. They can survive only if we build a new world

to sustain them. The task that we inherit from our teachers is to make a world in which a Beruriah could thrive.

And our heartbreak? It is part of our inheritance, a bitter hopefulness in the face of our estrangement from one another and from our world, matrix of the shattered spheres. Heartbreak is what moves us to the work of redemption, which is called *tikkun*, mending. And it is on this account that the Hassidic masters taught, "The wholest heart is a broken heart." □

SUMMITS

(Continued from p. 49)

the Polish events, which highlighted the dangers of imposing such increases in the face of latent popular opposition. Though the spring strikes ended in a stalemate, they signaled the deep problems that any East-bloc government can encounter if it tries to introduce economic restructuring without far-reaching political reform. The renewed Polish labor protests this summer, just weeks after the spring strikes had ended, showed the depth of the continuing political crisis in that country.

The fact that the most impressive challenge to party-directed restructuring has come from Poland is rooted in the fact that Polish society has achieved the largest amount of social pluralism of any East-bloc country. The Polish people used the political space provided by the Solidarity period in order to build their own independent institutions rather than depending on anyone in the established power structure. The result is that today Poland is the most liberal country in Eastern Europe—even after the events of 1981 and the continuing illegal status of Solidarity. Poland has an extensive underground press that publishes hundreds of journals, magazines, newspapers, and books. This alternative press reaches far beyond the intelligentsia, and workers in factories and thousands of other ordinary Polish citizens have relatively easy access to independent publications. Of course, Poland is not a democratic country, and people who print and distribute unofficial literature are subject to high fines if they are caught. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the government monopoly of the press has been shattered. Polish society has managed to achieve a substantial amount of autonomy even while one-party rule of the state continues.

The rest of Eastern Europe looks like it may now be more receptive to the Polish example. Hungarians, for instance, could feel a certain distance from the Polish movement in 1980 and 1981 because Kadar's "goulash communism" was still apparently successful, at least in terms of offering a relatively high standard of living to the population. Today, however, Hungary faces an economic and social crisis of drastic proportions. In response to this crisis and to the opportunities afforded by the Soviet thaw, Hungarian academics have started an independent union, youth activists have formed their own unofficial organization with over one thousand members already, and an umbrella group encompassing a wide variety of autonomous initiatives was launched in May of this year. One of the major demands of this umbrella group is that the government make substantial cuts in the military budget in order to free resources for social services and economic development. But, from the standpoint of Hungarian workers, the government's cure for the economic situation is hardly encouraging: "We need a Margaret Thatcher," said Janos Fekete, president of the Hungarian National Bank, in May of this year. "What she did with the coal mines, we have to do here."

Furthermore, there have been signs of movement from below, even in the East-bloc countries whose governments are clearly hostile to the USSR's reform mood. Thousands of East German citizens took part in public protests and mass vigils when the government clamped down on independent peace, human rights, and ecology activists in late 1987 and early 1988. Even in Czechoslovakia, where the Communist party has been reluctant to undertake the most modest political reforms for fear of opening the door to another Prague Spring, citizens have undertaken daring acts on their own. Members of Czechoslovakia's human rights movement, Charter 77, have issued an open challenge to their government to initiate reforms, many citizens rallied to the defense of leaders of the Jazz Section when they faced trial and imprisonment, and in June of this year Charter 77 convened an international seminar on peace and human rights to which they invited independent activists from both East and West. (The seminar was disrupted by Czechoslovak police, but the participants have vowed to reconvene the meetings at a later date.) In August, on the twentieth anniversary of the Soviet invasion, more than ten thousand marched in the largest political demonstration in Czechoslovakia in two decades.

The last two years have seen a series of common initiatives by East-bloc activists. The first of these was a joint statement issued in October 1986 on the thirtieth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution. On February 1 of this year protests against repression in Rumania were launched in four Eastern European countries. Later the same month hundreds of people from Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union issued a common declaration in defense of East German activists who were being harassed, imprisoned, and forced to emigrate. And in March over four hundred peace and human rights activists from the USSR

and Eastern Europe, including Andrei Sakharov, signed an appeal calling on all countries that signed the Helsinki Accords to recognize the rights of conscientious objection and alternative service.

Cooperation among East-bloc activists began long before Gorbachev, but the current relaxation has made communication and mutual support across the invisible iron curtains between East-bloc countries somewhat easier. The Czechoslovakian playwright and Charter 77 member Vaclav Havel underscored the significance of this network of solidarity when he said in a recent interview: "A liberation movement in the Soviet bloc will succeed only if it goes beyond the borders of any single country. This is why all the campaigns in the past were suppressed."

Out of an urgent need to invigorate a stagnating system, Gorbachev has encouraged a more liberal climate not only in the USSR but throughout the Warsaw Pact countries. Both at home and abroad, he has taken the gamble that the Communist parties will be able to maintain control over the processes of reform they have started from above. The extraordinary citizens' initiatives in the USSR and Eastern Europe over the last several months suggest he may well be riding a tiger.

The American Peace Movement

In the early 1980s the American peace movement had a great deal of influence. Today, despite its lasting effect on public consciousness in this country, the movement is far weaker and is searching for a way to recapture its former power. Pam Solo, a leader of the Freeze, has explained the movement's current state in terms that are worth bearing in mind, given the fact that both the Republican and Democratic parties have declared their commitment to a "strong defense." At a speech given at Hofstra University in December 1987, Solo said:

> Perhaps the most important reason for [the] success [of the Freeze movement] was that we were, in the early years, defining the terms of the debate.... We have to acknowledge, though, that at some point we lost the political initiative. The reasons for this loss are complex. These are a few of the highlights that we need to think about. The first is the cooptation by the Democrats. We allowed the constraints of our Congressional allies to become our own. There were times when, because of our grass-roots support, we had the power to push the politicians further, to demand more, but instead we took our signal from our allies on the hill, who, in fact, did not always share our political goals. We compromised at times when we should have confronted our allies.

In fact, it is not at all surprising that the once-powerful Freeze movement found itself lost in the halls of Congress. From the beginning, immediate legislative success rather than a long-term commitment to building an independent grass-roots movement was central to the Freeze strategy.

Fortunately, many activists have moved beyond the narrow limitations of the Freeze approach of focusing the goal of victory on a single legislative measure. For example, people opposing the arms buildup today generally link their position to the issue of the military budget. They stress the catastrophic effects of arms spending on the American economy far more than they did in the past, and they argue for the need to reallocate military funds to social services and genuine productive growth at home as well as to development in the Third World. Another example of the current more comprehensive approach is that activists now often bring up the "deadly connection" between interventionism and nuclear weapons. They point out that one of the most likely scenarios of nuclear confrontation is the escalation of a regional conflict between the superpowers. Moreover, many activists now believe it is important to oppose U.S. interventionism not only because it could lead to nuclear war, but because the peace movement should stand for an alternative U.S. foreign policy with respect to the rights of weaker nations.

By broadening the agenda to include Third World issues, activists have also begun to sense the need for a radical restructuring of the relationship of the United States and other advanced Western countries to the rest of the world. With a 1987 Third World debt of $1.2 trillion and a net resource transfer of $29 billion that resulted from the debt service the Third World paid to Western creditors, the dimensions of the problem are enormous. Increasing numbers of movement activists are convinced of the importance of explaining to the American people that they have no stake in the IMF–World Bank austerity program for the people of the Third World—low wages abroad pull down wages at home—and that instead ordinary Americans have common interests with popular struggles for democracy and social justice in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

This alternative, anticorporate foreign policy is still in its embryonic stages. In his campaign for the Democratic nomination Jesse Jackson began to suggest what such a foreign policy would look like—ending military interventionism and beginning to support the struggles of trade unions in developing countries, for example. Nevertheless, such a foreign policy still needs to be spelled out, and elaborating it will necessarily involve envisioning the possibility of cooperative economic relations among people from different countries, relations that go against the basic logic of the capitalist system.

An alternative foreign policy also has to be expanded to address the issues raised by the emerging movements for democratic rights in the Eastern bloc. It is necessary to demonstrate that over the years the cold war has enabled each side to use the other's militaristic and repressive actions to justify its own, and that a democratic and peaceful foreign policy on the part of the United States would help human rights everywhere by breaking this cycle of mutual justification. For too long, American peace activists have been unwilling to address this issue, out of a mistaken fear that doing so would give ammunition to the cold warriors. In truth, failure to address this issue has had the opposite effect. By ignoring or soft-pedaling human rights issues in the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, the movement has robbed itself of the ability to expose the American government for its hypocrisy in using a standard of judgment that varies depending on whether a particular government is friendly or hostile to the United States.

Gorbachev's Disarmament Proposals

A key question for opponents of American militarism concerns their response to the USSR's recent foreign policy actions and proposals. In a desperate effort to rescue the Soviet economy, Gorbachev has advanced a broad range of initiatives with the goal of lowering tensions with the United States and reducing the Soviet military budget. These include offers for asymmetrical cuts in conventional forces in Europe, proposals for nuclear weapons-free zones in various parts of the world, cuts in strategic weapons, and an end to the arms race in space. With regard to regional conflicts, the Soviets have withdrawn from Afghanistan (not on principle—they still defend the legitimacy of their original intervention—but because, like the U.S. in Vietnam, they were defeated). They seem interested in encouraging the Cubans to withdraw from Angola, and the Vietnamese from Cambodia. And they may be prepared to sharply reduce their support for Nicaragua in order to achieve détente with the United States.

For the most part, the American government has been reluctant to respond positively to these Soviet actions and initiatives, invoking either human rights considerations or arguments that the Soviet proposals leave the USSR with a military advantage. But, in fact, moves toward disarmament strengthen the hand of human rights activists by depriving states of one of their key alibis for repression. As for maintaining the military "balance of power," it is precisely the superpowers' quest for superiority or an elusive parity that has produced a perpetual and highly dangerous arms race.

Debates about the Soviet Union's ultimate intentions toward Western Europe or about the relative military strength of NATO and the Warsaw Pact are fruitless and irresolvable. Activists could build the foundation for a long-term revival of the peace movement if, instead of getting sidetracked by these debates, they proposed an entirely different way of thinking about disarmament and the East-West conflict.

Such a new way of thinking means starting with an alternative vision of a bloc-free world and a democratic peace in which the terms "superpower" and "spheres of influence"—the very words that describe the rule of strong countries over weak—would no longer be relevant. Such a vision has been put forward both by East-bloc human rights activists and by some currents in the nonaligned Western European peace movement. In fact, it has actually emerged out of a dialogue between members of these two movements, and was expressed eloquently by Czechoslovakia's Charter 77 movement, which declared:

> Peace is threatened everywhere, when the voice of the critically thinking citizen has been silenced. It is therefore foolish to think that peace efforts [can] be limited only to military-technical aspects of disarmament and that the problem of human rights and freedom can be left to organizations such as Amnesty International.... Real peace does not mean only the removal of despotism from relations among states, but also from relations between state power and a human being....

If a revitalized peace movement adopts the goal of a democratic peace, and understands the symbiotic nature of the conflict between the superpower systems, it will be able to advance political strategies aimed at building effective transnational pressure and power from below. The United States should be called upon, for example, to take up Gorbachev's peace initiatives without hesitation because they offer a good starting point for de-escalating the arms race and because a positive response is the best way to challenge the Soviet Union's continuing imperial role in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. As long as the U.S. continues menacing the world with its own military interventionism and massive nuclear and conventional arsenals, it undercuts pressure on the Soviets to end theirs.

But peace activists should demand that the U.S. go beyond simply accepting Gorbachev's proposals. If this country took dramatic and unmistakable unilateral initiatives toward disarmament, such as withdrawing U.S. troops from Western Europe—the central theater of the U.S.-Soviet confrontation—it could break the vicious circle of the cold war. The Soviets have always claimed

that the American threat necessitates their presence in Eastern European countries, and such a move on the part of the U.S. would offer invaluable political assistance to East-bloc activists demanding the removal of Soviet troops. Similarly, if the Soviets were unilaterally to initiate a consistent and thoroughgoing peaceful foreign policy, including withdrawal from Eastern Europe, such a policy would undercut the ability of cold warriors in the West to find acceptance for their policies.

As was noted earlier, discussions in the U.S. are now taking place concerning troop withdrawals from Western Europe. Nevertheless, they aren't being conducted in the spirit of a political peace initiative, but rather out of money-saving considerations, and often as part of a strategy of shifting the emphasis of American military power from Europe to the Third World. If troop withdrawals were to take place on a piecemeal basis, drawn out over many years and in the context of a redesigned U.S. global imperial strategy, they obviously couldn't have the political effect suggested above. Still, the fact that the question of troop withdrawals has been placed on the agenda at all offers the opportunity to reframe the question as part of a nonmilitaristic, democratic foreign policy for the United States. Peace activists have to be prepared to use that opportunity.

Some people might argue that there is no need to call for such risky unilateral steps since the superpowers have already negotiated an INF treaty, are having regular summit meetings, and seem to be working out agreements on strategic weapons and several regional conflicts. A cautionary note is in order here. While of course one should support agreements that reduce the levels of armaments and disengage the superpowers from other countries, we must keep in mind that the history of U.S.-Soviet relations has been marked by periods of alternating détente and confrontation. Moreover, past arms agreements have always been the starting point for continuing the arms race, albeit under new rules. Aside from any question of cheating, both sides build weapons systems permitted by the agreements signed. As mentioned before, such weapons-building is taking place right now with regard to the INF accord. And in an article for the Spring 1988 issue of *Dissent* magazine, military analyst Gordon Adams warns that the START treaty currently under negotiation may simply result in both superpowers possessing a meaner, leaner array of strategic nuclear weapons:

> The superpowers are fashioning a treaty ... that would permit a full modernization of each country's nuclear arsenal. In the end, each side may well end up with 6,000 strategic warheads based entirely on modern strategic weapons (some still on the drawing boards) rather than on the currently deployed systems. The U.S. strategic arsenal after a START agreement could thus be composed of fifty MX missiles in silos, fifty MX rail mobile missiles, two-hundred Midgetman single-warhead mobile missiles; one-hundred B-1 bombers; one-hundred thirty-two advanced technology ("stealth") bombers; and seventeen Trident nuclear submarines with Trident II missiles. The bombers would carry air-launched cruise missiles, the next generation of free-fall nuclear warheads and the SRAM II version of the short-range attack missile. In order to meet the 6,000 warhead limit, the United States would simply destroy current B-52 bombers, Minuteman II and III missiles, and retire the Poseidon and Trident I missiles and Poseidon subs....

Of course, the Soviet strategic arsenal in such a START agreement would be comparable to that of the U.S.

So, yes, one might well support specific arms agreements, but without illusions, and standing, as it were, "outside the circle" of the negotiators' logic and interests. Granting support in this manner means continuing to make independent demands for disarmament and noninterventionism on all governments involved. A good example of the need to go beyond the terms of the negotiators and call for governments to take meaningful steps on their own is the failure of Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks. These talks on reducing NATO and Warsaw Pact conventional forces in Europe have already gone on for *thirteen* years, and both the U.S. and the Soviets have used the technical nature of these talks to deflect popular criticism from the basic problem of the superpowers' continuing military presence outside their own borders.

While the START agreement could in theory be the beginning of a process under which the United States and the Soviet Union gradually get rid of their nuclear and conventional arsenals and work out a lasting basis for peace, it would be a mistake to count on it. After all, the East-West conflict has been about something more fundamental than simple national competition: It is at root a conflict of rival socioeconomic systems in which "offensive" and "defensive" aims are inextricably intertwined. As long as the systems are in place, with the superpowers at their core, there is an inherent conflict of interest between the two countries, and consequently military competition could revive, whatever the current intentions of their leaders.

It is difficult to imagine regions of crucial imperial interest such as the Middle East, the Pacific, and Eastern Europe ceasing permanently to be areas of conflict.

Both in regional conflicts and in the field of weaponry each side will find it difficult to resist the opportunities for substantial advantage, and when such opportunities arise the opposing side will feel "forced" to reciprocate because neither contender in this kind of contest can afford to lose too much to its rival. It is obvious that such sentiments motivate the U.S., and they probably shape Soviet policy as well. So, while the Soviet Union today clearly needs to de-escalate the arms race, and is prepared to make significant concessions in order to reduce tensions, it has not given up its claim as a global power. Moreover, the Soviet leadership is committed to maintaining its domination over Eastern Europe because of its deep fear of the contagion of democratic social developments if it loses control.

There are sections of the U.S. elite which, like the Soviets, urgently hope to reduce the costs of the arms race and seek a lowering of tensions. While neither U.S. nor Soviet foreign policy "moderates" are willing to jettison the interests of their respective capitalist or communist systems, their moves to avoid confrontation and reduce the level of armaments should be supported. But peace activists' basic commitment should be to social movements (in both blocs) which can offer a democratic resolution of the East-West conflict.

The Hope from Beneath the Official Structures

The USSR and the United States have been forced to adopt the language of peace and freedom. Both superpowers are facing increasing global demands to take meaningful steps toward disarmament and to acknowledge the right of smaller nations to self-determination. Thanks in large part to the efforts of groups such as Amnesty International, Americas Watch, and Helsinki Watch, people around the world are coming to hold all governments accountable to a single, international standard of human rights.

Popular pressure concerning peace and democratic rights has played a critical role in getting governments to sign agreements such as the Helsinki Accords and the INF Treaty. Such pressure has also produced results on other levels. This spring, for instance, the Washington-based American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations released a report entitled *The Requirements for Stable Coexistence in U.S.-Soviet Relations.* The principal author from the Soviet side was Georgi Arbatov, director of the U.S.A.-Canada Institute. Other members of the Soviet delegation included Valentin Falin, director of Novosti, the official USSR press agency; Fyodor Burlatsky, author, journalist, and highly visible representative of the new, government-appointed Soviet human rights commission; and Vitaly Zhurkin, director of the Institute of Europe. The project director from the U.S. side was Arthur Macy Cox, a former senior official of the State Department, the CIA, and the Brookings Institution. Included in the U.S. group that prepared the report were William Colby, former director of the CIA, and Townsend Hoopes, former under secretary of the Air Force.

The report received major coverage in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* because of the startling fact that leading former members of the U.S. establishment and people currently responsible to the Soviet government agreed to a statement that seemed to equate, and perhaps even condemn, past U.S. and Soviet direct and indirect intervention in other countries. The report cited U.S. actions in South Korea, Guatemala, Lebanon, Vietnam, and Libya; and Soviet actions in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, South Yemen, and Cambodia, among others. Even more astonishing, the report recommended guidelines for the U.S. and USSR to follow in the future which, if accepted, would make such military intervention virtually impossible. It recommended to the superpowers that "they should formally agree not to use U.S. or Soviet combat military forces in regional conflicts. They should agree not to introduce proxy or volunteer military forces into regional conflicts. They should agree to limit the number of military advisers or trainers to Third World countries to a specific small number."

The American delegation did not, of course, represent the U.S. government, but the presence of such formerly powerful (some would say criminally responsible) figures as Colby and Cox is significant. Arbatov repeatedly stressed that the Soviets were not speaking on behalf of their government, but as individuals. He undoubtedly did so for the usual reason, namely, to claim that an official state-controlled body is the counterpart of independent citizens' groups in the West so as to obscure the reality that genuine independent groups are not recognized as legitimate in communist countries. But in this instance the Soviet delegation had an additional reason for donning their unofficial hats: to enable them not to commit the Soviet government to adhere to the recommendations issued in the report.

Governmental treaties such as the Helsinki Accords and the INF, and less-than-official agreements such as the Arbatov-Cox report, are all signs of the tribute the powerful have had to pay to the moral claims of the powerless. They can serve as invaluable tools in building pressure from below to prevent the U.S. and USSR from undertaking military adventures, violating the self-determination rights of other countries, or denying democratic rights to their own citizens. It would be a tragedy if activists, instead of using their increased leverage to strengthen their movements, were to forfeit these new opportunities by entrusting the issues of peace and human rights to superpower elites. □

PERESTROIKA

(Continued from p. 58)

stepping up their harassment of these newly minted entrepreneurs while the police continue to plague peasants coming in to sell their food in city markets. Shmelev warns of "an intense envy of one's neighbor"—a deep-seated hostility toward individual success and enterprise—that could well destroy *perestroika.* (That same envy of the landlord, professional, and peasant who left the commune played a major role in sweeping away the provisional government in 1917.)

Shmelev has identified one of Gorbachev's biggest problems. The Russian people are very hostile to successful entrepreneurs, and their sense of egalitarianism leads them to prefer equal security at a low economic level to the risks and opportunities of markets. According to Professor Marshall Goldman, only 15 percent of the Soviet people favor private or cooperative ownership, yet this type of ownership is the cornerstone of Gorbachev's plan to get the nation moving again!

To make matters worse, Shmelev warns, the celebrated 1987 Enterprise Law, which gave enterprises a wide range of autonomy, is not working. The central ministries are subverting its implementation, and even those factories that have become more autonomous have had unimpressive results. Workers are grumbling that maybe it's time to bring in a "strong hand," and the masses are uneasy about looming price hikes. Even the antialcoholism campaign is petering out, according to Shmelev. Instead of the state treasury's benefiting from vodka sales, money is now going to moonshiners. Gorbachev, Shmelev concludes, has to act fast. Possible short-term solutions include dismantling curbs on individual farming, importing consumer goods, and allowing enterprises to raise capital by issuing stocks and bonds.

At the June party conference, L. I. Abalkin, the director of the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, delivered an even gloomier appraisal than Shmelev's. Economic performance, Abalkin warned, is even worse than in the last years of the Brezhnev era. Seemingly cheery output figures conceal waste and the production of goods that nobody wants. Availability of consumer goods is worsening. Unlike Gorbachev, who is giving priority to political reform, Abalkin insisted that economic reform is paramount, in light of the fact that previous attempts to enlarge the powers of the soviets and the role of workers in the factories failed because the economic preconditions for such political changes were absent. While other delegates such as Georgii Arbatov took issue with Abalkin's pessimism, most of the speakers acknowledged the sheer magnitude of the accumulated economic and social problems. Health Minister Yevgenii Chazov described the catastrophic state of the nation's hospitals, and D. K. Motornyi, a collective farm chairman, insisted that capital investments alone will not save Soviet agriculture unless massive resources are channeled into roads, theaters, modern housing, and other amenities necessary to keep young people from leaving the villages. G. I. Marchuk, president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, emphasized that the growing backwardness of Soviet science prompts "serious worry." F. T. Morgun, the chairman of the State Committee of the USSR for the Protection of the Environment, spoke of worsening pollution in major rivers, looming catastrophe in the Aral sea, contamination of the Baltic, and dangerous air quality in the Urals. (Who, by the way, will foot the bill for scrubbers and antipollution devices once economic reforms give autonomy to factories?)

Furthermore, having gone much further than Khrushchev in attacking Stalinism, Gorbachev runs the risk of opening a dangerous ideological vacuum. Pro-*perestroika* journals such as *Ogonek, Novyi Mir,* and *Moscow News* have attacked many aspects of the country's past: collectivization, the five-year plans, Stalin's inept military leadership, the great purges, and the mendacity and corruption of the Brezhnev era. Literary journals are publishing long-suppressed stories: Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate,* comparing Stalinism to Fascism; Anatoly Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat,* describing young Muscovites on the eve of the purge years; Vladimir Dudintsev's *White Raiment,* examining Trofim Lysenko's purge of Soviet biologists. Films such as Tenzig Abuladze's *Repentance,* depicting Stalin as a black-shirted Fascist, carry home the message that there can be no return to the past.

Not everyone in the Soviet Union likes this denigration of the past. On a recent visit to Leningrad, I spoke with a Soviet woman who told me she was "sick and tired" of the constant disparagement of the country's past. Perhaps hers is an isolated opinion, but recent events suggest otherwise. At last summer's party conference, writer Yurii Bondarev also lashed out, to loud applause, at journalists who have criticized the nation's history. Recent stories, such as Vasily Belov's "Everything Lies Ahead," have certain anti-Semitic overtones, while Viktor Astafiev's "The Sad Detective" pointedly questions whether aping Western culture provides any answers for Russia's spiritual problems.

Hostility toward those who are critical of Russia's past took on a particularly ominous tone in an article by Nina Andreeva that appeared in *Sovetskaia Rossiia* on March 13, 1988. Andreeva, a Leningrad chemist, wrote a long article defending Stalin's achievements and suggesting a certain connection between "cosmopolitan" influences and the hypercritical negativism

that has been lowering Russia's morale. As if on cue, the Andreeva article was reprinted in newspapers all over the country while various party committees organized discussions supporting her. Andreeva, as Professor Peter Reddaway has argued, was the point woman of a campaign probably orchestrated by Politburo member Egor Ligachev. Gorbachev was in Yugoslavia, while Aleander Yakovlev, one of his closest allies in the Politburo, was in Mongolia. Not until April 5 did *Pravda* attack the article and *Sovetskaia Rossiia.*

Postmortems of the Andreeva episode, such as M. S. Ulianov's speech to the June party conference and Iurii Kariakin's article in the May 1988 issue of *Ogonek,* have stressed the *lack of organized resistance* to the article until Gorbachev returned from Yugoslavia. A whole nation, which ostensibly had been applauding *glasnost,* collapsed in sudden fright, until its leader returned and assured everyone that things were still OK. Some letters to *Pravda,* published on April 12, make for pathetic reading. An L. Slutskaia thanks the newspaper for the April 5 rebuttal. "Thank you," she writes. "It means that there is still hope."

The Andreeva affair highlights a paradox of *perestroika* that has been noted by many observers—the need for constant leadership from above to energize and preserve civic and individual initiative from below. Gorbachev's abrupt assumption of the presidency and authoritarian management of the recent Central Committee meeting bears this out. It seems, therefore, that Joanne Landy (see page 106) may be misjudging both the degree and the direction of what she calls "extraordinary citizens' initiatives in the USSR. . . . "

One sector of the population particularly worried by the ideological vacuum and the tremors from the right is Soviet Jews. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* have brought mixed blessings to Soviet Jews. On the positive side, the regime has suspended the vicious anti-Zionist campaign of the Brezhnev era. Indeed, the popular weekly *Ogonek* recently published a hard-hitting attack on anti-Semitism which featured quotes from Lenin and admissions that the anti-Zionist campaigns of the 1960s and 1970s were indistinguishable from crude Jew-baiting. Soviet national television is showing occasional Yiddish cultural events, albeit of dubious artistic quality.

More important, there is a clear trend toward restoring the dignity and self-respect of the Jew *as a Soviet citizen.* In the Brezhnev era, instances of Jewish heroism in World War II were systematically ignored, but now things have changed. The 1985 Soviet publication *Encyclopedia of the Second World War* contains articles about the German-occupied ghettos in the USSR, and it reprints figures showing that a relatively large number of Jews won the nation's highest decoration, Hero of the Soviet Union. A recent article in a journal which appeared in the city of Vilnius finally admitted that there was a substantial Jewish presence in the celebrated Sixteenth Lithuanian Division, and in Vilnius there will soon be a memorial to Jewish Holocaust victims and, perhaps, a Jewish historical museum. Soviet authorities also seem to be easing restrictions on Jewish enrollments in prestigious universities, while the media, literature, and film are giving the Soviet public a more balanced view of Jewish themes and characters. Grossman's *Life and Fate,* Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat,* and the impending release of Alexander Askaldov's film *Commissar*—banned for twenty years for depicting Jews in a sympathetic light—are just a few examples. Some local authorities now permit—or at least do not actively forbid—Hebrew teaching and semipublic lectures about Jewish culture.

Yet old habits die hard. The March 13 issue of *Moscow News* carried a story by Boris Berman which touched on a very sensitive nerve: the lingering tendency in the Soviet media to ascribe pejorative connotations to the word "Jew." Citing a review of *Commissar* in a "popular youth newspaper," Berman noted that not once was the fact mentioned that the heroine, Vavilova, stayed with a Jewish family. Berman telephoned the author of the review—whom he knew well—and was told that the editor had insisted on changing "Jews" to "people."

Moreover, one drawback of *perestroika,* from the perspective of many Soviet Jews, is that Gorbachev's program of economic renewal is very dependent on those strata in which Jews are heavily represented: scientists, engineers, and so on. It is possible, therefore, that Gorbachev will be unwilling to allow for mass Jewish emigration once the refusenik backlog is released, hoping instead to keep talented Jewish professionals in the Soviet Union.

Even more threatening to Soviet Jews is the possibility that certain virulent strains of Russian nationalism will fill the ideological vacuum created by *perestroika.* Simply put, Russian nationalism—nationalism drawing strength from legitimate anger over the social and moral decline of the Russian countryside, the rape of the natural environment, the destruction of architectural landmarks, rampant alcoholism, and a sense that the Russian people have borne the brunt of the pain in building the Soviet state—poses the biggest challenge to Marxist orthodoxy in Russia today. The popularity of writers such as Vasily Belov and Valentin Rasputin, and of painters such as Ilia Glazunov, reflects the deep chords these themes strike in broad sectors of the Russian population, especially in the educated middle classes whose support for *perestroika* is critical.

In theory, there is no reason why the nationalist movement to recapture Russia's past has to be anti-Semitic, and many concerned Russians reject the connection between nationalism and anti-Semitism. But in fact, its most prominent organization, Pamyat, has begun peddling the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and stories of a Jewish plot to destroy Russia. According to one story, Lazar Kaganovich, the only Jew in Stalin's Politburo, led the assault on Moscow's landmarks and built the Moscow Metro in such a way that all key government buildings could be blown up by bombs planted in the subway stations underneath them. The August 14, 1988, issue of *Moscow News* contained a letter from Daniela Steila, an Italian exchange student, describing an openly anti-Semitic meeting organized by Pamyat in Leningrad's Rumiantsev Square. A schoolteacher boasted that she brought her pupils along to listen. Some old veterans of the Brezhnev era's "anti-Zionist" campaigns have returned to give Pamyat a hand. One such person is Valerii Emelianov. In 1980 he had an argument with his wife, chopped up her body, and stuffed the pieces into bags. After a good night's sleep, he took the bags to a garbage dump. Emelianov's defense? Persecution by Zionists. He was found mentally incompetent, put in a psychiatric ward, and then released. He now is one of Pamyat's popular lecturers.

There is little evidence that Pamyat has gained mass support—yet. But its ideas may gain popularity if *perestroika* falters. Its potential strength lies not so much in its anti-Semitism as in its ability to legitimize and synthesize seemingly incompatible traditions and personalities in Russia's past: Russian orthodoxy, the tsarist state-building ethic (former Russian prime minister Peter Stolypin is a Pamyat hero), and Lenin. In fact, in some ways *perestroika* and Pamyat are perfectly compatible, and many party members and officers attend Pamyat's meetings. And though there is no evidence that Gorbachev condones Pamyat or its anti-Semitism, he shares common ground with it. Both want national renewal, both attack "bureaucracy," and both express shame at the degeneration and corruption of Russian society.

Pamyat's adopting Stolypin and Lenin as heroes illustrates the potential appeal of its ideology. Stolypin, assassinated by a Jew (and a police agent) in 1911, was a complex figure who tried to save the tsarist regime with daring reforms, and whose reforms serve, in the opinion of some Pamyat leaders, as a prototype of *perestroika—which they claim to support.* Why? Because Stolypin, like Gorbachev, argued that the nation had reached a dead end and that national renewal should henceforth depend on the "sober and the strong," not the "drunken and the weak." He wanted to scrap the land communes, encourage individual initiative, and reform local government by involving the peasantry at the expense of the landlords. In Pamyat's eyes, Lenin too was a hero because he saved the Russian state from disintegration in 1918 to 1921. Had he only lived longer, the Russian people would not have fallen under the heel of the bureaucrats. But he didn't, and a "fifth column" got control of Russia. This is a message that many contemporary party members find congenial.

There are signs that at least some of the Soviet leadership is concerned about Pamyat. Alexander Yakovlev, Gorbachev's close supporter in the Politburo and new ideology chief, attacked Pamyat in a July 1987 speech, criticizing the overidealization of the Russian past and reminding his audience that the tsars were also guilty of destroying historical monuments. Yakovlev is a natural figure to lead the attack on Pamyat. After all, he paid dearly, as Professor John Dunlop points out, for a 1972 article attacking extreme Russian nationalism. Brezhnev packed him off to the diplomatic service, where he stayed until Gorbachev brought him back to Moscow in 1985.

It goes without saying that Soviet Jews are worried. To reassure its readers, the September 1987 issue of *Sovetish Heymland* carried a lengthy article on Pamyat entitled "Ven Demagogon Tsegartlen Zekh" (When demagogues let loose). *Sovetish Heymland* argued that Pamyat's ideas weren't new—that Russia had seen them before, back in 1905 with the Black Hundreds. Pamyat, the journal stressed, has little popular support, and the Soviet government will make sure that "a small demagogic clique will not sully our flag."

What should the United States' response be to all the recent changes in the Soviet Union? Our direct influence is limited, but we ought to make judicious use of credits, joint ventures, and symbolic gestures such as cultural and educational exchanges. Channels of communication enhance stability. Further down the road, the Gorbachev challenge will force the United States to adjust its relationship with Europe—especially with West Germany. If Gorbachev can reform the Soviet Union without serious disruptions—an unlikely possibility—then some fundamental shifts in American foreign policy will take place. Major troop withdrawals from both Western and Eastern Europe may be one possibility.

Gorbachev has set the Soviet Union on a courageous and difficult path. The obstacles are enormous. He is fighting history, psychology, and entrenched political structures. If he succeeds in changing people's attitudes, and if he can create stable institutions, introduce the rule of law, and unleash Russia's enormous economic potential, the world, on balance, will be a safer place. But we are seeing only a frail, if exciting, beginning. □

A gift subscription to Tikkun is an ideal Chanukah or Christmas gift.

There are four kinds of people who deserve priority when thinking about who should get Tikkun as a Chanukah or Christmas gift from you.

1. **Your friends, the intellectuals.** They've read everything, they probably have any book you'd buy for them, and they are bored with the tired, old ideas that surround them.

   For them, TIKKUN will be a revelation. It is not predictable and its range of interests defies any easy pidgeonholing.

2. **Your friends who want (or once wanted) to change the world.** Now surrounded by a culture that proclaims any larger changes to be utopian, they are most committed to their careers. But deep in their hearts they still nourish the dream.

   TIKKUN will revive their spirits. Instead of the old slogans, they will read new ideas and learn why liberals and progressives have failed and how that could be changed.

3. **Your friends, the alienated Jews.** They are sure that the Jewish world is too conservative and that Judaism itself is sterile and outdated.

   TIKKUN will show them a whole new aspect of Jewish life: A community of Jews involved in liberal/progressive politics, thinkers who challenge the traditional "sacred cows" of Jewish life, Israelis who criticize aspects of Israeli policy, Jews who engage with the most challenging aspects of modern philosophy and culture and who have a deep respect for intellectual honesty, wherever it may lead.

4. **Your friends, the involved Jews.** They've decided to take their Jewishness seriously—culturally, ethnically, religiously, or as supporters of Israel. TIKKUN will broaden their perspectives, expose them to intellectually deep and spiritually serious struggles with the Jewish tradition and Jewish politics.

   And the involved Christians, too. TIKKUN raises fundamental new insights into contemporary theology and biblical religion that will excite anyone interested in philosophy and culture.

But why only four?
You can probably think of many other people who would love a TIKKUN gift subscription
To make it easy, we are offering a greatly reduced price!

If you don't yet subscribe, pay $25 for yourself and $12 for each gift subscription.
If you are already a subscriber, pay only $12 per gift.
Call 1-800-825-0061. Or send us your name and the names/addresses of those receiving gifts.
(Use the card in this issue.) *Mail check, payable to* TIKKUN *to:*
TIKKUN, P.O. Box 6406, Syracuse, NY 13217.
We will send gift cards immediately—but allow several weeks for delivery of the first magazine.

TIKKUN'S FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Renewing the Liberal/Progressive Tradition of American Jewish Intellectuals

Dec. 18–20 Penta Hotel N.Y.C.

In the 1980s many American Jewish intellectuals have recognized that there is too much of value in the intellectual legacy of the Jewish people to allow it to be claimed by the conservative and conformist forces that tend to dominate the organized Jewish world. This conference will be a major national political and cultural event, heralding the reemergence of the liberal/progressive tradition of American Jewish intellectuals.

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Michael Lerner
Michael Walzer
Arthur Waskow
Marshall Berman
Ellen Willis
Robert Jay Lifton
Grace Paley
Herbert Gintis
J. Hoberman
Heather Booth
Irving Howe
Nan Fink
Russell Jacoby
Herbert Gans
David Gordis
Joanne Landy
Peter Gabel
David Gordon
Harvey Cox
Stanley Hoffman
Marge Piercy
Francine Prose
Todd Gitlin
Ruth Messinger
Yossi Sarid
Alfred Kazin
Rick Hertzberg
Howard Fast
Zalman Schachter
Marshall Meyer

AMONG THE TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

U.S. Politics in Light of the Election; Israel and the Palestinians; Blacks and Jews; the Cold War; Religion, Spirituality and Radical Politics; Responding to Bloom and Bennett; Conflicts in Trying to Maintain Jewishness and Commitment to Progressive Values; Radical Possibilities in Contemporary Culture; Rethinking Zionism; Anti-Semitism in the Left.

11
74125
0 306775 8