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For the Enrichment of Jewish Thought

PROPOSAL FOR PEACE

Creating the Palestinian State: A Strategy for peace

By Jerome M. Segal

Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books

A Review essay by Herbert Hirsch

In the world of international politics innovative solutions to long-term historical problems are rare. Jerome Segal's proposal to create a Palestinian state stands as one of the few. In an area of failed policy and political and ideological recalcitrance, Segal's book is a serious proposal for peace.

The author, who is a research scholar at the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy at the University of Maryland, describes his book as "a strategy for bringing about peace through a two-state solution" (p. vii). The strategy proposed does not "place the negotiations process at the center of activity." Rather, Segal believes that negotiations are likely to bring a formal peace only when they are negotiations between two states: Israel and Palestine. For this to be possible, there must first exist a Palestinian state. Creating the Palestinian state without obtaining prior Israeli agreement lies at the heart of this strategy (p. viii).

In placing the creation of the Palestinian state as the first step toward Mid-East peace, Segal proposes a rather unique reversal of the usual process which involves negotiations, or a peace conference, followed by proposed resolutions which are then implemented usually under the supervision of international organiza-

tions such as the United Nations. Segal's proposal is creative because it is an attempt to make an end-run around Israel's reluctance to either negotiate with the PLO or to consider a Palestinian state.

Segal argues that once the Palestinian state is a reality the Israelis and the world community will have limited choices: They can either recognize the Palestinian state and deal with it, or engage in a series of policies whose only projected outcome appears to be disaster for all. Segal, in fact, suggests three possible endings for the present situation: 1) the Israelis will destroy all of their enemies and eliminate the Palestinians, or 2) the Israelis and their enemies ultimately will destroy each other, or 3) the conflict will be resolved along the lines of the two-state solution (p. 11).

There is no doubt that continuation of the present course is most likely to lead to either the first or second scenario. The present impasse is unlikely to continue, and escalation of the conflict is a probable occurrence. Indeed, as I write this review the Israeli Prime Minister proposes to support continued settlement of the occupied territories, and an Israeli bus is sabotaged with the loss of 14 lives. This has resulted in renewed vigilante attacks on Arabs by Israelis seeking revenge. As all involved experience continued frustration violence is likely to escalate.

Segal's proposal is, at present, the only new proposal on the horizon. Since this is an unusual book, putting forth an unusual proposal, I do not plan to review it in the conventional sense. I hope to first summarize the essential elements of the proposal as a means of stimulating interest in halting the escalating spiral of violence in the Middle East and second to stimulate debate concerning Segal's specific plan. To accomplish this it is necessary to outline what Segal has in mind.

Segal begins his analysis by placing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into context—he reviews the history and historical meaning of the conflict. Segal points out that while the conflict is important to Palestinians and Jews it also has a potential impact on many aspects of world politics including oil prices; nuclear proliferation; Arab unity; U.S.-Soviet trade/detente; U.S.-Soviet conflict; U.S. relations with the Islamic World; American politics; South Africa; and Jewish-black reactions in the U.S.

Following this outline Segal traces the history of the PLO from 1967 to the present. He outlines a story of evolution pointing out that the PLO has changed over the years so that what Segal calls "the myth of PLO intransigence" is perpetuated by effective Israeli public relations efforts and by "an astonishing failure on the part of the PLO to communicate the gradual but significant transformation in its outlook over the years" (p. 15). This appears to be changing as a startling historical reversal has taken place. As Segal points out

Twenty years ago it was the PLO that refused to negotiate with Israel. Today it is Israel that refuses to negotiate with the PLO. For both Shamir and Peres,

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the reason is the same. The PLO is seeking to establish an independent Palestinian state; they are opposed to that. This is the key fact to be remembered. Israel was created within a commitment to the two-state solution. Forty years ago the Arab world rejected that idea. Today the tables are turned. It is Israel that rejects the two-state solution, and thus rejects the only basis for a stable peace in the region (p. 44).

The changes in PLO strategy and rhetoric lead Segal to point out that it is time for a new strategy. The new strategy he has in mind is the two-state solution which involves four major elements:

1. The Unilateral Declaration of Statehood and the creation of a provisional government
2. The Peace Initiative
3. Creating the sinews of the state
4. Motivating the Israelis to withdraw (p. 54).

The Unilateral Declaration of Statehood follows the model used in the formation of Israel in 1948 when a proclamation was issued in Tel Aviv that essentially proclaimed "the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called ISRAEL" (p. 57). Segal is no naive idealist for he realizes that there are many obstacles to overcome. He raises and answers some of the more significant questions involved. The most obvious is that given Israeli military occupation, what effect could the Palestinian Declaration have? First, Segal argues, it is necessary to understand that a "territorial state exists when there is a piece of territory over which some organization or individual claims sovereignty and when that claim is accepted by the people of that territory and by other states of the world" (p. 58). The Palestinian people already accept the legitimacy of Palestinian rule and once the state is proclaimed it is likely to be recognized by significant numbers of countries. That leaves Israeli military occupation as the major hurdle.

The Israelis will be placed in the unenviable position of using violence to maintain control—they are already in that position, since the uprising

which began in December 1987 indicates that the Israelis have lost any claim to legitimacy.

The declaration of the new state will be the last official act of the PLO. "In the declaration, the PLO will proclaim the existence of the new state, and then itself go out of existence, to be superseded by the provisional government of the new state" (p. 62). Segal even provides a text for the declaration modelled on the Israeli Declaration of Independence:

We the members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) by virtue of the historic and natural right of the Palestinian people to be a nation, as all other nations, in its own sovereign state, hereby proclaim the establishment of the Palestinian state, to be known as Palestine (p. 62).

The creation of the state of Palestine would mean that the former PLO would now be a provisional government. This is symbolically important because it means that the former PLO representatives now become ambassadors while "PLO offices become embassies, and the Palestinian flag would fly above them as the emblem of the new country" (p. 66).

Following this the new government should, according to Segal, "immediately issue a proclamation declaring itself at peace with the State of Israel. Then it should announce that the State of Palestine will not maintain an army" (p. 67). Clearly it is asking a great deal of the Palestinian state to disarm in the face of continued Israeli violence and military occupation, but Segal points out that world public opinion will view this positively, and it may very well stimulate the peace movement within Israel and the United States. While the barriers to implementation of such a strategy are huge, and the questions are many, Segal believes it is the only chance for peace, because the Israelis will eventually realize the State of Palestine is a reality with which they must negotiate. The central demand will be for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. Once the State is created the Israelis will be occupying a foreign country. Segal thinks that if the demand for withdrawal is "coupled with a strong and authentic offer of peace, and with continued

protest within the territories against the presence of troops, met by Israeli oppression, the stage will be set for a worldwide campaign of economic pressure" (p. 94).

To be sure, it is likely that there will be worldwide pressure for Israeli withdrawal, but there is also great internal pressure for maintaining and even for extending the settlements. In fact, I am afraid that this is one of, if not the main, barriers to peace. The settlers have become a powerful group within Israeli politics: dedicated, some might say fanatical, in their wish to maintain their hold on the settlements. The potential for violence, perhaps for civil war, if an Israeli government tried to trade away their settlements for peace cannot be discounted.

This is only one of the many challenging realities which Segal's seemingly rational solution faces. In fact, Segal develops no realistic plan for confronting the settlements nor for what will eventually happen to Jerusalem. These very real, and very difficult, issues are not likely to fade away after the proclamation of the Palestinian state. This is the major problem with Segal's proposal. While his argument is tightly reasoned, he is not dealing with rationality—he is confronting deep-seated human passions built up over many years. To my knowledge, no thinker has ever developed an adequate mechanism to effectively channel passion to rationality—even when it would appear to be in the best interest of all involved.

I do not mean to belittle Segal's contribution. He has put forth a unique and controversial proposal that one hopes will stimulate new considerations of the tragic situation in the Middle East. If his proposal or some other is not soon adopted, if peace cannot be achieved, the potential for escalation and even greater tragedy is the only possible outcome. It should be an outcome that no one wants. Yet, in the world of international politics undesirable outcomes seem to be common. Momentum, once built up in the international state system, is similar to the train in the tunnel—even though we are able to see the light moving rapidly up the tracks, we are often unable to get out

of the way. Meanwhile, the hope for peace must not be abandoned even as events seem out of control. In the end Segal writes his own conclusion when he notes that his plan can best be

... seen as a plea for help. The struggle for an independent Palestinian state is also the struggle for a humane and safe Israel. As there can be no Judaism without a commitment to justice, it is also a struggle for Jewish history and the Jewish future. It is a struggle in which Jews and Palestinians must find each other as allies (p. 13).

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THE ETERNAL THOU

Martin Buber and the Eternal
By Maurice Friedman
New York: Human Sciences
Press, Inc.

A Review essay by Donald J.
Moore, S.J.

In *Martin Buber and the Eternal* Maurice Friedman wants to present an integral statement of his understanding of Buber's philosophy of religion and its implications for ethics, for history of religion, for interreligious dialogue, and for religious education. Of the nine chapters only the first, which serves as a brief introduction, and the last were written specifically for this volume. The rest of the chapters are taken, with minor revisions, from some half dozen articles of Professor Friedman which have appeared over the past quarter century in a variety of journals or as chapters in different anthologies.

From the many and varied topics presented in this book we will concern ourselves with three themes: In Friedman's analysis, what does Buber have to tell us about God, about revelation, and about the relationship between the divine and the human?

We might answer the first inquiry quite abruptly: Buber has *nothing* to tell us about God; he is not at all concerned, as Friedman notes from the outset, with any "word about God" but only with the "Word of God." Buber insists that God "may

properly only be addressed and not expressed." Thus there can be no objective knowledge of God. Although Buber considered the development of his life's work to be rooted in an experience of faith, he refused in any way to theologize out of this faith experience. Theology implied for Buber a "teaching about God," even if that teaching were only a negative one. He considered himself "not capable nor even disposed to teach this or that about God." We know God only in relationship, in meeting; we cannot go beyond the meeting to know God as he is in himself. "Like the imageless God of the Hebrew Bible," Friedman writes, "Buber's 'eternal Thou' means the ever renewed meeting with the God Who will be there as he will be there."

Friedman is insistent that the eternal Thou does not mean "God" for Buber, but rather God means the "eternal Thou." He refers to this distinction in at least three different chapters. Buber's eternal Thou is not a symbol for "God"; God is a symbol for the "eternal Thou." Friedman argues that Buber's Thou, as the word of address spoken from within the relationship, gives no information concerning the nature and essence of one's partner in dialogue. By saying that the eternal Thou is God, one is placing the eternal Thou, in Friedman's mind, into some sort of metaphysical category, an up-to-date way of referring to the God of the philosophers and of the theologians.

I do not believe such fears are warranted. God does indeed mean the "eternal Thou" for Buber, which means God is eternally present, God is eternal Presence. And that which is eternal Presence, that which is eternally Thou, is the meaning of God for Buber. Paradoxically, Buber himself does give us some "information" about the eternal Thou: it is the Thou which by its nature can never become an It, the Thou which is nearer to me than my own I, the Thou which alone "satiates" the in-born Thou of each person. In *I and Thou* Buber writes: "Presence is that which is waiting and enduring." Only God is always present, eternally Thou. This is the very meaning of the "name" revealed to Moses in Exodus

3:14: "I will be there as I will be there." This is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob; this is the God of Jesus, the God who is with us as God chooses to be with us, not as we choose to try to manipulate. To proclaim that the eternal Thou is God is to proclaim with Buber that ultimately God can only be adored, not explored.

Before God humankind is called to a life of *emuna*, of unconditional trust in his abiding presence and concern; it is a trust in the God who is with us even as we walk in the valley of the shadow of death. This is the God who is recognized in each encounter, even though each encounter is utterly new and unique. Again and again we go forth to the meeting armed not with knowledge and information but with trust. This trust is ultimately an acceptance of the powerlessness, the emptiness, the poverty of the human condition. It is this trust which prepares us for the gift of meeting and presence which confronts us ever anew. *Emuna* for Buber is at the heart of biblical faith; this he understands also as the faith of Jesus. Thus the more that Christians seek to grasp the pure teaching of Jesus, the more they will find themselves, at least implicitly, in dialogue with genuine Judaism. *Emuna* calls us to partnership with God in holy insecurity, guided only by his presence. God's presence serves as counsel for us, but it is a counsel which provides no answers and no solutions. We must still direct our own steps; we are not absolved from the responsibility of deciding for ourselves what is demanded of us in any given situation. Yet what God demands of us in this hour we can learn only here and now and not beforehand. We must realize that we are answerable before God for this hour as *our* hour and that we carry out responsibility for this hour before God insofar as we are able. What confronts us is a sign, a word from him, a word that stands in no dictionary and that demands our answer. This responsibility is ours; we cannot cede it to any individual, any group, any institution; we must not let anyone take this responsibility from us. Otherwise we pervert the meaning of biblical faith, the relationship of absolute trust in God. For we would be removing from the sphere

of God's power the authority of the individual or group or institution, yielding to others that responsibility which we owe only to God. Our response is made with the awareness of God's abiding presence, and God's presence is indeed counsel for us. The consciousness of God's presence means that one approaches life far differently from one who lives unaware of this abiding Presence. Buber had no difficulty in pointing to Jesus as an exemplar *par excellence* of this deep awareness of God's presence.

This experience of presence, of dialogic relationship, is what Buber means by "holy insecurity," a life lived on the "narrow ridge." In this lived relationship one does not have the certainty of metaphysical truth, but only the experience of the mutual knowing that springs from genuine meeting, from wholehearted presence to the other, and ultimately from wholehearted presence to the One who is eternally Other, eternally Thou.

Such encounters for Buber comprise the essence of biblical revelation. In his mind the one teaching that fills the Hebrew Bible and which has become the basic teaching of Judaism is that our life is a "dialogue between the above and the below," unfolding again and again how God addresses humankind and is in turn addressed by humankind. God speaks to each person, and each is invited to respond by doing or not doing. It would appear that for Buber the fundamental reality is speech, dialogic relationship. "In the beginning is relation," he writes in *I and Thou*. Each lived moment carries on this dialogue so that all that happens, all that befalls us, is taken as a sign of address. What one tries to do or fails to do is taken as a stammering attempt to respond as best as one can, or it is simply a failure to answer. The Bible should be understood as having primordially an oral character; through address and response, this dialogue between God and humankind, between I and Thou, must again be able to be experienced behind the familiarity which so often stifles the voice for us today. The meaning of the word, insofar as it concerns the relationship between God and humankind, cannot in Buber's mind be grasped objectively; it

offers itself not to our objective understanding, but to our contemplation. The Bible must always be read in living Presence; we must listen faithfully to the voice that addresses us.

Although the Bible is the privileged locus for revelation, everything in life has the possibility of becoming a sign or vehicle of revelation. What is disclosed in revelation is never the divine essence but rather what we might call the divine relationship—God's relationship to us and our relationship to God. For some, as Friedman points out, this is tantamount to saying that revelation is a dialogue without content. Yet Buber insists that indeed there is content, but it is a content that is wholly unique and particular for each given moment. It is a content which confirms meaning, a meaning which cannot be spelled out or defined but only confirmed in the life one lives, by the uniqueness of one's life and being. Revelation is not objective knowledge; it is not mere subjective inspiration. Rather it takes place in meeting, encounter, dialogue, wherein one does not conceptualize but responds. The religious statement, as well as religious symbols and forms, stand as witnesses to this dialogue. And God remains near these witnesses as long as we treat them for what they are: each is a sign of the divine Presence, a pointer to this Presence, or, to use Abraham Heschel's term, "an allusion to God."

The "powerful revelations" that are at the basis of the world's great religions are essentially the same as the "quiet ones" which take place everywhere and at all times. It is the personal encounters here and now which lead individuals to an understanding of these great or powerful revelations. In theological terms (*pace* Buber) it is through contemporary religious experience that we grasp the significance of our religious traditions. As Friedman notes, Buber insists that we cannot renounce the historical traditions that have molded us religiously; this is a point in Buber's writings that is often misunderstood or misinterpreted.

All revelation calls us to the service and hallowing of creation, and it is through such service that we achieve

our fulfillment. There are no rules, no set methods for accomplishing this task. We must, in Buber's mind, withstand ever again the "unforeseen, the unforeseeable moment" and give ourselves wholeheartedly to that which we encounter here and now. From the human side all hallowing begins within the depths of the person and implies in the final analysis the hallowing of the human within the person. The only way for Buber that we can approach God is through becoming human; we are created in order to become human, and we become human through dialogic relation. The "real existence" of the human person is thus both symbol and sacrament. As Friedman puts it: "The highest manifestation of the religious symbol is a human life lived in relation to the Absolute." Our becoming human is at the same time the drawing of ourselves and our world into the sphere of hallowing.

Much more could be said about our three chosen themes, and there are many topics in Friedman's book, and even more so in Buber's writings, that are left untouched. Perhaps the greatest contribution that Professor Friedman makes in this slim volume is to remind all his readers of the depths that have yet to be plumbed in Buber's thought and of the paths yet to be discovered by those who continue to live in the holy insecurity of the narrow ridge, faithful to the life of dialogue to which Buber consistently points.

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A CONVERSATION ELICITED BY PETER GAY'S BOOK

*A Godless Jew: Freud, Atheism and
the Making
of Psychoanalysis*
(New Haven: Yale University
Press)

A Review Essay by William D.
Groman

The writer had expected to contribute more to the conversation reported here. Unfortunately he was for the most part ignored by his two companions, and only an occasional comment from him appears. To dis-

tinguish the three speakers the writer has labelled himself Z and his friends as X and Y. The three have been talking a while when Z speaks.

Z. You both seem to agree on several points. You find Gay to be a competent scholar, convincingly thorough in his documentation, conscientious and fair in his presentation of different opinions, informative, but with a rather plodding, pedestrian writing style. And you both used the same phrase calling the book "thought provoking."

X. And you, Z, are also provocative with your interruptions and tedious with your long sentences. I was asking Y why he thought Gay wrote the book.

Y. Why does anyone write a book? Freud said that our acts were not singly but over—or multiply—determined. So (a) Gay had already written and delivered a series of lectures on the topic. What can an academic do with such lectures except make a book? (b) He had had a genuine interest in his topic, (c) another book always looks good for a professor, (d) there is an ethnic group as well as a scholarly market for such a work, and (e) professors can always use a bit of extra income. So lectures can lead to books and books can lead to more lectures. Are you satisfied?

X. Not altogether. There is truth in what you say, but aren't you being a bit too cynical, Y. The book does address questions that a good many thoughtful people take seriously.

Y. Well, if I am cynical, then I am cynical. The word doesn't frighten me. And in present times reasons for cynicism are not hard to come by. Out of friendship, however, I will let your reproach go by without mentioning it. Tell me instead one of the questions you had in mind, which I can already guess is one that interests you, perhaps in a personal way.

X. There's nothing personal in what I have in mind. To name one question: Gay mentions that Freud, writing to Enrico Morselli, uses the phrase "the Jewish spirit." What is the Jewish spirit? Gay uses the concluding 27 pages of his book in an effort to answer this question.

Z. Speaking personally, and as a psychologist, I become somewhat suspicious whenever I hear someone use the disclaimer "nothing per-

sonal." I would like to hear though, X, what your thinking is on the "Jewish spirit."

X. Thank you, Z. But I must warn the two of you this will take a little time. As you recall, Gay discussed the Jewish spirit under four rubrics: professional, intellectual, tribal, and sociological. None of them he thought could account for the making of psychoanalysis. What is more, the idea of the Jewish spirit is no clearer.

Y. Where are you going with all this? I thought you would give us your thinking, not Gay's.

X. My dear Y, Gay went on about the Jewish spirit for 27 pages. To my way of thinking he did not elucidate it. Be kind enough to let me fail in fewer words.

Y. So talk, talk. I see Z is shushing me.

(Z smiles and shrugs. The shrug is a marvelous expression of the Jewish spirit. Like its Italian or French counterpart it is inexpressible in words.)

X. To me, we can't understand the spirit of any people unless we look for the boundaries of the group, what makes for inclusion or exclusion. With regard to the Jewish spirit we need to know, What is a Jew, Who is a Jew, and What makes a Jew. This question has been argued it seems almost from the time Jewry emerged. It still appears to be an enigma, given the number of different opinions.

Y. You are beginning to make some sense, X, but we need to keep in mind that we Jews have no monopoly on this enigma. Christians, Moslems, Buddhists, and others all have their own versions of this question.

X. Of course. And there is a common theme that appears through all the diversity within each belief. Every denomination, sect, cult, or whatever is convinced that it has found the "Truth Absolute" irrevocable and eternal. And around each "truth" a thorny perimeter of dogma, doctrine, and code is planted. These frontiers have two surfaces and two major purposes, to keep the "heretics" out and the "believers" in, or failing that to eject them.

Y. I agree. And not only religious, but ideological and political groups operate in much the same way. And so we have "iron curtains" and "bamboo curtains."

Wherever extremism is encountered it seems, eventually to lead to both tragic and comic consequences—to absurd contradictions. In Israel, for instance, legally there can only be religious marriages between Jews, and children are declared Jews only by descent from a Jewish mother, a situation brought about by the rigidity of the orthodox. The comic side of this is that the sons of Jacob, the patriarchs of the 12 tribes most likely did not take Jewish wives, and four of the sons were the offspring of the "maids," Zilpah and Bilhah, who were presumably not Jewish. Of Joseph we have no doubt for he married Asiath the daughter of Potipherah, the priest of On. The topsy-turvy nature of such contradictions leaves one not knowing whether to laugh or to weep.

X. You speak to my point. Let's not forget that Freud himself is reputed to have been extremely jealous of his psychoanalytic orthodoxy and intolerant of theoretical deviations other than his own, for example, Adler's and Jung's "excommunication."

Y. It is always when we take an extreme position that we become most inflexible; think of the history of the Catholic church and the methods they used to stamp out "heresy" and deviation.

X. The infallibility of the Pope.

Y. And the Southern Baptist fundamentalist's new term—the literal "inerrancy" of the Bible.

X. It seems we are all tarred with the same brush. Like the other religions, in Judaism there is the same spectrum from ultra-orthodoxy to secularism.

Y. So, are you suggesting with your spectrums that there can be no answer to the question, "What is the Jewish spirit," or Christian or Moslem or Buddhist spirit for that matter?

X. No, Y, I am not saying that. What I think is that an absolute, universal, eternal and final answer to this kind of question can't be found. It is a chicken-egg type of question; there is no answer. But if you ask about a particular egg or a particular chicken, that question has an answer. Gay's particular chicken is Freud. And for that chicken Freud's life and work can be taken as an expression of his Jewish spirit. Gay has given us

an adequate account of Freud's Jewishness as viewed by himself and others.

Z. But as you mentioned, X, Freud was pretty much an extremist. Especially with regard to religion which, as an atheist, he concluded was a superstition and an illusion.

Y. Yes, and an extremist also with his insistence that his description of our psychic life could be applied universally and his claim that psychoanalysis is a science. It is impossible, nor would one wish, to detract from Freud's accomplishments. His influence on almost every field has been extraordinary and incredibly far-reaching. There is scarcely a field that has not found it necessary to confront Freud's work either pro or contra, either applying or rejecting Freudian formulations. All the same, to my thinking psychoanalysis cannot stand as a science.

Z. What have you to say about the idea that psychoanalysis is a Jewish science, Y?

Y. What I have to say is that it isn't an idea, it is nonsense, an absurdity, as Gay recognized. Can we label Newtonian physics as Christian physics, Einstein's relativity as Jewish physics, Darwin's evolution as Christian science? What would "creationists" have to say about that? Perhaps they would call it Satanic science. Dam building would be a beaver science, and home construction a bird science.

No, psychoanalysis is not a science because, while it may fit some, it does not fit the most important criteria that define a science. For instance, it lacks predictability, specificity, replicability, quantifiable units, and testability. All of these are characteristics of a full-fledged science.

Moreover psychoanalysis has remained too closed a theoretical system to assimilate the findings of related sciences as well as those of clinical and experimental psychology. I think, however, that many of Freud's insights will survive in psychology, especially his emphasis on the importance of unconscious processes.

Z. A tough-minded comment, Y. The two of you have pretty much monopolized the conversation, and now I'd like to have my say.

It seems to me that when Freud dismissed religion so cavalierly, he was overlooking a part of our human make-up that may well be that which in us which makes us most human, our spiritual side. Wherever we have gathered information about humanity, be it from the earliest remains of ritual burial to the cave paintings of France and Spain (perhaps 30,000 to 10,000 years old) to the present day, we find a form of religion present. For psychology or any discipline to ignore what appears to be a universal aspect of humanity is to be selectively blind to the obvious. When Freud condemned all religion as an illusion, no doubt from his point of view it appeared that way. There are, in fact, religions which teach that the entire manifest universe is an illusion. I suppose this leads us to meditate upon whether we exist in a universe that is a real or a false illusion.

The conversation has been interesting, my friends, and we could go on, but since we have come together for an evening of chess, let us enter that little domain where we can find ultimate truths in the form of a win, a loss, or a draw.

Dr. William D. Groman is professor emeritus, Department of Psychology, VCU.

BOOK BRIEFINGS

Inclusion of a book in "Briefings" does not preclude its being reviewed in a future issue of Menorah Review.

Jewish-Christian Relations: An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide. By Michael Shermis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. In recent years, the field of Jewish-Christian relations has exploded with materials developed for and about the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Shermis has compiled a much needed reference work. His guide to the last 20 years of research in Jewish-Christian relations carefully annotates books, pamphlets, selected articles, and journals. Also included are complete listings of congresses, media presentations, organizations, and speakers in the field. Sample course syllabi, a chapter on educational resources, and a full set of indexes complete this useful volume.

The Sustaining Utterance, Discourses on Chasidic Thought. By Adin Steinsaltz. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc. In this companion volume to *The Long Shorter Way*, the author continues his commentary on the classic chasidic text, the "Tanya," with an exploration of the themes in the second part of Shneur Zalman of Liadi's masterwork. The title refers to the fundamental Jewish notion that Creation is not a historical event that took place long ago but is rather a continuous process. God did not create the world in the past, but rather he is constantly sustaining the world. This work deals with several fundamental theological concepts in Jewish thought.

The Mishnah: An Introduction. By Jacob Neusner. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc. In this basic introduction, the author introduces the Mishnah in a way that is challenging to both the newcomer and the sophisticated reader. Neusner describes how the Mishnah should be read and takes special care to delineate how the thinking of second-century Jewish sages applies to our own time. In addition to giving us a thorough exploration of the Mishnah's language, contents, organization, and inner logic, Neusner also provides us with a broad understanding of how it communicates its own world view—its vision of both the concrete and spiritual worlds.

We Are All Close: Conversations with Israeli Writers. By Haim Chertok. New York: Fordham University Press. This collection of conversations between Haim Chertok and 18 leading Israeli writers uniquely illuminates a five-year movement in Israeli cultural and intellectual life. The conversations extend from the time of the Israel stock market crash in 1983 to the time of the Palestinian intifada in 1988. Chertok leads the authors through such topics as Israel's literary community, contemporary Zionism, the lure of Diaspora, women in Israel, the Palestinians, and Judaism's official, cultural, and religious faces. Chertok evokes in each conversation a sense of the author's authentic presence.

What You Thought You Knew About Judaism: 341 Common Misconceptions About Jewish Life. By Reuven P. Bulka.

Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc. This unique book describes and debunks myths about Jewish special events, the Sabbath and festivals, food, prayer services, the role of women, the Jewish attitude toward parents and teachers, the Jewish legal system, and the responsibility of Jews toward others. Within each of these broad categories, the author states the various misconceptions, explains their probable origins, and compares them with the facts. And as each misconception is exposed, the truth is explained in a lively, straightforward way that will appeal to readers of all kinds.

The Way of Splendor: Jewish Mysticism and Modern Psychology. By Edward Hoffman. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc. A lucid introduction to Jewish mysticism, this book is designed to bring the exciting and evocative ideas of Kabbalah to a contemporary audience. It explores the relationship between the ancient Jewish mystical tradition and the teachings of modern psychology. The author shows that the Kabbalah is a vast realm of metaphysical, philosophical, and psychological insights, infinitely applicable to the concerns of daily life.

Israel, Egypt, and the Palestinians: From Camp David to Intifada. By Ann Mosely Lesch and Mark Tessler. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Few issues in foreign affairs have been as intractable as the Palestine problem. Resolving the conflicting claims of the Israelis and Palestinians to the same piece of land has so far proved impossible. The authors address the issues in a retrospective look at Egyptian-Israeli relations, and the Palestinian question since the Camp David accords.

The Writings of Yehuda Amichai: A Thematic Approach. By Glenda Abramson. Albany: State University of New York Press. Amichai is an Israeli poet of international distinction. Known as Israel's "master poet," Amichai conveys a portrait of life in modern Israel, summarizing and reflecting all the major preoccupations of his generation. Abramson presents a detailed critical description and thematic analysis of his work, with reference to the historical background from which it has emerged.

The problems of an emerging national culture are seen subjectively through the eyes of one of its most sensitive and perceptive literary observers.

Cosmos as Creation. Edited by Ted Peters. Nashville: Abingdon Press. Current thinking with regard to the relationship between science and theology is comprehensively explored in this collection of essays by many recognized leaders in the field. There is a full examination of all the significant topics currently on the frontier of science and theology: methodology, the big-bang theory, the second law of thermodynamics, relativity, creationism, and ecology.

The Journey Back From Hell. By Anton Gill. William Morrow & Company. This book depicts the Holocaust and its aftermath in the haunting words of its survivors. Based on interviews with 120 people from 14 countries who lived through the horror, it is one of the few books that offer direct testimony not only from people who were children at the time but also from those with adult memories of the camps. It is a stunning work of oral history that records the experiences of German, Hungarian, Austrian, Czechoslovakian, and Polish Jews, as well as resistance fighters and political prisoners.

Joyce and the Jews. By Ira B. Nadel. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.

An Irish Catholic in upbringing, James Joyce created one of the most memorable Jewish characters in fiction—Leopold Bloom. Yet his association with the Jewish people did not end there. As this book ably documents, Joyce's affinities with Jews, their way of life, and their sacred belief in text did much to form him as person and writer. In this volume, the author presents the first systematic study of Joyce's identity and association with Jews. He offers fresh insight into Joyce's work and his attitudes toward race, nationality, prejudice, and fanaticism.

The Best of Sholom Aleichem. Edited by Irving Howe and Ruth R. Wisse. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc. Sholom Aleichem is among the greatest and best-loved Yiddish writers of modern times. His wise, witty, poignant stories about life in the *shtetlach*, the Jewish towns of Eastern Europe, are read and cherished the world over. Now, two renowned literary scholars and Yiddishists have collected his funniest, most heart-touching stories, 12 of which have been newly translated, to create this volume.

How to Run a Traditional Jewish Household. By Blu Greenberg. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc. This is a modern, comprehensive guide, covering virtually every aspect of Jewish home life. It provides practical advice on how to manage a Jewish home in

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the traditional way and offers fascinating accounts of the history behind the tradition. Writing in a warm, personal style, Greenberg shows that contrary to popular belief, the home, and not the synagogue, is the most important institution in Jewish life.

Defending the Faith: Nineteenth-Century American Jewish Writings on Christianity and Jesus. By George L. Berlin. Albany: State University of New York Press. While this book's concern is the centuries-old argument between Christians and Jews, it focuses on the American setting of that argument and shows how American conditions shaped it. Traditionalists emphasized the differences, assuming an outsider stance with regard to American culture. In contrast, Reformists identified the highest ideals of both Christianity and America with Judaism. The author demonstrates that the Jewish writings are not a matter of interest so much for their theological content, but more importantly, for their exposition of the struggle within the Jewish community to define its relationship to American culture and society.

The Jews in the Greek Age. By Elias J. Bickerman. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. This is a vivid account of the Jewish people from the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.E. to the revolt of the Maccabees. It is a rich story of Jewish social, economic, and intellectual life and of the relations between the Jewish community and the Hellenistic rulers and colonizers of Palestine—a historical narrative told with consummate skill.

Echoes from the Holocaust: Philosophical Reflections on a Dark Time. Edited by Alan Rosenberg and Gerald E. Myers. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. This collection of 23 essays is the first book to focus comprehensively on the profound issues and philosophical significance of the Holocaust. They convey an extraordinary range of factual information and philosophical reflection in seeking to identify the haunting meanings of the Holocaust. Some of the questions: How should philosophy approach the Holocaust? What part did the intellectual climate play in allowing Hitlerism? What is the philosoph-

ical climate today and what are its probable cultural effects? Multiple dimensions of the Holocaust are brought together here for philosophical interpretation.

The Golden Tradition: Jewish Life and Thought in Eastern Europe. Edited by Lucy S. Dawidowicz. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc. Renowned historian Lucy S. Dawidowicz has assembled a collection of autobiographies, memoirs, reminiscences, and letters by some 60 Eastern European Jews whose lives and works form a rich sampling of Jewish responses to modernity. The thoughtfulness with which Dawidowicz has arranged and anthologized these works, which were written between the end of the eighteenth century and the eve of the Holocaust, makes this book more than the sum of its parts: *The Golden Tradition*, embracing history, autobiography, and philosophy, is an affirmation of the diversity of the Jewish spirit as it struggled to reconcile its own religious and cultural traditions with the demands of a changing world.



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